

Distracted Driving

WHY THIS MATTERS

In 2024, 3,208 people were killed and over 315,000 were injured in distracted driving crashes in the U.S. (NHTSA). Texting at 55 mph means driving the length of a football field with your eyes closed. Distraction is 100% preventable.

3,208

Killed by distracted drivers in 2024 (NHTSA)

315K+

Injured in distracted driving crashes 2024 (NHTSA)

5 sec

Eyes off road = 1 football field at 55 mph

5 Rules to Prevent Distracted Driving

Every driver must follow these rules to keep themselves and others safe:

1

PUT THE PHONE AWAY

Silence your phone and place it out of reach before starting the engine. No call, text, or notification is worth a life. Use Do Not Disturb mode or a driving app.

2

PULL OVER IF NEEDED

If you must make a call, read a map, or respond to an urgent message, pull over to a safe location first. Never attempt these tasks while the vehicle is moving.

3

SET UP BEFORE YOU DRIVE

Program GPS, adjust mirrors, set climate controls, and choose your music before putting the vehicle in gear. Pre-trip setup eliminates in-drive distractions.

4

KEEP EYES ON THE ROAD

Avoid eating, grooming, reading, or reaching for objects while driving. Every second your eyes leave the road increases crash risk dramatically.

5

SPEAK UP AS A PASSENGER

If you see the driver using their phone or driving distracted, say something. Passengers have the right and responsibility to speak up for everyone's safety.

Before You Drive — Quick Checklist

- Is your phone silenced and stored out of reach?
- Is your GPS destination already programmed?
- Are mirrors, seat, and climate controls adjusted?
- Are loose items in the vehicle secured?
- Do you have a hands-free device if calls are essential?
- Are you well-rested and alert for the drive?

The 3 Types of Distraction — Know Them All

Visual: Eyes off the road — looking at a phone, GPS, passengers, scenery, or an incident on the roadside.

Manual: Hands off the wheel — texting, eating, drinking, adjusting controls, or reaching for objects in the vehicle.

Cognitive: Mind off driving — daydreaming, emotional stress, conversations, fatigue, or thinking about work problems.

Texting: The deadliest — combines all three types at once. Takes eyes, hands, and mind off driving simultaneously.

Fatigue: Drowsy driving mirrors impaired driving. Fatigue slows reaction time and causes micro-sleeps at the wheel.

Complacency: Familiar routes breed overconfidence. Most crashes happen within 25 miles of home on well-known roads.

Common Mistakes That Kill on the Road

- ✗ Glancing at a text 'for just a second' — at highway speed, that second covers 80+ feet blind
- ✗ Eating or drinking while driving — spills cause sudden jerking of the wheel
- ✗ Programming GPS or changing music while the vehicle is moving
- ✗ Believing hands-free phone calls are safe — cognitive distraction still impairs driving
- ✗ Driving while fatigued — drowsy driving is as dangerous as drunk driving

Safety Tips to Remember

- ✓ Designate a passenger as your 'co-pilot' to handle phone calls, GPS, and messages
- ✓ Take regular breaks on long drives — stop every 2 hours or 100 miles to stay alert
- ✓ Use apps that block notifications while driving — many insurance companies offer them free
- ✓ Secure all loose items before driving — a rolling water bottle can become a deadly distraction
- ✓ Lead by example — if you manage drivers, set a zero-tolerance distracted driving policy

Discussion Questions for Your Team

1. What are the most common distractions when you drive for work?
2. Has anyone had a near-miss caused by distracted driving?
3. Do we have a company policy on phone use while driving?
4. What strategies do you use to avoid distractions on the road?
5. How can we hold each other accountable for distraction-free driving?

TOOLBOX TALK SIGN-OFF

Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

Project: _____

Location: _____

Attendance sheet attached: [] Yes