



INJURY PREVENTION

# Quick Review of Safety

## Defensive Driving

### BEFORE DRIVING

- Be well-rested before going for a drive. Driving fatigued can be every bit as dangerous as impaired driving.
- Review weather forecasts and your route. This helps know the time the trip will take and helps prevent distractions or feeling rushed.
- Keep the vehicle well-maintained and supplied with adequate fuel, oil and other liquids. Address any problems with the vehicle, such as check engine lights, promptly.
- Prepare emergency repair tools, a first-aid kit, winter survival kit, window breaking tool or other equipment to help should the car break down.
- Do a quick visual inspection of the vehicle prior to driving: Check tires for pressure; inspect windshield wipers; ensure headlights, brake lights and turn signals are functioning. The vehicle owner's manual may provide other pre-check items.
- Adjust the seat and mirrors, and ensure equipment, such as GPS or radio, are programmed before the vehicle is moving.
- Finish eating, grooming or applying cosmetics prior to driving.
- Secure items to prevent them from rolling around during the drive. If anything does roll around, pull over safely and come to a complete stop before retrieving items.
- Buckle your seatbelt and ensure passengers are also buckled up prior to putting the vehicle in motion. This is perhaps the single most important life-saving device in your vehicle.
- Be aware of any medications that may affect your ability to operate motor vehicles safely and plan accordingly.

(Over)



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(Over)

## WHILE DRIVING

- Avoid speeding; speeding contributes to most serious crashes.
- Maintain an adequate following distance behind and around vehicles. Generally, keep 3 to 4 seconds of distance between you and the car ahead. It takes about three-fourths of a second to react to a situation. You need to be able to stop in the distance you can see!
  - At higher speeds or during inclement weather, the following distance may need to be more than 3 to 4 seconds.
- Keep your eyes up and scan your surroundings in all directions and anticipate actions of other drivers or pedestrians.
  - Always anticipate unsafe driving practices in others, and give them plenty of time and space.
  - Be particularly careful at intersections and scan down the road.
- Do not assume that another driver approaching a stop sign or traffic light will stop until you see evidence of them coming to a stop. When braking, keep an eye on the rear view mirror to verify following cars are braking.
- Plan your exit when you arrive and avoid or minimize backing to avoid backing collisions.
- Use turn signals and give other drivers plenty of time to see and acknowledge your intentions.
- Be aware of your vehicle's blind spots and be sure to check them when changing lanes. Avoid driving in the blind spots of other vehicles.
- Pull off the road and legally park to make calls, or use a hands-free option. Avoid complex or emotional conversations on the phone or with passengers.
- Do not allow your frustrations or anger to lead to reckless behavior.
- When passing crashes or other objects of interest, do not gawk, as this increases the risks of further crashes. Slow down and move over to provide space for responders.
- Never drive a vehicle after consuming alcohol or illicit drugs.



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