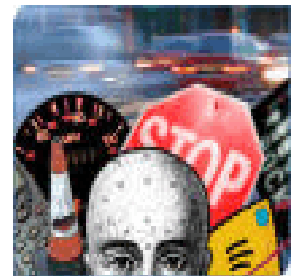


# Driver Distraction



*Driver distraction is not unique to cellular telephones. Historically, drivers have engaged in a range of distracting activities—grooming, eating, drinking, and adjusting their sound systems. But the frequency with which new technologies are introduced into the vehicle is accelerating.*



**Be familiar with the equipment in your car, such as the stereo system and cell phone.** This is especially important if you have a new phone or car, or a rental vehicle. Practice before driving so you can perform basic functions without taking your eyes off the road. Program your favorite stations into the radio for easy access. Arrange tapes and CDs in an easy-to-reach spot.



**Keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road.** If you choose to use your wireless phone, use hands-free devices and keep it in its holder.



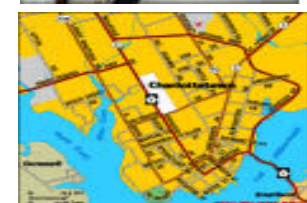
**Make sure your children are comfortable and properly buckled up.** To keep children from distracting the driver, provide them with safe items they may need for the road trip. Teach your children the importance of good behavior while in a vehicle. Don't underestimate how distracting it can be to tend to them in the car.



**Pull over to eat or drink.** By stopping, you can give yourself a break from the traffic and enjoy your refreshments. Children or adults may choke on food while in the vehicle, causing a severe distraction for the driver. Avoid eating while driving, but if you must, choose easy-to-handle items and make sure all drinks are secured in cup-holders.



**Check your route before leaving.** If you are unfamiliar with where you're going, study a road map to avoid unnecessary stress and distractions. Do not attempt to read the road map while driving.



**Complete your grooming before leaving.** Don't rely on the time in your vehicle to take care of your personal routine such as applying make-up, combing your hair or shaving. Don't try to retrieve items that fall to the floor while driving. Wait until your vehicle is parked.



**Do not engage in emotionally charged conversations** -either with the passengers or on your mobile phone. Such discussions can result in aggressive or erratic driving behavior.



**Never take notes while driving.** Always find a safe place to stop before writing things down. Designate a front-seat passenger to serve as "co-pilot" rather than fumble with maps or unfamiliar navigation systems.



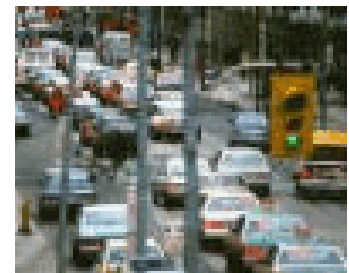
**Drive defensively.** Be prepared for the unsafe actions of other motorists or for poor driving conditions. If you find yourself 'lost in thought' while driving, take a break.



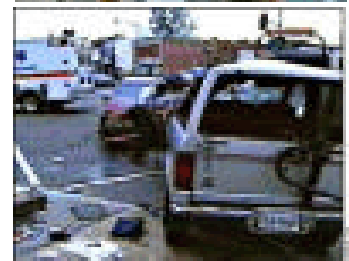
**Tired Driving.** Don't begin your trip unless you are well rested. Dozing off behind the wheel for just 2-3 seconds can be deadly. If you're driving 90 km per hour, your car can travel the length of a football field in three seconds.



**Heavy Traffic.** Plan your drive times to avoid the "rush hours" of people leaving the city. Agitation can lead to aggressive driving behaviors like tailgating and speeding. Remember every other driver on the road is subject to the same stress, fatigue, anger and distractions that you are.



**Oncoming Traffic.** Be alert for unanticipated movements like a car drifting across the center line or cutting into your lane. Be prepared to drive calmly into the ditch if necessary to avoid a crash. Don't panic and try to oversteer—this can lead to a rollover. Approach intersections with caution. Just because you have the right of way doesn't mean the other driver will stop.



**Breaks.** Schedule frequent rest breaks for your passengers as well as yourself. If children are bored and restless, they can be distracting. Driver distraction is a leading cause of motor vehicle crashes.



***Stopping.*** Always stop at stop signs—whether or not you can see there are no vehicles coming. Fatal crashes can happen because someone didn't stop certain the "coast was clear."



## ***Cell Phones***



- Always buckle up, keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road.
- Use a hands-free device to make it easier to keep both hands on the wheel.
- When dialing manually, dial only when stopped. Or, have a passenger dial for you.
- Do not engage in stressful or emotional conversations that may divert your attention from the road.
- Program frequently called numbers into the speed dial feature of your phone for easy, one-touch dialing, or use auto answer or voice-activated dialing services (when available).
- Never take notes while driving. Pull off the road if you need to write something down.
- Let voice mail pick up your calls when it's inconvenient, unsafe to answer the phone or driving conditions become hazardous.
- Be a Wireless Samaritan. Call 9-1-1 to report any crimes, life-threatening emergencies, accidents or drunk drivers. In Canada alone, nearly three million calls per year are made to 9-1-1 or emergency numbers using a wireless phone.