

19 safety tips for teen drivers.



Did you know half of all teenagers will be involved in a car accident before they graduate from high school? That number is alarming, right? Sometimes these car accidents are due to teen distracted driving – like a text message or a favorite song. Other times, they happen because the driver didn't know a safety rule, like when to pass or change lanes.

As you're preparing your teen driver to take on the roads, share these 19 tips for teen distracted driving to keep them safe.

Tips to stop teen distracted driving

Of all age groups, teens are the most likely to be distracted at the time of a crash. Help them stop distractions and stay focused with these tips:

1. **Have them turn off their cell phone or put it out of sight.** The National Safety Council reports drivers are four times more likely to get into an accident if they're using their phone. Have your teen turn their phone on silent while driving, store it in the glove box, or put it in the back seat. If they need to make a call or text, advise them to pull over or park in a lot to do so.
2. **Don't text and drive.** At 55 miles per hour, the average text message takes your teen driver's eyes off the road while they travel the length of an entire football field.
3. **Start the GPS before starting the car.** If your teen is traveling somewhere new and they need directions from a map app, have them put the address in the app before they leave. Additionally, have them turn the sound on for voice directions so they can keep their eyes on the road.
4. **Reduce the number of passengers.** The more passengers your teen takes, the more distracted they'll be. It's best to reduce distractions with fewer (or no) passengers when they start driving.
5. **Don't eat or drink while driving.** According to the National Highway Traffic Safety

Administration, people who eat and drive increase their odds of getting into a car accident by 80 percent.

6. **Keep the radio at a reasonable volume.** It should always be at a level that allows drivers to hear oncoming emergency vehicles or nearby horns.

Follow the rules of the road

Teenage drivers account for more car accidents than any other age group, and car accidents happen to be the leading cause of death among 15- to 20-year-olds. It's important for your teen to follow these rules of the road to stay safe.

7. **Leave enough space between vehicles.** Whether your teen is in motion or at a stop, they should always be able to see the ground behind the vehicle ahead of them. That distance should increase immensely in wet or wintry conditions.
8. **Don't switch lanes at an intersection.** Changing lanes in the middle of an intersection may or may not be considered illegal in your state, but it's always considered dangerous.
9. **Know when it's okay to pass and when it's not.** New drivers shouldn't be doing much passing. They should, however, know the symbols on the road that mark when it is okay to pass another vehicle.
10. **Don't use cruise control in wet or slippery conditions.** If there's rain, snow, or ice, it is risky to use cruise control. Wet roads can be slippery and going at a constant speed in that condition could lead to hydroplaning.

How teens can stay safe while driving

Small precautions can make all the difference for teen driving safety. Teach your teen these keys to safe driving:

11. **Make sure the vehicle always has at least a half tank of gas.** You always want your teen to travel without trouble. That's why it's a good rule of thumb to make sure the vehicle has the gas to get where it's going.
12. **Stock up on emergency supplies.** There are a few things your teen should always keep in the car ... like these emergency items.
13. **Always know the road they're on.** In case your teen needs to call the police, they'll need to know their location.
14. **Adjust the headrest to the right height.** Most drivers believe the headrest should be behind the neck, but it should be at a height behind the head to minimize whiplash.
15. **Don't get out of the vehicle if it's on the road.** If your teen is in a car accident, make sure they know to remain in the vehicle where it's the safest.
16. **Keep the doors locked and the windows rolled up.** This will keep intruders out and your teen safe. They should also lock their doors promptly after getting in the car.
17. **Leave a phone charger in the car at all times.** If something happens to your teen from point A to point B, having a phone charger in the car will ensure they have enough battery life to call for help.
18. **Don't leave valuables in plain sight.** When your young driver is parked, advise them not to leave valuables like wallets, purses, smartphones, laptops, and sports equipment where they can be easily spotted.
19. **Park under a streetlight.** Parking in a lit area is always the safest option. And on the way to the vehicle, your teen should walk with keys in hand.

Not sure what kind of vehicle to buy your teen driver? Looking for more tips to stop teen distracted driving? Our experts are always here. Talk to a local, independent agent today.