

Common Teen Driving Mistakes



1) Speeding

Speeding accounts for almost 40% of teen fatalities?

As an inexperienced driver, it's tougher to judge speed and how long it will take to stop. Reflexes are sharp, but lack of experience driving may hinder one's interpretation.

Driving under the posted speed should not be an embarrassment to the driver. If a driver feels uncomfortable, slow down. Let other drivers go by. It may be likely that the other drivers have more experience or are engaging in risky behavior.

2) Getting Distracted

All of these activities can cause distraction: Talking on a cell phone, Texting, Eating, Playing with the radio or a CD. Distractions hinder your ability to scan the road effectively, locate potential trouble early, and take the necessary action.

3) Taking Unnecessary Risks

It's risky enough to drive a car. But, when you compound this with foolish actions such as squeezing through an intersection on a yellow light, not checking your blind spots before switching lanes, and not using your turn signal, you ramp up your chances of causing car wrecks.

4) Failing to Keep a Proper Distance

Teens often overestimate their ability to stop their cars in time. Always maintain an adequate safety margin from the car ahead of you. The higher the speed, the more braking space you need.

5) Not Wearing a Seat Belt

Most teens have grown up wearing a seat belt. They play a critical role in eliminating injuries or reducing the severity of injuries you might sustain in a car wreck. Sometimes a seat belt even decides who survives a crash.

6) Over-correcting and Other Emergency Errors

At times, you must swerve your car or quickly correct the direction of your wheels. Many times teen drivers over-compensate in these situations, and make a dangerous situation worse by losing control of their car.

It's difficult to master emergency handling skills, but you can easily learn to anticipate dangerous situations, which will limit the need to apply these emergency skills. Keeping a safe speed helps, too.

7) Driving While Tired

Teens have full schedules.

As a teen, you need a lot of sleep—more than most adults. Yet, your schedule may not let you get the rest your body and mind require. This leads to driving while drowsy, which delays reaction time, decreases awareness, and results in auto accidents. You may feel you're fine to drive when you're not; better to let someone else drive when you're struggling to stay awake.

8) Having Teen Passengers

It's natural to want to drive with the company of your friends, but doing so can be dangerous: A single teen passenger in your car can double the risk of causing a car accident. That's because passengers can distract you, or prompt you to drive more aggressively than you should.

9) Driving the Wrong Car

Don't choose a powerful, high-performance car, as it's easy to lose control of these vehicles as an inexperienced driver. When it comes to the car you drive, you may not have a choice. But, if you do, opt for one with good safety records and quality safety features. Also, avoid large vehicles as they can be a challenge to handle in tight situations.

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