



# The Dangers of Distracted Driving

Each day in the United States, approximately nine people are killed and more than 1,000 are injured in crashes involving a distracted driver.\* Distracted driving can be interpreted as any activity that takes a driver's eyes off the road -- including eating, drinking, changing the radio station, reaching for items and managing distractions.

On Jan. 1, 2017, California implemented a hands-free law and widened the scope of distracted driving regulations. The law states, while operating a vehicle:

- Handheld devices are strictly prohibited, except in the case of an emergency.
- Cell phones must be entirely kept out of driver's hands during travel.
- Drivers can swipe or tap features if the cell phone is mounted.
- Drivers can still use headphones, but only one earbud at a time.

Here are a few additional tips to keep you safe while you're on the road.

## Before your drive:

- Familiarize yourself with your vehicle's controls – adjust mirrors, seat, radio, etc.
- Determine your route, enter the address of the destination(s) into GPS, if available.
- Fasten your seatbelt.
- Store loose items.
- Secure children and pets.
- Consider powering down or stowing devices in the trunk to avoid temptation.
- If your phone is needed, place it in a mount.

## During the trip:

- Focus on driving – actively scan the road, watch for hazards and keep your hands on the wheel.
- Avoid distractions that impair your ability to operate a vehicle safely, such as eating and drinking.
- If you have passengers, enlist their help so you can focus on driving.
- Don't engage in distracting conversations – make phone calls before or after the drive.
- If your work requires frequent email, text and phone communications, carefully pull off the road and stop your vehicle in a safe place before managing these requirements.

Distracted driving is hazardous. Pay attention to the road ahead, stay focused and expect the unexpected.

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\* National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

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