

# Safe Driving Instructions

MAY 2011

## LOOK BOTH WAYS AT INTERSECTIONS

Don't pull away from a sign or a light until you're sure other drivers are stopping or yielding. Wait a few seconds after a light turns green before proceeding, to protect yourself from a driver running a red light.

## KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

Drivers commonly tailgate because they underestimate how much stopping distance they really need. In general, under good weather conditions you need to keep at least three to four seconds between you and the car ahead of you if you're going over 35 mph (at least two seconds if traveling less than 35 mph). To make sure you're leaving enough room, count "one thousand one, one thousand two" as the car ahead of you passes a landmark you choose. If you reach the landmark before you get to two (or more if you're going faster), you're following too closely.



## GET A GRIP

On the steering wheel, that is. Don't drive one-handed, because if you're hit unexpectedly, you might lose control of your vehicle. Place both hands in a comfortable position on opposite sides of the steering wheel. And look ahead to anticipate obstacles you may need to steer around.

## STAY AWAKE

Falling asleep at the wheel can occur at any time, but it's especially common late at night or early in the morning. If you find yourself getting sleepy at the wheel, try:

- Pulling over in a safe place and taking a break until you feel more alert
- Opening a window for the breeze (or turning on the air conditioner if it's hot outside)
- Sharing the driving with someone else, especially if you are on a long trip
- Singing

## DON'T TALK ON THE PHONE

People who talk on cell phones or text while driving are much more likely to have accidents. If you must use your cell phone when you drive, use a hands-free device. But if the conversation is complicated or emotional, pull off the road to a safe location to talk.

## DON'T LET THE KIDS DISTRACT YOU

Drivers weaving on a highway might not be under the influence of alcohol. They might have kids in the back seat! Refuse to let your kids distract you when you drive. Have a plan to deal with arguments in the car. If they drop something, don't try to pick it up. If all else fails, pull off the road until things settle down.

## WEAR YOUR SEAT BELT CORRECTLY

You may wear your seat belt regularly, but are you wearing it correctly? If not, it may not protect you in an accident. Fasten lap and shoulder belts snugly, wearing the lap belt on your hips, not on your stomach. And wear your seat belt even if your car has an air bag. The air bag won't protect you from being thrown around or out of the car in an accident.

**For Additional Information, please contact:**

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