



Residential & Family Services

Driver Safety



Have you ever seen distracted drivers? What were they doing?

- Talking or texting on a cell phone
- Adjusting the car stereo
- Reading a newspaper/magazine/book
- Applying makeup
- Shaving
- Taking a picture
- Brushing their hair
- Eating a meal
- Slowing down to check out a wreck on the side of the road
- Braking sharply to avoid an accident





Distracted Driving Statistics

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that driver inattention is a factor in 80% of highway collisions in the United States
- In a recent NHTSA survey, 81% of drivers, admitted to engaging in potentially distracting behavior while driving
- In another recent survey NHTSA found that about 3.5% of all drivers have been involved in a crash in the past five years they attribute to their being distracted
 - That's about 6 million to 8.3 million drivers
- Recent police report data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) shows that about 5,800 people are killed each year in crashes involving driver distraction
 - That is 15% of total fatalities.



Distracted Driving

- Distracted driving and distracted drivers are a rapidly increasing problem on our roads today
- In addition to seeing driver, you have most likely been a distracted driver also
- Most of us are distracted at least some of the time when driving
- By failing to give our full attention to the road, we put ourselves, our passengers and everyone else on the road at risk
- How can we be less distracted when we drive?
 - There are multiple strategies we can use to remain focused on the road. We will go over the different ways in this training.



Learning Objectives

By the end of this training, you will be able to:

- State the 3 major types of driver distraction
 - Give examples of each of them
- Describe what you can do to avoid these distractions while driving



Distracted Driving Exercise

Look at the picture below. Can you find all of the possible distractions?
(Hint there are 8 in all)





Distracted Driving Exercise Answers

1. Thinking about an argument with someone
2. Map
3. Children in the backseat
4. Beverage
5. Cell phone
6. CDs
7. Radio
8. Police Car





Common Driver Distractions

Drivers who are involved in a distraction-related crash attribute their distraction to the following activities:

- Looking for something outside of the car such as a building or street sign
- Dealing with children or other passengers
- Looking for something inside the car
- Another driver
- Personal thoughts / day dreaming
- Dealing with technology



Categories of Distractions

Distracted drivers fall into 3 main categories:

- **Visual - Taking your eyes off the road**
 - Construction, pedestrians, billboards, police activity, other vehicles – both moving & stopped
- **Manual - Taking your hands off the steering wheel and taking your eyes off the road**
 - Eating, drinking, adjusting GPS, trying to get something from your purse, wallet or briefcase
- **Cognitive - Taking your mind off the task of driving**
 - Talking to another passenger, daydreaming, being preoccupied with personal, family, or work-related issues





Distraction Categories Exercise

Let's try to match our answers from the distracted driving exercise to the correct distracted driving category.

(Hint: some may be in multiple categories)

- Distractions:
- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Thinking about an argument with someone | 5. Cell phone |
| 2. Map | 6. CDs |
| 3. Children in the backseat | 7. Radio |
| 4. Beverage | 8. Police Car |

- Categories:
1. Visual
 2. Manual
 3. Cognitive

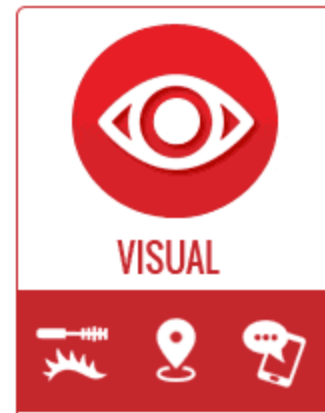


Distraction Categories Exercise Answers

1. Thinking about an argument with someone – Cognitive
2. Map – Manual
3. Children in the backseat – Manual & Cognitive
4. Beverage – Manual
5. Cell phone – Manual & Cognitive
6. CDs – Manual
7. Radio – Manual & Cognitive
8. Police Car – Visual



Avoiding Visual Distractions

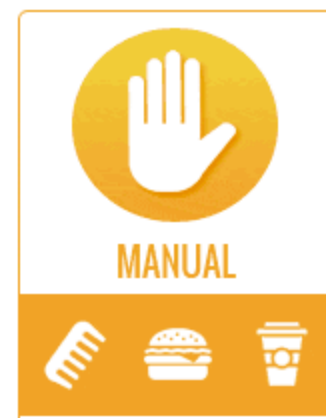


- Consciously remain focused on the road ahead
- Pull over to read directions
- Put your phone in “Do Not Disturb” mode
- Be aware that objects and events outside of your vehicle can distract you – resist those distractions
 - Scan your surroundings for potential hazards without letting them take away your attention from driving
- If you see an accident in the opposite lane avoid turning to look
 - Instead focus your attention on maintaining your distance from cars around you whose drivers are most likely rubbernecking themselves.
- Slow down and use extra caution when in work zones
 - Expect the unexpected
- If you become aware of a visual distraction slow down and leave space around your vehicle



Avoiding Manual Distractions

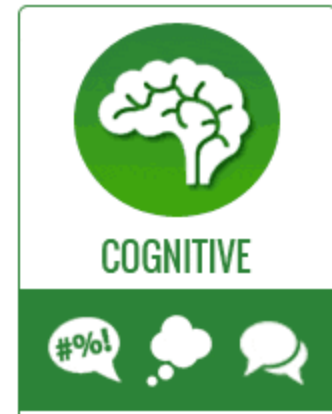
- If you are in an unfamiliar vehicle adjust the seats and mirrors and familiarize yourself with the controls before you drive away
- If you are driving to a new location, take time to review the map and directions or program the information into your GPS before you drive away
 - If you need to consult them while you are on the road, pull over and then check.
- Make sure young passengers understand they need to allow you to concentrate on driving
 - Don't turn around or otherwise get involved with arguments with or between children
 - Don't allow unruly behavior, throwing of objects, etc.
- Don't reach for items while driving
- Keep your cell phone out of reach
 - If you must take a call find a safe place to pull off the road and park your vehicle





Avoiding Cognitive Distractions

- Stay focused on the road
 - Make sure you get plenty of rest before you drive
- If you feel like your mind is wandering to some problem at work or at home, pull off the road and write it down or make a phone call
- Do not drink or take illegal drugs and drive. This will impair your judgment and reflexes
 - It is also illegal
- Take breaks on long drives to rest your eyes and refresh your mind
- Avoid phone calls, even hands free
- Keep your emotions in check





Texting & Driving

- Particular dangerous as it involves all 3 types of distraction categories
 - Visual – Takes your eyes off the road to look at your phone screen
 - Manual – Takes your hand(s) off the wheel so you can push keys
 - Cognitive – Takes your mind off the driving instead focusing on your conversation
- When texting...
 - The amount of time drivers take their eyes off the road increases by 400%
 - The number of incorrect lane changes increase over 135%
 - The risk of a car accident increases by 50%
- Using hands free devices does give you a safety boost but does not eliminate all distractions
 - You will be able to keep your eyes on the road and hands on the wheel but there is still a level of cognitive distraction involved
 - Studies reveal that hands-free drivers are still less likely to notice exits, red lights, stop signs, and other cues relevant to driving
- The only safe way to text in a car is when you are stopped, parked and in a safe location



Conclusion

Driving a vehicle requires your full attention. You never know what you will encounter when your driving. Keep your eyes on the road, your hands on the wheel and your mind on the job. You'll keep yourself and everyone else on the road a lot safer.

- Driving and multitasking don't mix
- It is tempting to text or check your email but if your able to resist the temptation and focus on the road ahead, you'll be able to react to the unexpected and maybe avoid an accident
- Many states are enacting laws such as, banning texting while driving and Junior Operator drivers licenses.
- The best way to deal with distractions:
 - Drive only when healthy, rested and unimpaired
 - Prepare yourself and vehicle before each trip
 - Stay physically and mentally focused on driving

