



JOB AID

Distracted Driving

Distracted Driving

A distraction is any activity that takes your:

- MIND off driving safely,
- EYES off the road and your surroundings, and/or
- HANDS off the wheel or gear shift.

Avoiding Distractions

- Get plenty of rest before you drive
- Do not drink or take drugs before driving
- Wear your seat belt
- Let go of stress before and during driving
- Don't drive aggressively
- Maintain safe space between vehicles
- Stay alert for hazards, conditions and other drivers
- Take care of your vehicle
- Inspect your vehicle before every trip
- Get fuel and anything else you need before trips

Outside Distractions

Distractions outside your vehicle can include: construction, pedestrians, billboards, other vehicles (moving and stopped) and police activity. To avoid them:

- Remain focused on the road ahead
- Resist distractions
- Scan for potential hazards
- Avoid turning to look at accidents
- Slowdown in work zones
- Reduce your speed and leave space around vehicles
- Pay attention to changing traffic patterns and emergency personnel

Inside Distractions

Distractions inside your vehicle can include: eating and drinking, adjusting the radio, adjusting mirrors, dialing/texting on a cell phone, bending to pick up an object that has fallen or shifted in transit, turning to deal with children or pets, grooming activities such as shaving or applying makeup, and reading a map or directions. To avoid these, before you drive:

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|---------------------------------|--|
| • Adjust seats/mirrors/controls | • Secure objects that may move or fall |
| • Review map/directions | • Make sure passengers/pets are secure |
| • Plan your route | • Perform any grooming tasks |
| • Program navigation devices | |
| • Set up audio entertainment | |

While driving:

- Stop before retrieving fallen items
- Don't turn around or engage in arguments or unruly behavior
- Pull over to resolve passenger issues
- Stop to eat and drink
- Don't attend to grooming tasks
- Call ahead if you think you will be late (don't rush!)

Cell Phones

Phone use of any kind – handheld or hands-free – slows your reactions. This is especially true of **texting**. Find a safe place to pull off the road and park if you are forced to take a call that becomes lengthy or emotionally heated.

You'll avoid possible legal liability that may accompany cell-phone-related accidents. An attorney can subpoena your cell phone records.

Know and follow the local laws that apply to where you live and drive.

Mental Distractions

Keep your mind on your driving rather than daydreaming or on other distracting thoughts. If you lose focus, pull over in a safe place and take a break.

Keep stress levels low by being well-rested, leaving plenty of time to reach your destination and making sure you're not hungry or thirsty before you set out.

Postpone phone conversations and heated discussions until you're out of the vehicle or can pull over safely.