

# I'm a #SafeDriver



I don't drive if I'm tired and I don't allow distractions





# I don't drive if I'm tired and I don't allow distractions

2 out of 10 serious accidents are caused by driver fatigue or inattention. Knowing how to drive also means knowing when to take breaks and banishing any activity that could divert your attention while driving.



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#### I assess my level of fatigue.

Fatigue becomes an issue when it affects the driver's capacity to perform tasks that require concentration, discernment and responsiveness.

The consequences of driver fatigue are similar to those of driving under the influence of alcohol:

- Difficulty maintaining a constant trajectory and speed
- Reduced vigilance
- Longer reaction times
- Increased tendency to take risks, memory issues
- Poor discernnment, microsleep, etc.



## I avoid distractions while driving.

A distraction is any activity that diverts the driver's attention away from the priority task of driving safely.

Distracted driving means slower reaction time, diminished judgment and a reduced field of vision. It can result in death or injury for the driver, passengers and other road users.

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## 20%

### of fatal road accidents are caused by driver drowsiness.

Source: French National Institute for Sleep and Vigilance



## 50 meters

is the distance covered in 3 seconds by a car travelling at 60 kph (37 mph). Closing your eyes for just a few seconds can have tragic consequences.



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59% of drivers use their phone while driving. Source: French Road Accident

Prevention Association

Using your phone while driving increases the risk of having an accident.



Texting while driving means 23 you are 23 times as likely to have an accident.

Source: Virginia Tech Transportation Institute

25% of fatal road accidents are caused by distracted driving. Source: ONISR 2018



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Below are some tips that will help you stay awake and alert behind the wheel.

## Prepare your journey and identify rest areas before leaving.

This enables you to integrate rest stops into your itinerary.

## Get enough sleep before setting out.

The recommended amount of sleep per night is 7-8 hours. Avoid late nights and early mornings before a long trip.

## Learn to identify signs of fatigue.

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Difficulty concentrating, stiff neck, back pain, constant need to change position, frequent yawning, heavy eyelids, glazed stare, numbness in legs are all signs that it's time to pull over and take a break.

## Take a break at the first sign of fatigue

Light vehicle drivers must stop for at least 10 minutes every 2 hours, and truck drivers for at least 30 minutes every 4 and a half hour.

## Be particularly vigilant at certain times of the day.

The early afternoon (1 p.m.-3 p.m.) and the middle of the night (2 a.m. -5 a.m.) are the peak sleepiness periods.

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# My rule is to take a break as soon as I feel tired.

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#### **Did You Know?**

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Factors that can contribute to or exacerbate driver fatigue:

- Not taking regular breaks.
- Eating heavy, fatty or sugary meals.
- Smoking, which reduces the amount of oxygen inside the vehicle.
- Taking medications, some of which make driving unsafe. Sleeping pills and antidepressants, for example, are known to drastically reduce driver vigilance.
- Consuming alcohol or illicit drugs.

#### An accident is

## 3 to 4 times

more likely to occur in the 30 minutes following the first signs of drowsiness.

Source: French National Institute for Sleep and Vigilance



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# Distractions behind the wheel Best Practices

There are four types of distractions drivers need to avoid at the wheel: visual, auditory, physical and cognitive.

**A visual distraction** is anything not driving-related that causes the driver to take their eyes away from the road.

To avoid visual distractions:

- Keep your eyes on the road.
- Pull over to check instructions.
- Avoid staring at your cell phone or GPS screen while following directions.

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**An auditory distraction** occurs, for example, when ambient sounds like an ambulance siren are drowned out by other sounds.

To avoid auditory distractions:

- Keep the radio volume low.
- ☑ Listen for unusual noises.
- Put your phone on "Do not disturb" mode.





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I never use my phone while driving. It stays in my bag. A physical distraction is anything that prevents the driver from keeping both hands on the wheel. To avoid physical distractions:

- Keep your phone out of reach.
- Adjust driver controls before you start the vehicle.
- Avoid adjusting onboard equipment settings while driving (radio, GPS, temperature, cruise control, etc.).
- Don't eat, drink or smoke while driving.

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As a general rule, don't try to grab or hold anything other than the steering wheel.

#### **Top 5 Driver Distractions**

- Cell phones (texting, talking, using GPS)
- Vehicle equipment controls (windows, radio, air conditioning, etc.)
- 3. Passengers
- 4. Eating, drinking and smoking
- 5. Distractions outside the vehicle

A cognitive distraction occurs,

for example, when the driver is concentrating on a conversation rather than on analyzing traffic conditions. To avoid cognitive distractions:

- Avoid using your phone, even with a hands-free kit.
- Stay focused on the road.
- Control your emotions.

Sending or receiving a text message means taking your eyes off the road for 5 seconds. That's the time it takes a vehicle traveling at 90 kph (55 mph) to cover a distance of

## 125 meters, or the length of a football field.

Source: French National Institute for Sleep and Vigilance



Want to know more? Log onto the HSE Toolbox to access all the #SafeDriver campaign content.

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