

When driving, do you ever?

- ▶ Tune the radio
 - ▶ Eat, drink, or smoke
 - ▶ Pick something up from the floor or between the seats
 - ▶ Read, write
 - ▶ Reach for the glove compartment
 - ▶ Talk on the cell phone
 - ▶ Clean the inside of the windshield
 - ▶ Argue with another passenger
 - ▶ Comb or brush your hair
 - ▶ Break up fights between your kids
 - ▶ Put on makeup
 - ▶ Put on contact lenses or use eye drops
 - ▶ Shave
 - ▶ File, clip, or polish your nails?
- If you answered yes to any of the above, you are driving while distracted and are at risk of an accident.

The next time you catch yourself slamming on the brakes to avoid hitting something or someone, you know what to do. Recognize that you may be driving distracted. Use some common sense and help keep our roads safer for everyone.



Resources:
South Dakota National Safety Council
AAA Exchange



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

ARMY SAFE
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Have you been a **distracted** Driver?

The Problem

Driving instructors estimate that a driver makes 200 decisions for every mile of driving. If you're mentally solving business or family problems while driving, you're adding to the total cognitive workload. If you take your eyes off the road for three or four seconds at 55 mph, the car travels the length of a football field. Other factors, such as fatigue, weather and traffic conditions, can make distractions even more potent.

The Clues

How do you know when you are distracted? Consider how many of these things have happened to you:

- ▶ A passenger in your car screamed or gasped because of something you did or didn't do.
- ▶ You ran a stop sign or red light unintentionally.
- ▶ You swerved suddenly to avoid an animal, a car, or another highway hazard.
- ▶ You slammed on your brakes because you didn't see the car in front of you stop.
- ▶ You didn't remember driving from one place to another.
- ▶ You drifted in your lane or into another lane of traffic.

These events are clues that you're distracted while driving. The next time you decide to read a road map or a work report, referee an argument, or even engage in an intense conversation on a cell phone or with occupants in the car, ask yourself this question: **Who's driving?**

Who's Driving?

AAA's first tip:

- ▶ **Don't use a cellular phone while driving. But if you must:**
 - ▶ Do not engage in emotional conversations while trying to drive. Pull off the road to a safe spot before continuing this type of conversation.
 - ▶ Do not combine distracting activities such as talking on your cell phone while driving, eating and tending to a child.
 - ▶ Use message-taking functions and return calls when you are stopped at a safe location.
- ▶ Familiarize yourself with the features of your cell phone before you get behind the wheel.
- ▶ Use the cell phone only when absolutely necessary. Limit casual conversations to times when you're not trying to safely operate a motor vehicle.
- ▶ Plan your conversation in advance, and keep it short - especially in hazardous conditions such as bad weather or heavy traffic.
- ▶ Let the person you're speaking with know you are in a vehicle.

Tips for Managing Distractions

Recognize driving requires your full attention. If you find your mind wandering, remind yourself to stay focused on the road.

- ▶ Before you get behind the wheel, familiarize yourself with the features of your vehicle's equipment.
- ▶ Preset radio stations and climate control.
- ▶ Secure items that may move around when the car is in motion.
- ▶ Avoid smoking, eating, drinking and reading while driving.
- ▶ Pull safely off the road and out of traffic to deal with children.
- ▶ Do your personal grooming at home - not in the car.
- ▶ Review maps before hitting the road.
- ▶ Monitor traffic conditions before engaging in activities that could divert attention away from driving.
- ▶ Ask a passenger to help you with activities that may be distracting.

