



Distracted driving continues to be one of the fastest growing safety issues on the roads today. Distracted drivers are not just a threat to themselves, they are a danger to everyone else on the road. The National Distracted Driving effort focuses on ways to change the behavior of drivers through legislation, enforcement, public awareness, and education. Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with the stereo, entertainment, or

navigation system — anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving.

According to AAA, 94.5% of U.S. residents ages 16 years and older drove at least occasionally in 2022, unchanged from 2021 and 2020. Drivers made an average of 2.44 driving trips, spending 60.2 minutes behind the wheel, and driving 30.1 miles each day in 2022. Projecting these results nationwide, drivers made a total of 227 billion driving trips, spent ninety-three billion hours driving, and drove 2.8 trillion miles in 2022. The California Department of Motor Vehicles ([DMV](#)) states that “driver distractions are the leading cause of most vehicle accidents or near collisions”. According to a study released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI), 80 percent of collisions and 65 percent of near collisions involve some form of driver distraction. The distraction occurred within 3 seconds before the vehicle crash!

Four types of distractions while driving:

- Visual – looking at something other than the road.
- Auditory – hearing something not related to driving.
- Manual – manipulating something other than the steering wheel.
- Cognitive – thinking about something other than driving.

To avoid distractions while driving, AAA recommends that motorists:

- Put aside electronic distractions. Stow a smartphone away, turn it to airplane mode, or activate “do not disturb” call/text blocking features.
- Prepare for a drive. Set vehicle systems like GPS, seats, mirrors, climate controls and sound systems before hitting the road.
- Groom before leaving the house. Do not use time behind the wheel to fix hair or makeup.
- Stay focused. Be sure to actively scan the road, use mirrors and watch out for pedestrians and cyclists.

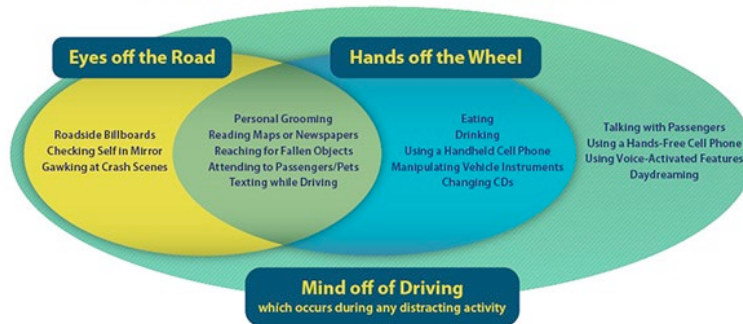


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- Secure items. Properly secure items, children, and pets that can move around the vehicle and distract you.
- Be mindful of passengers. Enlist passengers' help as a "designated texter." Ask them to answer calls, respond to texts and program navigation.

The National Safety Council has put together information [packets](#) that agencies can use to promote safe driving.

Understanding Distraction



ICRMA members should review their agency's vehicle use policy to ensure their employees understand the consequences of poor driving habits. It is recommended that agency employees have a driver training refresher every three years.

Please consult the ICRMA 2024-25 Risk Control Plan for additional trainings and webinars.