

# DISTRACTED DRIVING

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that distracted driving results in more than 5,000 deaths and 400,000, plus, injuries each year. Car accidents also cause more work related fatalities than any other. Unfortunately, it is highly likely that you will be involved in some type of automobile related incident in your career. There is a good chance it will be linked to distracted driving.

While driving, there are some common sense practices that can help you keep focused on the road and avoid distractions. First, turn off your cell phone. You can even place it in an inaccessible location where you will not be tempted to reach for it. You should also be familiar with your state's laws regarding cell phone use and texting while driving.



Should you need to keep your phone on and it's allowable by law, use a hands-free phone or blue-tooth device. You should keep both hands on the wheel at all times. When using the phone while driving, let the person you are talking to know that you are operating a vehicle and be prepared to end a conversation abruptly if needed.

Avoid conversations that involve deep concentration while driving. This may include those that require calculations and/or that are emotionally stressful communication. Never use the phone, even the hands free option, during hazardous weather or road conditions or on unfamiliar routes.

Always keep your eyes on the road. If something other than driving demands your attention, pull over, park the vehicle and address the situation. Exercise extreme caution when adjusting the radio or using a GPS device. You should never glance away from the road for more than 2 seconds at a time.

Additionally, you should never text while driving. Texting is an exponentially growing root cause of traffic related incidents. Reading, writing, or dialing a phone is very, very hazardous.

Keep in mind distracted driving isn't limited to electronic equipment. Your risk of getting in an accident can increase due to a number of other factors as well. This includes eating and drinking (non-alcoholic) beverages while driving.

Pay attention and take a little extra time while operating a vehicle and it might just be the difference between life and death for you and/or someone else.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**What are some forms of distracted driving?**

**What should you do if another task requires your attention while driving?**