Tips for Managing Driver Distractions

Distracted drivers pose a deadly risk to everyone on the road. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that in 2008, the most recent year for which data is available, 5,870 people lost their lives and another 515,000 were injured in police-reported crashes in which one form of distraction was noted on the crash report. Drivers engage in a range of distracting activities.

Here are 10 tips for managing some of the most common distractions.

1. **Turn it off.** Turn your phone off or switch to silent mode before you get in the car.

2. **Spread the word.** Set up a special message to tell callers that you are driving and you’ll get back to them as soon as possible, or sign up for a service that offers this.

3. **Pull over.** If you need to make a call, pull over to a safe area first.

4. **Use your passengers.** Ask a passenger to make the call for you.

5. **X the Text.** Don’t ever text and drive, surf the web or read your email while driving. It is dangerous and against the law in most states.


7. **Prepare.** Review maps and directions before you start to drive. If you need help when you are on the road, ask a passenger to help or pull over to a safe location to review the map/directions again.

8. **Secure your pets.** Pets can be a big distraction in the car. Always secure your pets properly before you start to drive.

9. **Keep the kids safe.** Pull over to a safe location to address situations with your children in the car.

10. **Focus on the task at hand.** Refrain from smoking, eating, drinking, reading and any other activity that takes your mind and eyes off the road.

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