



Motor Vehicle Safety

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death and crippling injury in the United States. Traffic safety laws are important components of vehicle safety, but the most important aspect of vehicle safety is the driver.

General Vehicle Safety

To ensure driving safety, follow these driving practices:

- Never drink and drive. Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs greatly increases your chances of crashing.
- Obey all traffic laws, signs, and signals.
- Respond to dangerous driving conditions as appropriate.
- Maintain a safe distance between your car and any car in front of you. Allow at least one car length for each 10 MPH (e.g., three car lengths if you are driving 30 MPH).
- Keep your eyes moving to avoid fatigue, especially if you plan on driving for a long period.
- Always use your turn signal to indicate your intended action.
- Leave yourself an "out" by either driving in the lane with a shoulder, driving in the middle lane of a multi-lane road, or following other vehicles at a safe distance.

Guidelines For Children

- Every person riding in a car or truck needs his or her own seat belt. Do not let passengers ride in storage areas or on other people's laps.
- Children always ride restrained with a car seat or seat belt and in the back seat.
- Infants should ride in rear-facing car seats until at least 20 lbs (9 kg) *and* at least 1 year old. Do not put a rear-facing car seat in the front seat of a vehicle with an active passenger air bag.
- Children over 1 year old and between 20 lbs (9kg) and 40 lbs (18 kg) should ride in forward-facing car seats.
- Children ages 4 to 8 between 40 lbs (18 kg) and 80 lbs (36 kg) should ride in booster seats restrained with lap and shoulder belts. A regular seat belt won't fully protect a child this size in a crash.



For additional information on Motor Vehicle Safety visit the following web sites:

www.nhtsa.dot.gov

www.safekids.org