



Teen Driving Tips for Parents

Prepare your consequences before the learner's permit arrives!

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teens in the U.S. Establish rules and repercussions for breaking those rules and become comfortable with them. Make them reasonable. Remember, you will both have to live with them.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommends you spell out the rules:

1. Alcohol: Absolutely No Alcohol
 2. Seat belts: Always Buckle Up!
 3. Cell phone/texting: No talking or texting while driving
 4. Curfew: Have the Car in the Driveway by 10 p.m.
 5. Passengers: No more than one at all times
 6. Graduated Driver's License: Follow the state's GDL law
 7. Parental Responsibility: Set your house rules and consequences
- **Before you get in the car with your teen...**
Know the licensing laws and road rules for your state. Although your teen knows everything, have the facts before you get in the car. Read the materials your teen has been given by the DMV and their school. If you are uncomfortable teaching your teen, find another adult you trust to do the job (or hire a professional).
 - **Your teen is behind the wheel**
Remind your teen to take 30 seconds to: check mirrors, adjust seat height and distance from the wheel, know location of dashboard instruments and buckle that seatbelt (93 percent of parents said their teens wear a seatbelt; 39 percent of teens say they don't!).
 - **You're on the road with your teen driver**
Remember those toddler years? Calm, slow, precise instruction and repetition. Pretend you're a pre-school teacher and you don't want her/him to cry or have a tantrum. Start in a parking lot and learn the basics. If you get frustrated and that voice starts to get louder, call it a day and take your kid for ice cream.
 - **Let your teen talk first**
Encourage your teen to tell you what they are planning to do while she/he is driving. When you talk about the sessions afterwards, let your teen present her/his mistakes first. (Most common mistakes teen drivers make - they don't slow down when the driving becomes more difficult; they haven't had enough experience to drive defensively; poor roadway scanning techniques.)

Use every opportunity to expand your teen's driving experience:

- **Do not shy away from inclement weather.** Your teen does not know how far your car will slide when hitting the brakes on wet or icy roadways. When these conditions exist, take them back to that parking lot to practice.

- **We live in an area with many narrow and winding roads.** With minimal amount of speed, a small dip in the road can cause the car to become airborne. Passing on these roads is impossible...obvious to you, but your teen doesn't know that.
- **Same goes for highways.** They are not speedways and also offer challenges (such as extra alertness on a "boring" stretch of road or sharing multiple lanes with a wide array of vehicles) that a local road may not.
- **In adverse conditions, remind your teen:** listen to weather reports, reduce speed, increase following distances, use wipers, don't brake and steer, differences between anti-lock and traditional brakes (don't pump anti-locks), don't be intimidated by other drivers.

Helpful Reminders to Tell Your Teens:

- Don't assume other drivers will give you the right-of-way.
- Pull over to the right when you hear a siren.
- Do not pass a stopped school bus.
- Practice at your neighborhood's most dangerous intersections.
- Let that car entering the highway go first.