

HOME SAFE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Defensive Driving: Protect Yourself and Others on the Road

The holiday season brings increased travel, unpredictable weather, and distracted drivers. Practicing defensive driving is one of the most effective ways to stay safe and protect others. This flyer highlights key behaviors that reduce risk and promote safe driving during the holidays.

Stay Alert and Anticipate Hazards

- Scan the road ahead, behind, and to the sides continuously.
- Watch for erratic drivers, pedestrians, and sudden stops.
- Avoid assumptions—never expect other drivers to follow the rules.

Tips to Stay Alert:

- Get adequate rest before driving long distances.
- Avoid driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or strong medications.
- Take breaks every 2 hours on long trips to stay fresh.

Maintain Safe Following Distances

- Keep at least a 3-second gap between you and the vehicle ahead.
- Increase distance in poor weather or low visibility.
- Tailgating reduces reaction time and increases crash risk.

Tips to Maintain Distance:

- Use the 'one-thousand-one' rule to measure following time.
- Slow down in heavy traffic or when visibility is reduced.
- Never try to 'push' slower drivers—pass safely or wait.

Adapt to Road and Weather Conditions

- Rain, snow, and ice dramatically reduce traction and visibility.
- Adjust speed and braking distance accordingly.
- Use headlights and windshield wipers proactively.

Avoid Aggressive Driving

- Speeding, weaving, and road rage increase crash risk.
- Stay calm and courteous, even when others are not.
- Your goal is to arrive safely—not to 'win' on the road.

Tips to Prevent Aggression:

Leave early to avoid rushing.

Listen to calming music or podcasts while driving.

Don't engage with aggressive drivers—give them space.



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Defensive Driving Works — The Numbers Say So

- 94% of all crashes are caused by human error — defensive driving directly addresses these behaviors. (NHTSA)
- Drivers who complete defensive driving courses are 33% less likely to be involved in a crash. (Gitnux)
- Defensive driving can reduce crash risk by up to 70% and lower insurance claims by 25%. (Gitnux)
- Aggressive driving contributes to 56% of fatal crashes, with speeding as the top factor. (III)
- Distracted driving causes over 3,000 deaths and 400,000 injuries annually. (NHTSA)
- During the holidays, driving is 13.9% more dangerous than non-holiday periods. (ValuePenguin)
- 300 people die annually in drunk driving crashes between Christmas and New Year's. (LegalJobs.io)
- Defensive driving training can reduce distraction-related incidents by 40% and fatal teen crashes by 30%. (Gitnux)

**Let's make it home safely for the holidays.
Drive defensively. Drive responsibly.**

