

When To Pay Attention - The Consequences of Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. All distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety. These types of distractions include:

- Texting
- Using a cell phone or smartphone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a navigation system
- Watching a video
- Adjusting a radio, CD player, or MP3 player

But, because text messaging requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the most alarming distraction.

Key Facts and Statistics

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- According to the Department of Transportation, 3,179 people were killed, and an estimated 431,000 individuals were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving a distracted driver in 2014.
 - As of December 2014, 171.3 billion text messages were sent in the US (includes PR, the Territories, and Guam) every month. **(CTIA)**
 - 10% of all drivers under the age of 20 involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the crash. This age group has the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted.
 - Drivers in their 20s make up 27 percent of the distracted drivers in fatal crashes. **(NHTSA)**
 - At any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010. **(NOPUS)**

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- Engaging in visual-manual subtasks (such as reaching for a phone, dialing and texting) associated with the use of hand-held phones and other portable devices increased the risk of getting into a crash by three times. **(VTTI)**
 - Five seconds is the average time your eyes are off the road while texting. When traveling at 55mph, that's enough time to cover the length of a football field blindfolded. **(2009, VTTI)**
 - Headset cell phone use is not substantially safer than hand-held use. **(VTTI)**
 - A quarter of teens respond to a text message once or more every time they drive. Twenty percent of teens and 10 percent of parents admit that they have extended, multi-message text conversations while driving. **(UMTRI)**

Source: www.Distracted.gov, United States Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration