

**The following text provides comprehensive safe driving tips to reduce the risk of collisions and ensure safety on the road. It emphasizes defensive driving techniques, such as maintaining proper following distance, scanning for potential hazards, and adjusting to traffic conditions. Additionally, it covers specific guidelines for interacting with law enforcement during traffic stops, promoting cooperation and safety for both drivers and officers. Overall, the handbook aims to equip drivers with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate various driving scenarios safely and responsibly.**

**SAFE DRIVING TIPS** The purpose of this handbook is to keep you and others safe. If you obey every roadway rule and regulation, your chances of being involved in collisions will be greatly reduced. However, you can't be certain that other drivers are following every rule and regulation. You should always try to drive calmly and ignore aggressive drivers. It is important that you become a defensive driver. Defensive driving protects you and others from unsafe and unexpected driving situations. Buckle up: Ensure all people in the vehicle fasten their seat belts to help keep everyone safe in the event of a crash. Using a cell phone while driving: Colorado law prohibits drivers younger than 18 from using a cell phone while driving, unless it is to contact law enforcement or the fire department or if it is an emergency. No driver may use a cell or mobile telephone for text messaging while driving unless it is to contact law enforcement or fire department or it is an emergency. Steering: Keep both hands on the steering wheel. The most effective hand positions are 8 o'clock and 4 o'clock or 9 o'clock and 3 o'clock. When turning, the preferred methods are the "hand-over-hand" or "push-pull-slide" methods. Do not turn the wheel with the palm of your hand or let it slide through your fingers after making a turn. Scanning: To be a good driver you must know what is happening around your vehicle. You must look ahead, to the sides, and behind the vehicle. Always look left, right and then left again when turning, driving through or entering an intersection. Scanning helps you see conditions ahead, such as vehicles and pedestrians that may be on or entering the road, warning signs and signs giving you directions. Be sure to look for smaller road users as you scan, including pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists. Look ahead: In order to avoid last-minute braking or the need to turn abruptly, you should look down the road at least 10 seconds ahead of your vehicle (city — one block, open road — half a mile). By looking well ahead and being ready to stop or change lanes, you can drive more safely, save on fuel and help keep traffic moving at a steady pace. Look to the sides: As other vehicles or pedestrians might cross or enter your path at any time, you should be looking for them on both sides and beyond the curb. Look behind: You must check traffic behind you in your rear view mirror every 5 to 8 seconds. This is the only way to know if someone is following too closely or coming up too quickly, and it will give you time to react. You need to check more often when traffic is heavy. It is very important to look behind you when you change lanes, slow down, back up, exit an intersection or drive down a long or steep hill. Following another vehicle: Following the vehicle in front of you too closely limits your vision of the road and does not allow you enough time to react to avoid a crash. Remember to stay aware of the vehicle in front of you and to maintain an adequate distance between your vehicle and theirs. Three-second rule: Under normal conditions, use the three-second rule to gauge how much space you should leave between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. Watch the vehicle ahead of you; when it passes a reference point (such as a mile marker, sign or telephone pole) then count "one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, one-thousand-three." If you pass the reference point before you finish counting, you are following too closely. It is also important to consider weather, road conditions, the amount of traffic and time of day, because the stopping distance required is greatly increased. Adjusting to traffic: Follow posted speed limits and keep pace with traffic in a reasonable and cautious manner to help avoid crashes.

Traveling much faster results in frequent passing, increasing the opportunity for a crash. Driving considerably slower than other vehicles can also increase unpredictability and compromise safety by causing back-ups and more passing situations. Slow Zones: Places where people or traffic gather that require slower speeds and increased attention: • Shopping centers • Rush hour traffic • Schools • Narrow bridges • Parks/Playgrounds • Toll plazas • Residential streets • Rail crossings

**What to Do and Expect When Pulled Over by Law Enforcement:** Law Enforcement officers are responsible for conducting traffic stops when they have reasonable suspicion of a traffic violation or a criminal violation. Being stopped by an officer can be a stressful experience for the 19 Colorado Driver Handbook driver, any passengers, and for the officer, too. Knowing what to do during the stop will help ensure your safety and the safety of others. When you see emergency lights behind you or hear emergency sirens, it is important for you and your passengers to stay calm and cooperate. Remember to:

- Activate your turn signal and pull off or to the right side of the roadway as soon as it is safe to do so. The officer might request you to pull farther off the roadway and away from moving traffic.
- Turn off the engine and any audio devices.
- Stay in your vehicle unless directed by the officer to exit.
- Turn on your interior lights if you are pulled over at night to assist with visibility. Officers may use a spotlight for additional visibility.
- Keep your hands on the steering wheel or in a visible location so they are easily observable.
- Follow all instructions the officer gives you or your passengers. The officer may approach either side of the vehicle. When the officer approaches the vehicle, remember to:

- Lower the corresponding window so you and the officer can better communicate.
- Let the officer know if you have a weapon in the vehicle upon first contact, but do not reach for it or attempt to hand it to the officer.
- Wait for the officer's instructions before reaching for your driver's license or vehicle documents. When conducting the stop, the officer will typically:

- Show their law enforcement credentials if they are not in uniform. If they do not show their credentials, you may ask to see them.
- Explain why you were stopped/ask questions about your trip.
- Ask for your driver's license, proof of insurance, and vehicle registration. If the documents are out of your reach, tell the officer where they are and wait for the officer's acknowledgement before reaching to retrieve the documents. In some cases, the officer may:

- Ask you to exit the vehicle. In this case, keep your hands visible, exit the vehicle, and stand in a location as directed by the officer.
- Impose a sanction such as a warning, traffic ticket which may include a fine, or arrest. The officer will typically explain whatever action is being taken. If they do not, you may ask them to do so. If you have questions, respectfully ask the officer to clarify. If you disagree with the officer's decision or course of action, do not prolong the contact by arguing with the officer. Rather, you may seek to contest the decision in court through established legal channels. Your acceptance and signature on a traffic ticket is not an admission of guilt. However, the refusal to sign a traffic ticket may result in your arrest. If you believe the officer acted inappropriately or have questions regarding their conduct you may request to speak to a supervisor. This is best done as soon as possible after the stop. Following these procedures can help make a traffic stop a safe experience for all parties involved.