Introduction continued

Let us introduce you to our two main characters of this defensive driving course: Peter Parallel and Sally Swift. Both Parallel and Swift are probably like many students of this course: bright, motivated, but frustrated after having a run-in with the law for not driving safely. What will hold true for both students is that they will avoid another run-in with the law by learning the pitfalls to driving under the most recent highway safety and defensive driving statutes and regulations….

Please review the course objectives below first.

**Course Objectives**

Reduce traffic collision involvement - According to the World Health Organization (WHO), road traffic collisions cause over a million deaths and up to fifty million injuries each year worldwide. The impact extends beyond just the individuals involved. This course aims to reduce the risk of being involved in a collision, which can result in financial loss, injury, or death. The term “traffic collisions” is used instead of “accidents” to emphasize that they are preventable and usually caused by driver or vehicular error. The philosophy of the Delaware state agencies that oversee traffic and enforce the laws holds that driving “accidents” can be traced to the driver or vehicular error and are preventable.

Reduce traffic law violations – Completing this course will increase your familiarity with the legal code, enabling you to make informed choices and avoid committing a driving offense. Ignorance of the law is not accepted as an excuse by the court systems in every state, and it applies to traffic laws as well. In order to receive and maintain the privilege to drive, each and every driver is expected to be on familiar terms with the ins and the outs of the Delaware Vehicle Code, as well as local traffic regulations, signs, and speed limits.

Driver awareness and education on topics such as the meaning of traffic control signals, right of way rules, pedestrian duties and rights, proper turning and lane use, laws forvehicle maintenance, against speeding, careless and impaired operating are all essential to driving without committing violations of the traffic law.

Responsibilities associated with operating a vehicle - This course is designed to guide those who participate to accept responsibility for their driving behavior, monitor their actions and reactions when behind the wheel, understand and identify the consequences of continued poor driving habits, and develop a comfortable routine in which driving in a responsible manner is as natural as breathing.

Additionally, the student is reminded that driving a vehicle involves a certain amount of necessary and ongoing vehicle maintenance. Meeting state requirements for emissions testing, vehicle inspection, license renewal and insurance requirements are part of every driver’s job description. The responsibilities of every driver include several physical, mental, ethical, and financial components – in other words, driving responsibly involves the whole person in a commitment to safety on the road.

**What is Defensive Driving?**

Defensive driving is a very broad term, and in fact there are not many standardized definitions for it. The basic intent of the term is to describe an entire method of driving that has the intent of keeping the driver, and everyone around him, as safe and unhindered as possible. It combines a number of techniques and attitudes, all of which combine to create a single method of defensive driving. What these techniques and attitudes are will be covered in this course.

One of the most important things about defensive driving is that it does not assume that the road is automatically safe and that everyone on it is going to be following the same rules. These methods are something extra to carry with you in addition to knowledge of the law and will help you deal with almost any situation. It takes into account bad drivers, bad weather, and to a certain extent, bad luck, none of which are necessarily covered in a standard driver’s manual.

Defensive driving does two things for you – it is your first line of defense when it comes to protecting yourself and others in dangerous and unexpected driving situations. Secondly, it helps you develop strong and positive driving habits, which will protect you during everyday driving situations. The theory goes that if everyone on the road practiced effective defensive driving, there would be almost no crashes every year. Of course, we do not live in such an ideal world, and that in itself is one of the most important facts defensive drivers take into account.

**State of Delaware Insurance Discounts and DMV point reduction.**

By taking and completing this course you will receive a 10% vehicle insurance discount, guaranteed by the Delaware Department of Insurance. All individuals under the policy must take the course for the discount to fully applied, otherwise the discount will be reduced to reflect the fraction of drivers who have taken the course (for example, if two drivers are under the policy but only one takes the course, the discount will be half of 10%, which is 5%).

One hundred and eighty days before the three-year expiration date, you may take a refresher course which will renew the discount and increase it to 15%. This additional discount will still apply even if you complete the refresher course after the expiration date (within two years), but you will lose all discounts until it is complete.

In addition to these discounts, completing the course may result in the application of a 3-point credit to your Delaware driving record. Upon completion of the course, we will automatically inform the DMV of your passing score on the final and will reduce the total point count on your driving record. You will also be emailed a competition certificate immediately, confirming you have taken and passed the course.

**Defensive Driving Portrayed in Popular Culture as Counterproductive**

Imagine any Hollywood movie which includes an action scene, a hero and a villain.

Almost always, the hero is planning a heroic escape “against all of the odds” involving a barrage of explosions, collisions, daring maneuvers and sense of ultimate justice for the pursuing bad guys. As much as we all love to go to the movie theater or read pulp fiction, we should guard against letting our driving habits and attitudes about driving safety be influenced by the heroes we admire, villains we grow to despise. Implicit in the rating system for motions pictures is the disclaimer that most of the behavior displayed in the course of the film should not be attempted by any driver on the road. While it may be perfectly okay for someone to enjoy watching such action suspense getaway scenes, one should have an understanding that this is okay just for the movies, and never for real life.

**Changes in Driving Laws in Delaware in 2024**

What began as a pilot program to incentivize Delaware drivers to purchase or lease electric and plug-in hybrid electrical vehicles, is now an active program to allow for more electric vehicles on Delaware roads. Drivers will receive special rebates to be able to use electric vehicle charging stations at home or work.

**Rebates for the purchase or lease of cleaner fuel vehicles are:**

•       $2,500 for purchasing a new battery electric vehicle (BEV) with a base MSRP below $40,000.

•       $1,500 for new battery electric vehicles with a base MSRP between $40,000 and $500,000.

•       $1,000 for a new plug-in hybrid vehicle with a base MSRP below $50,000.

•       $2,500 for a used battery electric vehicle with fair market purchase price of $40.000 or less.

•       $1,000 for used plug-in hybrid vehicle with a fair market purchase price of $40,000 or less.

**Technology Driven Changes**

When a driver enters a vehicle, the car interior becomes his interface to the world. Car interiors today would be almost unrecognizable to the average driver 50 years ago – more Star Trek than Herbie the Lovebug. GPS systems, video screens, digital and LED dashboard displays, voice activated interfaces and automatic seatbelts all reflect changes in technology that impact the everyday driver and how he relates to the interior driving environment. Most drivers also bring modern technology on board – namely personal electronic devices which have transformed how we communicate but also have added greatly to driver distraction on the road. Laws have been enacted to minimize distraction, such as outlawing the use of headphones, earbuds, and cellphones while driving. Additionally, vehicles are constantly engineered with new features – from power steering, anti-lock brakes and cruise control, to the more recently introduced traction control and cylinder shut off - all of which have an impact on how the driver operates the vehicle. **A close up of a dashboard

Description automatically generated**

Technology continues to impact the driver from the driving environment in how roads are engineered, lit, monitored by cameras and airplanes, and controlled by newly designed traffic control devices and night-glow pavement markings. Law enforcement detects and tests for driving violations using laser and scanning technology and breathalyzer testing. Driving records and licenses are tracked electronically and state-to-state reporting allows a driver’s record to follow them wherever they move.

**Changes in Driving Techniques**

Changes in technology ultimately result in changes to driving techniques. Today's highways and fast-paced traffic demand a thorough knowledge of and use of driving and accident prevention techniques – the newest forms of Defensive Driving. Drivers must be familiar with how to safely negotiate HOV lanes, highway entrance meters, toll booths, engineered exit ramps and cloverleaf interchanges and interwoven sets of multiple high-speed lanes. The Space Cushion, the 3 Second System (where you maintain a 3 second space between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead of yours), avoiding the No Zone of a truck, constant scanning for hazards to avoid, advanced mirror positioning, and collision avoidance techniques have been developed to cope with today’s headlong rush into daily traffic on highways and expressways designed to move millions of vehicles in a day. What an environment!

In another era, proper signaling could be accomplished with hand signals, today they are not recommended unless a vehicle’s electronic signals are temporarily disabled. Today’s employers recognize that newer driving techniques can help save a great deal of money and time for businesses that run on the road, and they invest in extended driver education. Up-to-date and ecology minded drivers know how to operate their vehicle to get the most fuel efficiency by keeping speeds down and accelerating gently. Similar driving techniques apply whether the aim is to reduce vehicle wear and tear, save fuel, minimize pollution, or increase safety and comfort. Another major consideration for today and into the future is the new wilder weather that just doesn’t fit the old models – hurricanes in New York, city-swamping floods and regional blizzards, smoke from ever widening wildfires, larger and more frequent tornadoes, yearly evacuations – all of these require a knowledge of skills for operating in dangerous conditions that simply were not touched on in Grandpa’s Drivers Handbook!**A tornado and lightning striking a lightening bolt

Description automatically generated**

**Reasons for Traffic Laws**

**Safety**

The number one reason traffic laws have developed is to keep you, your passengers and everyone else on the road - including those on two feet and two wheels - safe. The public roads are meant for everyone’s use and enjoyment, and so that commerce can be conducted without incident or interruption. Traffic laws are what facilitate this. The difference between safe and orderly roads and a chaotic mess of honking horns and collisions on every other block is often in the laws that every driver adheres to as they drive. While this might seem like a dramatic example, this is the basic premises behind any law. Certain traffic laws reflecting larger society changes have risen above normal regulations to have a definite impact on public safety – seat belt laws, child restraint laws, impaired driving laws, motorcycle helmet and speed laws are some examples.

**The Circumstances Surrounding Peter and Sally’s traffic tickets:**

It was late Friday afternoon. It was a school day. Opting to meet with friends rather than sit for a close to two-hour bus ride across town, Sally Swift leaped into her purple convertible and launched the car to a start down the main street. Approximately fifteen miles away, Peter Parallel entered a teal sedan as he prepared to visit a friend of his across town.

During her commute, Swift encountered a man riding on a bicycle moving closer to the intersection at Jones and Main Street. Sally instinctively sped up next to the bicycle, nearly colliding with the cyclists and made a sharp cut through the corner.

At the next intersection, Sally approached a jogger starting to cross the intersection at Jones Street, who then abruptly stopped his gate and began walking. A woman and a small child suddenly entered the intersection and began at a sauntering pace to the other side of the street.

An emergency siren was heard coming from behind Sally, and Sally continued driving at her normal pace oblivious to the flashing red lights and woo-ing siren.

Sally was pulled over and given a ticket and told that she could enroll in a defensive driving school to avoid incurring traffic points on her driving record.

About twenty minutes later, Peter was also pulled over after driving in a like manner and ordered to pay the ticket or do traffic school.

With these factual circumstances now described in greater detail, please keep these in mind as you begin the course.

# THE DANGERS OF CITY DRIVING

**1 of 10 This Chapter gives you 7 BASIC Tips on how to drive safely in a city.**

## A Note on the Statutes

The regulations we discuss in every chapter are based on the Delaware Code, Title 21, hence the abbreviation of “**DC21**.” You may look them up yourself at any library in the state or online at http://delcode.delaware.gov/.

The official Delaware tourism website publishes a three-day itinerary for the area. One need not look very far to find Delaware scenic countryside. The simple beauty of the landscape with its rich heritage and traditions. Also included in this list are hazardous traffic zones.

\* \* \*

There are approximately 570,000 licensed drivers in Delaware, and most of them are in the cities, or driving from one city to another. City driving is filled with its own set of dangers, distractions, and regulations. Although the open road has the possibility of sudden hazards and obstacles, city driving has many more potential dangers in terms of types and frequency.

Drivers in the city have to share the roadway with pedestrians, pets, cyclists, the handicapped, buses, taxis, trucks, and other drivers. Furthermore, drivers in the city face distractions from noise, advertisements, posted traffic signs, and people. Here are a number of steps you can take to decrease the danger of driving in the city.

**BASIC TIP # 1 – SLOW DOWN**



**Reduce your speed.**

Recall the frustrations of Peter and Sally. While the only thing they were thinking about was meeting their friends at one of their favorite hangouts, the truth is that this type of narrow focus is risky and dangerous for others on the road.

If a driver really knows why slowing down is safer, they are more likely to do just that. The simple act of giving the friend waiting for you a call letting them know that you will be running late is the smarter choice. In the city, many drivers panic about time and speed up, driving way past their abilities. The decision to slow down can actually be a way of giving you more time to make a series of decisions…or to change to a better course! Here are 4 reasons to slow down:

* You will pick up more details at a slower speed and be able to understand what they could mean.
* You will have more time and room to analyze and predict what could happen.
* You will have more reaction time to actually decide what to do and act on it.
* You give other drivers more time to do the same, very likely preventing a collision.

It is helpful to compare what Peter and Sally actually did under the circumstances to determine what they *ought to* have done. Peter was speeding through a residential area on his way to the bank, without paying close enough attention to the jogger leaving the street corner and preparing to cross the street. Nor was Peter paying attention to the woman and her child slowly pacing near the crosswalk just at the time Peter neared the ATM.

Consider if the woman and child crossing the street decided to turn back, or if the jogger slowed down her pace to a walking pace? Would Peter or Sally have enough time to avoid an awful collision? Would the cars behind Peter have an opportunity to swerve to avoid a rear-end collision?

Simply by slowing down and driving more attentively, one substantially reduces the chances of the worst from happening.

**BASIC TIP # 2 – IT PAYS TO LOOK AHEAD IN CITY TRAFFIC**

Seeing hazards early can give you more time to process that information and make the best decision possible. Do not allow yourself to be trapped in obstacles that could have easily been avoided. Allowing for a safety cushion can help you avoid sudden stops, swerves, or obstacles. Also keep an eye out for the traffic signals ahead; if a light has been green for long, it might change suddenly to red.

In order to avoid making last second moves, you should scan down the road 10 to 15 seconds ahead of your vehicle. A driver needs to look that far ahead to see hazards early. The practice of staring mindlessly into the road ahead and driving on “auto pilot” is very dangerous. It will make you complacent, and you will not be as aware of your surroundings as you could be.

**Check Your Blind Spots**

Scan with your eyes and look near and far. If changing lanes, turn your head to cover your blind spot because they can hide small objects, vehicles, and persons.

The 10 to 15 second scanning rule does not only apply to what is directly ahead. You should “take in the whole scene” and be aware of what may come from the side of the road. Be aware of cars or people that may be in your path by the time you reach them, warning signs, and directional signs.

**Look Behind You**

The “whole scene” is also behind you. Every 2 to 5 seconds, check your rear-view mirrors to be aware of what is behind you. Check the rear-view mirror before changing lanes, slowing down quickly, backing up, or driving down a steep hill. These moves are particularly important because a car may be following too close and might collide with you.

**BASIC TIP # 3 – TRY COVERING VERSUS RIDING THE BRAKES**

It is tempting to drive while sipping a cup of morning coffee, chewing a bagel, and adjusting the knob of the car radio. These distractions, while almost unavoidable for the modern driver, must not interfere with your ability to use the brakes properly in specific situations. You should be prepared to use your brakes with extra alertness in certain situations.

You should be prepared to use your brakes with extra alertness in certain situations. For example, when you drive alongside parked cars, a pedestrian or car may suddenly enter the road front of you. Be alert for things that can come at you from the sides. Cars may suddenly pull out of a driveway or space and children can dart into the street to follow a ball. Furthermore, if you see brake lights or a traffic signal in front of you, be ready to apply your brakes.

While you should be ready to apply the brakes, do not ride not-ride the brakes by resting your foot on the pedal. Although you might feel safer by having your foot there, such behavior is sometimes unsafe. Firstly, you may get a false sense of security by riding the brakes, and you will be less alert and observant. Secondly, cars behind you will begin to ignore your brake lights and be unprepared if an actual emergency occurs. The concept is similar to car alarms that go off all night; you begin to ignore them because constantly hearing them desensitizes you.

**BASIC TIP # 4 – RULES FOR CITY PASSING**

There are certain restrictions to passing traffic on city streets. You may not pass someone on the left if the center line is a set of solid double yellow lines or a solid yellow line with a broken line on the opposite side. This means that even though you can see that no oncoming traffic exists for miles, you still cannot cross the central line. When you are driving on a two-lane road, you are also prohibited from passing in an intersection or when approaching one.

In the state of Delaware, there are some other basic rules to passing that always apply, be it in the city, on the highway, or a rural road. You may overtake on the left only when at a safe distance and then only shall return to the right when safely clear. If you are being passed, you must yield to the vehicle passing and may not increase speed until you have been fully overtaken. It is important to note that unlike some states, Delaware law allows you to pass on the right, but only with care and in certain situations.

If a vehicle is making a left turn, travelling on a road with more than one lane moving in the same direction, or is on a one-way street with more than one lane, that vehicle may be passed on the right side of the road. In fact, if the vehicle being passed is making a left turn, passing on the shoulder is permitted if necessary.

**BASIC TIP # 5 – POSITIONING YOUR VEHICLE**

Driving is much easier when cars have reached a kind of balance, with the drivers reaching an unspoken agreement of position. The phrase “going with the flow” is close to this idea. Although you must be careful not to go over the posted speed limits, you should not drive too slowly; it is dangerous to block the steady flow of traffic. Driving too slowly can be just as dangerous as driving too fast. Avoid side-by -side driving and driving in clusters of cars – this limits your ability to maneuver out of bad situations.

**Remembering the “Second Rules” to Minimize Chances of a Traffic Collision and Help Save Lives**

The National Safety Council advises that all drivers abide by certain “second rules” to minimize traffic collisions caused by distracted drivers. Although these second systems sound alike, it is important to distinguish these systems more clearly.

**The “Two-Second” rule**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administrations recommends that, at most, drivers should glance at a space other than the road ahead for two seconds. After two-seconds, they warn, the driver is distracted at an alarming distraction equivalent to driving the length of “an entire football field with your eyes closed.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

**The “Three-Second” rule or “3-second system”**

Establish a three-second gap between you and the vehicle you are following. Here’s how to tell that distance, you might be surprised at how far this “seems” to be. When the vehicle right ahead of you passes something stationary like a sign, telephone pole, or tree…

Start counting...one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, one-thousand three...



When you reach three, you should be passing that same marker. Try it, it works!

**The “Four-Second” rule or “4-Second System”**

You should apply the four-second rule when it's wet, frosty or when you are towing a trailer.

The four-second rule means that you leave four seconds between you and the vehicle in front. It gives you more time to react and more time to stop. In dry conditions, you should leave a minimum of two seconds; some road safety experts say three seconds is more realistic in dry weather because of the reaction time of drivers before they start braking.

Many factors influence stopping distances including the friction of the road surface, how much standing water there is on the road (i.e. puddles), tire condition and inflation, tire tread depth, tire width, braking effectiveness (e.g. vehicles with anti-lock brakes and electronic brake force distribution can brake more efficiently), air resistance, speed and whether the road is on a gradient (e.g. braking distances downhill are longer and uphill are shorter).[[2]](#footnote-2)

https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/distracted-driving

**Keep a Cushion to the Side**

Keep a space cushion on each side of your car. This can be hard to do, especially in very busy downtown areas, but it can be done. If there is a lane with oncoming traffic, do not drive too close to that lane or “crowd” the center line. The same goes for a lane with parked cars. People forget themselves and open car doors or emerge from them without warning all the time.



Above is an illustration of what is called “The No Zone” – or blind spots. If there is a car to your side, stay out of that driver’s blind spot. If the roadway has multiple lanes, move ahead, or fall slightly behind the car next to you. A good driver will cooperate with what you are doing. That’s the kind of driver you want around you, and it starts with you.

https://www.drivingtests.co.nz/roadcode-questions/car/core/when-should-you-apply-the-four-second-ru/

**BASIC TIP # 6 – CHOOSING A SAFE ROUTE**

Most cities and towns have more congestion during certain times of the day. If you have the option to avoid rush hour traffic, plan your commute outside hours of congestion. You can also plan your commute to avoid some of the main streets that might be the most crowded. Although you may encounter lighter traffic on side streets, be alert because other drivers may have the same idea as you but may be using your chose street as a boulevard.

If you are traveling down a one-way street, be cautious of other drivers. Stay within the posted speed limit and make your decisions in advance. Make sure you are going in the right direction and remember that there may be a driver heading towards you that isn’t paying attention. If you come across another driver coming towards you, honk and pull over to the right as far as possible until they pass.

**BASIC TIP # 7 – SPECIAL PROBLEMS GO WITH CITY DRIVING**

**Parking lot safety**

Did you know that The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that parking lot accidents account for more than 20 percent of automobile crash claims?

In a parking lot, people have their minds on everything but driving. Drivers seem to suspend their good judgment when looking for a parking space. Some consider the stop and yield traffic signs traffic signs such as Stop and Yield (or even lanes!) as optional in parking lots because they are on private property and not subject to a ticket. This assumption is false.

Pedestrians are equally at risk as most parking lots do not have provisions for them which means that they must walk in the traffic lanes, often with small children in tow.

Post office parking lots usually have the highest incidence of accidents. This is because they have the quickest turnover with cars often parked for less than 5 minutes.

The best way to protect yourself is to be aware of everything moving 360 degrees around your car. Watch for cars that might be cutting diagonally across the lot and above all, drive slowly.

Here are precautionary measures drivers can take to ensure safety in parking lots:

* Obey traffic lanes and avoid cutting diagonally across lots.
* Obey traffic signs such as Stop and Yield
* When backing out of a parking space, be mindful of vehicles and pedestrians moving behind you
* Be wary of "runaway" shopping carts.
* Watch out for parents pushing baby carriages and strollers.
* Don't race for a parking space when seeing someone approach their car with keys in hand.

And some advantages to following this advice:

* The doors on your car will be exposed to fewer parking lot dings.
* A car out in the open, not hidden between other vehicles, is less likely to be vandalized.
* You'll find a spot faster which will make up for the time it takes to walk to the store.
* The extended walk will do you good.

In general, drive slowly, use your turn signal, park in safe areas and practice defensive driving skills at all times. By anticipating the actions of other drivers and pedestrians, you may avoid senseless accidents.



**Pedestrians**

You share the road with people on foot and on two wheels. “When traffic-control signals are not in place or not in operation...the driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way…to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk when the pedestrian is upon the half of the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling, or when the pedestrian is approaching so closely from the opposite half of the roadway as to be in danger” **(DC21 4142)**

Pedestrians are restricted to the right half of crosswalks by law, and from walking on public roadways when a sidewalk is available and must walk facing approaching traffic on the outside edge of the street or shoulder of the road when there is no sidewalk. In addition, pedestrians must yield the right-of-way to vehicles when walking on a highway. **(DC21 4146 d)** They also must obey traffic devices directed at them and should not suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and move into the path of a vehicle that is so close “as to constitute an immediate hazard.”

However, to keep yourself from ever being involved in a pedestrian fatality, we strongly recommend that you drive as though all pedestrians have the right-of-way at any time, even if they are in violation of one of the above laws. Even if they are jaywalking! Remember: Pedestrians have the right of way on both marked and ***unmarked*** crosswalks.

An operator of a vehicle is required to exercise *due care* to avoid colliding “with any pedestrian upon any roadway,” and must honk their horn in warning when necessary.

**(DC21 4144)** In legal terms **“**due care” means, “Conduct that a reasonable man or woman will exercise in a particular situation, in looking out for the safety of others. Each juror has to determine what a ‘reasonable’ man or woman would do.”

Keep in mind that you may not ***even temporarily*** block any sidewalk, crosswalk, intersection, or railroad crossing with your vehicle*.* Before entering these areas make sure there is enough room for your car on the other side. If there is not, do not go – even if a traffic signal says it is okay to proceed. **(DC21 4130)**.

Crosswalks do not only appear at intersections. In a school zone, shopping, or residential area, for example, there may well be a crosswalk in the center of the block, rather than at the ends. Check for bicyclists and other hazards before you open a door either on either the street side or next to the curb.

**Emergency Vehicles (DC21 4134)**

It is worth revisiting what our drivers, Peter and Sally, were thinking about as they negligently did not yield to the emergency vehicle driving behind them. What might be considered dangerous and bordering on foolish, both drivers were sending text messages with one hand and driving, or at least attempting to drive, with the other. The lesson to draw from this reckless act is to always be aware of sirens and lights.

Ambulances, fire trucks, and police cars are equipped with sirens and lights. If they are driving with sirens, and flashing lights of red, white, and blue or combinations of these, they have the right-of-way no matter what. This means that they can drive through any signal and even travel against the opposite flow of traffic. When approached by such a vehicle, the operator of every other vehicle must immediately draw as near as possible to the right-hand curb, parallel to the curb. Remain clear of any intersection! You must yield until the authorized emergency vehicle has passed.

The Delaware Code states that even when approaching a stationary emergency vehicle displaying flashing lights, traffic shall proceed with caution and yield the right of way by changing lanes when possible**.** If it is not possible to change lanes, drivers must reduce speed and proceed cautiously.

Evenif you hear a siren somewhere in the distance, safely pull over as close to the shoulder as is possible and stop. Remain stopped until the emergency vehicle is well past you, or you can hear no siren whatsoever.

Failure to yield right of way to emergency vehicles can cause many problems – you may impede help that is desperately needed by injured or dying people, and you may tie up traffic further. You will earn a stiff fine for violating these right of way laws and may lose your license for a period of time.

**Comply with Orders from Police, Fire Fighters, Traffic Officers, and Flagpersons**

Traffic might have to be directed manually in the vicinity of an accident, a public safety or medical emergency, fire, hazardous materials incident, work zone or other natural or man-made disaster. Sometimesthere will simply be a malfunctioning signal that will require manual traffic regulation. If a traffic flagger, police officer, firefighter or any emergency medical personnel gives you an order or signal to stop, slow or change paths you must obey them - even if it is in direct contradiction with posted signs, laws, or signals. You also must obey instructions from school crossing guards and signal persons at road construction sites. Follow any detour signs you encounter – it might seem out of the way, but these signs are posted for a reason – the route is closed to through traffic. **(DC21 4103)**

**Using a Two-Way Left Turn Lane.**

These lanes near the center are set aside for use of vehicles turning left in both directions from or onto the main roadway. They are marked with left-turn arrows for traffic in either direction or by solid yellow lines enclosing broken yellow lines. In some areas, these lanes become a “reversible lane” during rush hours. Be sure you can enter the lane before you do so. Generally, you use these lanes to prepare for a left turn or initiate a permitted U-turn. Never use these lanes for passing, and do not drive in them for more than 200 feet.



**Driving on One-Way Streets**

Dashed white lines separate lanes of traffic on one-way streets, which are also marked with black and white signs with an arrow indicating the direction of travel. To enter, start at the appropriate lane for turning and turn into any lane that is safely open. Make sure you are going in the right direction and remember that there may be a driver that isn’t paying attention heading towards you. Stay within the posted speed limit. If you come across a driver coming towards you, honk the horn and pull over to the right as far as possible. Exit a one-way street in the lane closest to your direction of travel**.**

**Remember! No U-Turns on a one-way street!**

**Which is more dangerous, the city or the countryside?** 

While it is good to be a lucky driver, it is better to be a good driver! The answer as to which is more dangerous comes down to more than a roll of the die. Every driving environment has its dangers and advantages. It all depends on how well people follow the rules of the roads every single day.

Driving is one of the most potentially life altering things we do on a routine basis – a one or two-ton vehicle is the heaviest piece of equipment most of us will ever operate. And nobody, not even the most experienced or professional driver, knows *everything* about driving.

**BASIC TIP # 8 – KEEP IN CONTEXT WHERE CITY DRIVING IS RATED**

**“THE WORST”**

While some cities are notorious for their traffic, they are not the worst by global standards. Chicago has often been labeled one of the worst cities to drive in, according to *Travel & Leisure*, and New York City’s traffic can be overwhelming for tourists. However, when considering the worst driving conditions, factors such as congestion, road discipline, and attitudes toward pedestrians come into play.

Internationally, some cities present even more dangerous driving conditions. For example, driving in cities like St. Petersburg, Russia, and Manila, Philippines, is notorious for extreme congestion and risky behaviors, with statistics showing incredibly high accident rates.

Recent studies show that some of the worst cities for drivers globally, according to a 2024 report by automotive experts, are:

1. **Kolkata, India**: 73% congestion, average speed of 10.50 mph
2. **Karachi, Pakistan**: 66% congestion, average speed of 12.00 mph
3. **Lagos, Nigeria**: 65% congestion, average speed of 9.30 mph
4. **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**: 70% congestion, average speed of 14.50 mph
5. **Mumbai, India**: 69% congestion, average speed of 7.80 mph
6. **Bangalore, India**: 68% congestion, average speed of 13.20 mph
7. **Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam**: 64% congestion, average speed of 13.90 mph
8. **Bogotá, Colombia**: 52% congestion, average speed of 11.60 mph
9. **Mexico City, Mexico**: 70% congestion, average speed of 16.20 mph
10. **Istanbul, Turkey**: 54% congestion, average speed of 11.50 mph

In contrast, some of the best cities to drive in offer smoother commutes, as seen in places like Germany, Switzerland, and the UAE. These cities are often praised for their efficient public transportation systems and low congestion:

1. **Düsseldorf, Germany**: 19% congestion, average speed of 22.10 mph
2. **Dubai, UAE**: 27% congestion, average speed of 34.00 mph
3. **Zurich, Switzerland**: 32% congestion, average speed of 26.30 mph
4. **Tokyo, Japan**: 24% congestion, average speed of 30.00 mph
5. **Basel, Switzerland**: 28% congestion, average speed of 18.90 mph
6. **Singapore, Singapore**: 37% congestion, average speed of 33.50 mph
7. **Dortmund, Germany**: 22% congestion, average speed of 20.50 mph
8. **Vienna, Austria**: 30% congestion, average speed of 27.00 mph
9. **Munich, Germany**: 29% congestion, average speed of 26.50 mph
10. **Calgary, Canada**: 21% congestion, average speed of 28.30 mph

Regardless of where you drive, it is crucial to apply defensive driving principles to minimize the risk of traffic collisions.

❖ **CHAPTER 1 QUIZ**

**First Rotation**

**Choose the *best* answer.**

1. Driving is one of the most potentially \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ things we do on a regular basis.
2. side-spitting
3. mind-numbing
4. life altering
5. time consuming
6. ride sharing

2.) Drivers must obey signals from school crossing guards \_\_\_\_\_.

1. during school hours
2. if they go to that school
3. at all times
4. if it isn’t a school holiday
5. none of the above

3.) If you are traveling down a one-way street, \_\_\_\_\_.

1. watch for traffic going the wrong way.
2. make sure you are going in the right direction.
3. A and B are correct.
4. keep your turn signal on.
5. pull over to the right as far as possible.

4.) The following statement is NOT correct. Pedestrians have a duty to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. cross at an intersection or crosswalk.
2. stay out of bike lanes.
3. yield to vehicles when in a crosswalk.
4. not cross diagonally at an intersection.
5. not make themselves a hazard.

5.) A two-way left turn lane \_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. may not be used for passing.
2. can never be used for U-turns.
3. is set aside for the use of vehicles turning left or right.
4. C and B are correct.
5. can be used to make passing easier.

**Chapter 1 2nd rotating Quiz**

1. Drivers must obey signals from \_\_\_\_\_ at all times.

A:) teachers

B:)street cleaners

C:) school crossing guards

D:) no one

E:) None of the above

2:) If you are \_\_\_\_\_\_, watch for traffic going the wrong way and make sure you are going in the right direction

A:) parked

B:) getting into your car

C:) traveling on a one way street

D:) washing you car

E:) at a gas station

3:) Which statement is correct. Pedestrians have a duty to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A:) cross at an intersection or crosswalk.

B:) stay out of bike lanes.

C:) all are correct

D:) not cross diagonally at an intersection.

E:) not make themselves a hazard.

4:) Do not use a two way left turn lane \_\_\_\_.

A:) for passing

B:) for u-turns.

C:) for vehicles turning left or right

D:) C and B are correct.

E:) To make passing easier.

5:) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is one of the most potentially life altering things we do on a regular basis.

A:) movie watching

B:) sleeping

C:) driving

D:) sitting

E:) sharing

**READING THE ROAD - SIGNS, SIGNALS AND MARKINGS**

**2 of 10 This Chapter gives you 5 BASIC Tips about how you can read signs for safer driving.**

**BASIC TIP # 1 – BE FAMILIAR WITH ROAD SIGNS, SIGNALS AND**

**MARKINGS**

From colored light signals at intersections to mechanical gates at railroad crossings, specialized devices have been put in place to help guide, inform, and instruct *you*, the everyday driver. Traffic signs, road signs, markers, and dividers direct traffic in conjunction with these devices. Unless a police or traffic officer is actively directing the flow of traffic, drivers and pedestrians must follow traffic signs so that traffic will flow smoothly.

As the Delaware Driver Manual puts it very simply, “Traffic signals and signs apply to every person walking, driving, or riding a bike on a street or highway. Failing to heed a signals or sign’s message is a major cause of crashes.”

Despite the enormous numbers of drivers - each with their own schedule and agenda - and ever-increasing distractions on the road and in our cars, varying weather conditions and a host of other factors, the humble road sign and its mate, the silent traffic signal, do a very good job of keeping traffic flowing day in and day out.

There are four different kinds of basic traffic signal: **Traffic Lights, Signs, Arrows, Flashing Signals and Lane Signals.** Here are examples of what these devices tell you to help you read the road like a book...

* Direction of Motion - Regulate what you can do safely, such as stop or proceed.
* Warnings – Let you know that roads may be washed out or inconvenient to drive.
* Information - Traffic slowdowns ahead, detours, or time saving information as simple as a road that will dead end.
* Guidance – Help in determining things like which lane to be in, and for how long.

First, we’ll look at one of the most common places to find traffic signals - the intersection. Any driver approaching an intersection needs to scan for traffic controls, prohibitive signs, and potential hazards, and act accordingly.

##### Traffic Control at Intersections

Traffic lights and right-of-way rules regulate travel through intersections. Drivers must stop for red lights, red arrows and flashing red lights at the marked limit line. If there is none, stop before the crosswalk on the near side. Although traffic lights give instructions that drivers *generally* should immediately comply with, observance of right-of-way rules is also necessary.

For example, if a car has been waiting at a light to turn left, but is still in the intersection when your light turns green, do you have the “right” to just run into them? No. The green light means you can go, but the right-of-way rules say you have to let that car get safely out of the intersection.

Here is another thing that most drivers **DO NOT** know: the color, display, and blink rate (is the light staying the same color constantly or changing?) all have meaning in a traffic light. The pictures will help you learn just how helpful signals really are!

**RED:** (Non-Blinking): A red signal light means **STOP**. If stopped at an intersection, drivers must wait until the signal changes to one that allows traffic to flow again. If a driver wants to make a right turn on a red signal, the driver must first see if there is a “**NO TURN ON RED**” sign posted. If no such sign is posted, the driver may proceed from a stop after he has yielded to any foot or vehicle traffic that may have posed a danger.



**RED ARROW:** A red arrow means **STOP** just as a red signal does, except applied to turns in a specific direction.

The driver may never make a turn in the direction of the red arrow. The driver must wait until a green signal or green arrow appears before proceeding.

**FLASHING RED:** A flashing red signal operates just as a posted stop sign does. The driver must come to a complete stop and observe both safety and right-of-way rules before proceeding on.

**YELLOW:** (Non-Blinking): The yellow signal is a warning to drivers that a red light is about to appear. If a driver sees a yellow light, the driver should exercise caution and slow down to a stop. Remember: a yellow light does NOT mean to speed up to *beat* a red light! A driver may only proceed through a yellow light if they cannot stop safely before the red light appears at their current speed.

**FLASHING YELLOW:** A flashing yellow signals drivers to slow down and exercise special alertness and care. A flashing yellow may indicate a hazard that may appear suddenly or present a special obstacle.

**YELLOW ARROW:** A yellow arrow alerts drivers making a turn that cross traffic is about to begin moving again. Drivers should be prepared to follow the next signal to come, which could be a red arrow, a red light, or a green light.



**GREEN:** A green light means for drivers to **“GO”** but drivers are still obligated to right-of-way rules and must allow any vehicles, bicycles, or foot traffic in the intersection to get through first. If making a left turn on a green signal, drivers must first see if there is enough room to complete the turn without interference from any oncoming vehicle, cycle, or foot traffic. It is important to make sure there is sufficient space before entering an intersection because failure to complete the

turn before the light changes to red can result in a citation.

**GREEN ARROW:** A green arrow means **“GO”** like a green

signal light and indicates that cross traffic is halted by a red signal. Although a green arrow provides drivers with a “protected” turn, drivers must yield to any vehicle or pedestrian approaching that may constitute a hazard at any time during the turning maneuver, until the turn can be made with reasonable

safety.

**TRAFFIC SIGNAL BLACKOUT:** If there are signal lights present, but not operating, an electrical power failure may be the cause. In such cases, drivers must stop at the intersection just as with a stop sign, proceeding by turns with other vehicles as they approach and stop. Stay relaxed – most likely, a traffic

control officer is already on the way to get traffic flowing more smoothly.

##### Red Light Enforcement Program

Delaware’s Red Light Reinforcement Program is the most up-to-date and effective way of monitoring busy intersections for motorists who disobey traffic laws. The program is designed to help change driver behavior by strategically positioning traffic cameras and making Delaware intersections safer. Drivers who run red lights are photographed, their vehicle tag numbers are recorded, and citations are automatically sent via the mail. If you have received a red-light citation but have lost it, or have questions about mailing your payment or viewing the video footage of the violation, call one of the following numbers:

888-335-9273 (10-digit)

844-213-7033 (11-digit)

866-790-4111 (13-digit)

##### The New Bicycle Signal

****

Some cities are adding a new light located near the pedestrian signal; it contains a pictorial of a bicycle within a circle. The pictorial will communicate with a red, yellow, or green light and operate similarly to the regular vehicle signal lights. Cyclists must obey these lights and motorists must be aware of the presence of cyclists.

##### Pedestrian Signals

Pedestrian, or foot traffic, is controlled by special signals posted near the traffic lights. It’s all one big family. Pedestrian signals work with words **“WALK”** or **“DON’T WALK,”** or with pictures of a **“WALKING PERSON”** or a sound recognized for those who are blind or have visual impairments. It’s all a way of telling pedestrians that it is legal to start crossing.



A **“RAISED HAND”** is just the opposite, for telling pedestrians that it is **NOT** legal to start crossing the street. The ‘blink rate’ also communicates a message; a flashing signal tells pedestrians not to start crossing but they may finish crossing the intersection. A steady **“RAISED HAND”** tells pedestrians that crossing vehicle traffic is about to receive a green signal. If there are no pedestrian signals, pedestrians must obey the red, yellow, and green signal lights for vehicles.

**HAWK Signals**

**HAWK** (High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk) signals are a special type of pedestrian signal used primarily at mid-block crossings or intersections where there are no traffic lights. These signals are designed to improve pedestrian safety by controlling vehicle traffic. When activated by a pedestrian, the **HAWK** signal goes through a sequence of phases that first shows a flashing yellow, then a solid yellow, followed by a red signal for drivers. This alerts drivers to stop for pedestrians who are crossing. Once pedestrians have safely crossed, the signal changes back to dark, indicating that drivers can resume normal traffic flow. **HAWK** signals are often used in areas with high pedestrian traffic, such as near schools or busy shopping areas, and are especially useful in places where traditional traffic signals might not be present or necessary.

**BASIC TIP # 2 - UNDERSTAND THE COLORS AND SHAPES OF TRAFFIC SIGNS**

##### The Colors and Meanings of Pictorial Messages

Color plays a large part in our society and certain colors have meaning most all of us are familiar with:

* **RED**, **BLACK** or **RED** on **WHITE**: Indicates that you must Stop, Yield or that there exists a prohibition of a sort.
* **GREEN:** Guides permitted directional movement; provides place names and
* distances.
* **YELLOW:** Serves as a warning.
* **ORANGE:** Indicates Construction or Maintenance. This color serves as a warning, and gives guidance as to what is expected of you approaching.
* construction and/or maintenance zones.
* **BLUE:** Indicates Motorist's Services.
* **BROWN**: Indicates Public Recreational or Cultural interest guidance.

##### Shapes

* **OCTAGON: STOP**
* **TRIANGLE: YIELD**
* **ROUND: RAILROAD CROSSING**
* **VERTICAL RECTANGLE: REGULATION POSTED**
* **PENTAGON: SCHOOL**
* **PENNANT: NO PASSING**
* **DIAMOND: WARNING**
* **HORIZONTAL RECTANGLE: INFORMATION AND GUIDE**

##### Traffic Signs

Traffic signs use shape, pictorials, colors, and words to communicate their message. Signs have varied purposes; they serve to control traffic, communicate warnings, provide guidance, and express traffic regulations.

**STOP SIGN:** This sign appears as an eight-sided, red sign with the word “**STOP”** inside it. This purpose is self-explanatory, and drivers are obligated to make a full stop before crossing the white “limit line” or entering the crosswalk. If a crosswalk or limit line is not marked on the pavement, drivers should stop at the corner.

**STOP** signs also appear on divided highways in order to

allow some safety for crossing or turning vehicles. These **stop** signs are usually placed on a cement island or dividing strip so drivers should take notice that stop signs are posted in places other than street corners. Some things this sign **DOES NOT MEAN**: yield, squeak by, or think that there’s no one around so don’t bother coming to a complete and full stop before the solid white line on the road.

**YIELD SIGN:** This sign appears as a three-sided, red sign with an internal red border and the word **“YIELD”** in the center. This sign alerts the driver to slow down and to be prepared to stop. If there is cross foot or vehicle traffic, the

driver must let them pass before proceeding.

**DO NOT ENTER:** A sign in red and white indicates a regulation that must be followed. Failure to obey these regulatory signs is very dangerous. Often these signs are situated near freeway ramps and can include **“DO NOT ENTER”** or **“WRONG WAY.”** Failure to obey these regulatory signs can result in driving against oncoming traffic.

**WRONG WAY:** This sign is usually found where traffic is headed against our intended path on freeways and one-way streets. If you think about it, it’s all too common to need this sign (or else we would not recognize it). When you see this sign do not look for a “convenient” place to

turn around. There’s no such thing when you see this sign! Quickly and safely get off the road *immediately*. It could already be too late.

A regulatory sign with a red circle with a diagonal line through it always means.

**“NO.”** To illustrate, an arrow that curves 180 degrees within this red circle indicates

**“NO U-TURN.”**



Sometimes there may be several signs telling you the same thing. Here’s an example, using three types of signs. Do you see the differences and the similarities? Two of the signs shown below indicate that the cement divider on the road is about to end. Soon, drivers will be on a two-way road without a protective barrier to keep apart opposing traffic.

Do you see the differences and the similarities? The first indicates a

divider is approaching and you should keep to the right, while the second indicates the divider is about to end.



##### Warning Signs

Many road signs warn you to slow down or watch for hazards ahead. Most warning signs are yellow and shaped like a diamond. Some common warning signs are shown below. All warning signs must be obeyed.

Crossroads. Another road crosses yours up ahead.



There is a traffic signal ahead.

There is another lane of traffic merging with your lane ahead.



There is a pedestrian crosswalk ahead and the pedestrian has the right-of-way.



Specific directions on how to merge when a lane is ending.

The right lane ends ahead.

You may turn left when the light is green. Yield to traffic, which is close enough to be a hazard.

**A Circular Sign** with the letters **“R R”** alerts drivers of an

approaching railroad crossing ahead. There are specific driving regulations that apply at railroad crossings.

**A Five-Sided Sign** tells drivers that a school is



nearby. Specific driving regulations apply in school zones because of the danger of children darting out into the street. The newer fluorescent yellow-green signs may also be used.

 When you come to this sign, slow down to be ready to stop at the

stop sign ahead.

**Regulatory Signs: Black and white signs that must be followed.**

These signs are used to regulate the flow of traffic, including speed. Drivers may be alerted of specific, potentially dangerous road conditions through the use of four-sided, *usually* square shaped, regulation signs such as these:

**A black lettered, white crossbuck can mark railroad crossings,**



**sometimes with a gate that closes and flashing lights.**

At some crossings, along with the crossbuck sign, you will see side-by-side lights that will flash when a train is approaching. When the lights are flashing, you must stop. At some crossings there is also a crossing gate that will lower when a train is coming. Do not drive around the gate. Some crossings also have a bell that will sound. Do not cross until the bell has stopped.

**At a railroad crossing that DO have** electrical or mechanical warning devices indicating an oncoming train you should REDUCE YOUR SPEED to about 15 mph and come to a complete stop between 15 and 50 feet from the railroad crossing. If there is no indication of an oncoming train from a device or flagman, you should proceed cautiously over the crossing.

**At railroad crossings that DO NOT have** electrical or mechanical warning devices, REDUCE YOUR SPEED within 100 feet of approaching the crossing to about 15 mph. Check to see that you have a clear and unobstructed view of any traffic that may be on the railway for a distance of at least 400 feet in both directions before crossing. If it is necessary to come to a full stop to check up and down the tracks, do so. If you have any doubt as to whether you are hearing a train coming, stay put until you can confirm that a train is not on the tracks headed towards you.

Crossings with more than one train track often will post a sign that shows the number of tracks. These signs warn you that there is more than one track and there may be more than one train crossing. If you come to a railroad crossing without a number-of-track sign, it is important that you always check if there is more than one track before crossing.



* Don’t shift a manual transmission while crossing the tracks.
* Tracks marked “Exempt” are not used often but may still be in use occasionally. Check all tracks regardless of these signs.
* If there is more than one set of tracks, don’t start as soon as a train passes. Wait until you have a clear view in both directions as another train might be coming.

**Guide Signs**



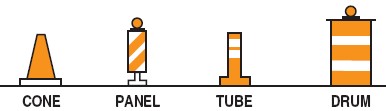
That familiar term “Gas, Food & Lodging” has entered popular culture in movies and songs - perhaps because guide signs can be such a welcome sight when we are on the road. Guide signs can be blue, green, or brown. They inform drivers that travel services are available nearby.



##### Construction and Maintenance Signs



These signs signal for you to slow down and be aware that workers are in the vicinity. Accidents in work zones are common and are caused by a variety of reasons including inattentive drivers, drivers who are unsure of work zone traffic control directions, and those who drive aggressively through work zones to minimize delay. When you see diamond and square shaped warning signs such as these, orange cones and “road work” or “detour” signs, you know that you will be asked to slow down soon and possibly obey signals given by hand by work zone personnel. Barricades, vertical panels, drums, cones, and tubular markers (like those illustrated below) are the most commonly used devices to alert drivers of any unusual or potentially dangerous condition in highway and street work areas and to guide drivers safely through work zones. At night they are often equipped with flashing or steady burn lights for improved visibility. Remember: fines in work zones for traffic infractions are always doubled.

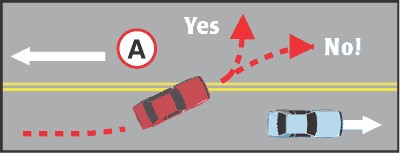


So far, this has been a discussion about traffic safety signs and devices, mostly above ground at eye level. Now we’ll talk about markings ON the ground such as pavement and curb markings.

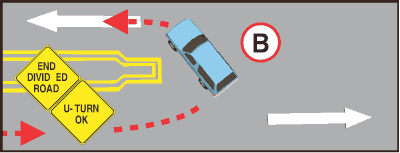
**BASIC TIP # 3 - KNOW ROAD AND CURB MARKINGS**

Imagine trying to drive without any road markings! And yet, we pretty much take these all-important safety devices for granted - until we can’t see them, such as in snow or fog.

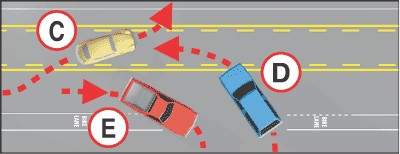
Pavement markings form lanes on the road: they are colored white or yellow, and form either a broken or a solid line. The color and the type of line have both purpose and meaning. As a general rule, the **YELLOW CENTER LINE** marking divides the road in two for traffic going in opposite directions. **A SOLID YELLOW LINE NEXT TO BROKEN LINES** means that passing is allowed on the side of the broken line only.



**DOUBLE SOLID YELLOW LINES:** As illustrated by **(A)** above, one set of solid yellow lines separate opposing directions of traffic on a two lane roadway. Since traffic on the opposite side of the lines will be coming towards you, drivers may not cross the line in order to pass a vehicle. However, a solid double yellow line may be crossed to make a left turn or to make a permitted u-turn.



**TWO SETS OF DOUBLE SOLID YELLOW LINES:** As illustrated by **(B)** above. **If TWO SETS** of solid **DOUBLE** yellow lines are spaced two or more feet apart, drivers are to observe these road markings as a **SOLID WALL**. Unlike the closely spaced solid double yellow line, drivers are not allowed to cross this “wall” to make a left turn. Furthermore, drivers are not allowed to drive on or over these markings and they are prohibited from making U-turns over them. Drivers are only permitted to cross at plainly marked openings.



**TWO-WAY LEFT TURN LANE:** As illustrated by **(C)** and **(D)** above, the center lane separates opposing directions of traffic in the middle of a two-way street and provides a safer way to make left turns or U-turns. This center lane must be used before making these kinds of turn when they are present. This lane is marked on both sides - each side has an inner yellow line that is broken, and an outer yellow line that is solid. Drivers should only drive for about 200 feet in this lane. The center left turn lane is not a regular lane of traffic so it may not be used for passing. The only time you may drive across this marking (after yielding to traffic) is if you are entering or exiting private property. And if you use the lane, remember to watch out for oncoming vehicles traveling on the same lane.

**SOLID WHITE LINES** are similar to the banks of a stream, marking out lanes going forward in the same direction and containing the roadway on the right side of the road. In poor visibility conditions, they are meant to help drivers “find” the right side of the road and keep on track. They are also meant to discourage lane changes, as

opposed to **BROKEN WHITE LINES.** Lanes separated by broken white lines are

meant to separate two lanes of traffic travelling in the same direction, just like solid white lines, but also allow for lane changes between these lanes.



Besides broken white line markings, there are **WHITE LINES WITH ARROWS**. The arrows are painted on the ground to tell drivers about possible turns. Other messages may be painted on the ground. It is a bit hard to see, but in the picture above the warning “KEEP CLEAR” is painted on the road to warn against stopping in and blocking the intersection.

**THICK WHITE LINES** mark where cars should stop on the road at intersections and stop signs. They also define the area of cross walks. Cars should always stop **BEHIND** any thick white line painted on the road.

**Bicycle Lanes:** Bicycle lanes are narrow lanes of two solid lines that provide bicycle traffic with a “protected” path of travel. The left line of the bicycle lane becomes broken as a corner approaches. Drivers can move into the broken line bike lane before turning right but should not do this more than 200 feet from the intersection.

**Did You Know?**



**Sometimes signals controlling traffic flow are placed other than in intersections.**

**In this case, you should adhere to the signal at the closest crosswalk or**

**intersecting roadway.**

**BASIC TIP # 4 - SAVE YOURSELF A TICKET! KNOW THE COLOR MEANINGS OF PAINTED CURBS.**

The colors of curbs regulate how long drivers can park, the types of vehicles that can park and what kind of drivers may use them.

* **Yellow:** No stopping, standing, or parking.
* **Blue:** Indicates parking for those with disabilities. You must have a placard (window sign) or your license plates must be specially marked in order to park here for *any* amount of time. Often a sign with a blue symbol may be in place, rather than a blue painted curb.

From “Farmland Preservation” to “Animal Welfare” to vanity plates, the DMV offers a wide variety of license plates. A Delaware disabled license plate or disabled veteran’s plate is available to those who have a walking impairment or movement disability, which does not allow them to walk 200 feet without stopping to rest - or if they are on portable oxygen, cannot walk without assistance from a crutch or brace, or have a serious lung, heart, arthritic, neurological or orthopedic condition. Women recovering from childbirth also can qualify for a temporary placard. If you drive out of state, your disabled placard will be recognized, and Maine recognizes the handicapped placards and plates of other states.

##### Disabled License Plates and Placards

Senate Bill 236 was passed by the Delaware General Assembly and signed into law on July 17, 2024. This new law brings changes for people with special license plates or parking placards for disabilities. Here's an overview of the key updates:

1. **Renewing Special Plates or Placards:**  
   People with permanent disabilities no longer need a doctor’s certification to renew their special license plate or parking placard. Instead, they must submit a written statement confirming that they still have the disability and need the plate or placard for the same reasons as before.
2. **Physician’s Signature:**  
   A physician's signature is no longer needed when renewing a special license plate or placard for people with permanent disabilities.
3. **First-Time Application:**  
   When applying for a special license plate or parking placard for the first time, the form must still be signed by a licensed doctor (as outlined in Chapters 17 or 19 of Title 24).
4. **Placard Validity:**  
   Disabled placards are valid for 8 years.
5. **Eligibility for a Special Plate or Placard:**  
   To get a special license plate or placard for the first time, the applicant must meet one of these conditions:
   * Cannot walk 200 feet without resting.
   * Cannot walk safely without help from a cane, crutch, brace, prosthetic device, wheelchair, or another aid.
   * Has severe lung disease or uses portable oxygen.
   * Has a serious heart condition (Class III or IV) according to the American Heart Association.
   * Has a disability that severely limits their ability to walk due to arthritis, neurological, or orthopedic conditions.

**Note:** Applicants who are 80 years or older only need to show proof of age to get a placard.

1. **Vehicles Eligible for Special Plates or Placards:**  
   Special plates or placards apply only to passenger cars, pickup trucks, motorcycles, or any vehicle with a gross weight of 14,000 pounds or less.
2. **Number of Plates and Placards:**
   * One special license plate is allowed per vehicle.
   * One placard is issued initially. If you do not have a special license plate, you can request an additional placard.
   * If you qualify for a special plate, you may also apply for one permanent parking placard.
3. **Use of the Placard:**  
   The person with the disability must be in the vehicle (either as the driver or passenger) when using the special parking spaces. The placard must be removed from the rearview mirror when the vehicle is in motion.

**BASIC TIP # 5 - UNDERSTAND THAT SPECIAL STOPS CAN BE REQUIRED**

Special lanes can pop up anywhere a special event, holiday parade or other important entertainment event takes place. For access to and from special events, a special lane is sometimes created out of an entire street or alternatively, a lane or two of a street, in order to enhance and control high density traffic.

Everyday situations in which a special stop is going to be required is at railroad crossings and around school buses.



**Railroad and Train Crossings:** When drivers approach signs warning them of an approaching railroad crossing, they should be ready to stop. Look and listen for trains in both directions and cross tracks only when there is enough room to completely clear them and drive beyond them.

Make sure to **stop** *at least* 15 feet in front of the crossing guard when:

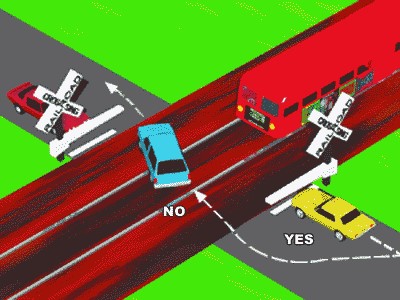
* You HEAR the wheels or horn, or bell of a train close by, or
* You SEE a train on its way, or
* A person or signal of any kind WARNS that a train is coming.

Drivers should never stop on railroad tracks - trains are very fast with literally ***tons*** of

weight behind them, and they cannot stop to avoid a collision. Even a “minor” collision with a train is a disaster for everyone involved.

|  |
| --- |
| **Did You Know?**  **If your car stalls on the tracks and you can see or hear a train coming, don’t hesitate, get out and run diagonally away from the tracks in the direction of the oncoming train. (This is so that debris from the collision will have the least impact on you.)** |

Also, be aware that drivers of trucks conveying hazardous materials are required by federal regulation to stop at all railroad crossings to check for trains before proceeding. Be prepared to stop – even if traffic signals don’t indicate that the driver has to do so - if you are following such a vehicle and you approach railroad tracks.



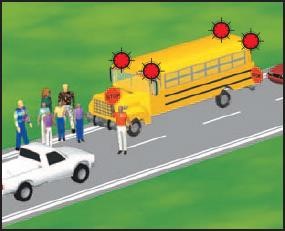
**NEVER go around or under any closed railroad gate.**

The fines for running around flashing red lights or a crossing gate at a railroad crossing have become quite substantial, and the offense will put points on your driving record. It is certainly not worth tempting fate to receive this kind of expensive ticket.

**School Buses:** School buses are unique in traffic laws, as in many respects they count as moving traffic signals. They are tasked with transporting school children of various ages to and from school, and as many of us know, children are not the most predictable people around. They are prone to emerging from unexpected directions and doing thing like running into the street to make sure they catch the bus. Because of this, extreme caution is required of drivers when a school bus is operating. They are equipped with special light systems to warn drivers when they are obligated by law to stop. When drivers approach a school bus that has flashing yellow lights, it means that in approximately 10 seconds the bus will be loading or unloading children. Once it is stopped, it will display red stop lamps as it loads and unloads pupils.

When this occurs, Delaware law states that you MAY NOT pass the school bus until its warning lights have been turned off and the bus is in motion again.

Even if the bus is on the other side of the road, drivers must stop if they are on an undivided roadway. O***nly*** drivers on a divided highway or multiple-lane highway do not need to stop upon meeting a school bus that is on the opposite roadway, but they should drive with increased caution anyway. **(**A multiple-lane highway is any highway that has two or more lanes of travel in each direction.**)**



### Reading the Road Better with a Free Travel Guide

This chapter has been all about reading the signs, signals, and other devices on the road. Since Delaware is at the very heart of the Mid-Atlantic region, it is never far from anything happening on the Eastern Seaboard. Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey are in easy reach, and New York and Washington DC are just a couple of hours away by car. Within the state, Delaware has so much to offer – cultural festivals, performing arts, museums, sports events and points of interest range from “Chateau Country” to Bethany Beach. To help you get there, the State of Delaware offers a free Travel Guide. Just call them at 1-866-2-VisitDE. You can also sign up to receive the packet by mail at www.visitdelaware.com/visitorguide.html.

### The Lighter Side of Road Signs

Road signs are used all over the world to communicate through symbols, colors and shapes, with some variations from country to country depending on what hazards may exist. The following is a collection of some of our favorite road signs from different parts of the world. Some are just puzzling. Some are pictures worth a thousand words!



❖ **CHAPTER 2 QUIZ**

**Choose the *best* answer.**

1.) If \_\_\_\_\_ are present but not working, then the driver must use the intersection as a four-way stop and must yield to all vehicles to the right.

1. cars
2. fire hydrants
3. signal lights
4. speed bumps
5. curbs

2.) The purpose of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is to serve as traffic control, communicate warnings, and to express traffic regulations.

1. brakes
2. U-turns
3. seatbelts
4. traffic signs
5. cell phones

3.) A green curb means that the driver may park for a short time, specified by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. police
2. a sign, and/or time period painted on the curb.
3. the driver
4. parking meter
5. gas meter

4.) A circular sign with the letters \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ alerts the driver of approaching railroad crossing.

A. Approaching railroad crossing.

B. Rough Road conditions

C. Road construction

D. None of the above

5.) If the lights are flashing red on a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, drivers must stop and wait until the lights stop flashing.

1. passenger car.
2. school bus
3. traffic light.
4. flash light
5. plane

**2nd Chapter 2nd rotating quiz**

**1:)** **You can make a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on red, provided you have first stopped completely, and you have checked to make sure there is no oncoming traffic.**

A:) left turn.

B:) U-turn

C:) 3 point turn

D:) right turn.

E:) None of the above.

**2:)** **If \_\_\_\_\_ are present but not working, then the driver must use the intersection as a four-way stop & yield to all vehicles to the right**

A:) cars

B:) fire hydrants

C:) signal lights

D:)speed bumps

E:) curbs

**3:)** **The purpose of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is to serve as traffic control, communicate warnings, and to express traffic regulations.**

A:) brakes

B:) u-turns

C:) seatbelts

D:) traffic signs

E:) cell phones

**4:)** **A green curb means that the driver may park for a short time, specified by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

A:) police

B:) a sign, and/or time period painted on the curb.

C:) the driver

D:) parking meter

E:) gas meter

**5:)** **A circular sign with the letters \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ alerts the driver of approaching railroad crossing.**

1:) "R R"

2:) "A R R"

3:) "R R A"

4:) "I R S"

5:) "A P"

**INTERSECTIONS… WHERE PEOPLE MEET!**

**3 OF 10 This Chapter gives you 6 BASIC Tips on How to Handle Intersections and Turning.**

**BASIC TIP # 1 – BE AWARE AT INTERSECTIONS**



Almost one out of every three car collisions is at an intersection. The general rule is that intersections are more dangerous than other areas of the road. Why? The dangers are fairly obvious – lanes of traffic are crossing, vehicles turning, drivers changing speeds, pedestrians trying to crossroads and visibility may be less than ideal.

Intersections are the designated places in the roadway that allow for traffic to cross and for the meeting of two or more streets. A roadway can join streets, side streets, freeway entrances, and driveways. Sometimes these intersections have control devices that regulate the flow of traffic, or they may just depend on smart drivers to be courteous and safe. You need to know that there are two basic types of intersections: 2 basic types of intersections: controlled and uncontrolled. controlled and uncontrolled.

**BASIC TIP # 2 – UNDERSTAND CONTROLLED AND UNCONTROLLED INTERSECTIONS**

Let us first look at the most obvious type of intersection— the *controlled intersection.*

#### Controlled Intersections

Most intersections are regulated by traffic signs, signal devices or even human traffic control. All of these indicators must be obeyed to avoid collisions with cross or oncoming traffic. When you want to go through an intersection with moving cross traffic, there must be enough room to get all the way across the intersection and past the wide white limit line on the other side. Traffic crossing your path should never have to stop for you. Generally, a good amount of space is half a block on city streets and twice as much space on the highway.

If you are trying to make a turn, use good judgment to determine if traffic is moving fast enough for you to enter the intersection and finish the turn. If traffic is backed up or moving intermittently and you enter the intersection anyway, you will probably end up sitting there blocking other traffic while the stop light changes. You can get a ticket, not to mention a good deal of ill will and a chorus of honking horns directed at you. Just exercise some restraint and don’t enter a “crowded” intersection.

**YIELD SIGNS:** This is always a three-sided sign, which alerts the driver to slow down and be prepared to stop. Other cross traffic has the right of way, so the driver at a yield sign must slow down and stop, if necessary, before the wide white line, checking in the direction of oncoming traffic before proceeding through the intersection.

**STOP SIGNS:** This familiar eight-sided, red sign with the word **STOP** inside it simply means that drivers are obligated to make a full stop before crossing the white “limit line” or entering the cross walk. If there is no limit line or crosswalk, you stop before the intersecting roadway – the corner. **STOP** signs also appear on divided highways in order to allow some safety for crossing or turning vehicles.

**TWO-WAY STOP SIGNS:** Some intersections and divided highways may have two way stops, or even 3 way stops. If drivers are opposite each other, they should proceed through the intersection after stopping fully and checking in all directions for oncoming traffic. If a driver wishes to turn, they must stop, signal, and yield to any oncoming traffic.

#### THREE AND FOUR WAY FOUR-WAY STOP SIGNS: These intersections have

specific right-of-way rules. The first driver that has come to a complete stop at the intersection has the right of way. If two or more drivers come to a four-way stop at the same time, the driver to the right always has the right-of-way.

**TRAFFIC LIGHTS:**If there is an intersection controlled by a traffic signal and your light is red, stop at the wide white marking – the limit line or the crosswalk. If there is none, stop where a limit line or crosswalk would be marked – in other words, stop before the entrance to the intersection. Never stop in a crosswalk.

**Red Light:** The only time you move at a red light might be if you are legally allowed to make a right turn after coming to a complete stop and allowing any pedestrian traffic to complete their crossing. You must check for oncoming vehicles from all directions as well. Right turns on red are not always allowed - make sure there are no posted signs that prohibit it.

**Yellow Light:** If you are coming up on a yellow light, keep in mind that you should not speed up to “beat the red.” The yellow light might stay on for different lengths of time at different intersections. Remember that cross-traffic may be approaching an intersection expecting their red light to turn green and may cross the intersection without stopping. Drivers expect cross-traffic to slow down and stop at a yellow, so it is important to do so. Prepare to slow down and stop at any red, even if you think it might turn green before you approach it.

**Green Light or Arrow:** A green light or arrow means "GO." A green arrow requires you to turn in the direction the arrow is pointing after you yield to any vehicle, bicyclist, or pedestrian still in the intersection. The green arrow allows you to make a "protected" turn. This means oncoming vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians are stopped by a red light as long as the green arrow is lighted. When oncoming traffic is not stopped by any human or signal device, it is considered an “unprotected” turn. Some intersections will have both unprotected and protected turns – i.e. green lights and green arrows.

**HUMAN TRAFFIC CONTROL:** At times you may encounter a situation where manual traffic regulation is necessary by Traffic Control Officers, Police, Firefighters, Road Workers, and School Crossing Guards. In some cases, such as School Crossing Guards and Traffic Control Officers, certain intersections may be manually controlled routinely at set times. You must obey the signals to stop or proceed given by these personnel, even if it is in direct contradiction with posted signs, laws, or signals.

|  |
| --- |
| **Did You Know?**  **At a "T" intersection, vehicles on the “through” road have the right-of-way.** |

#### Uncontrolled Intersections

When an intersection does not have a **STOP** or **YIELD** sign, be ready to stop anyway. Being ready to stop involves keeping an eye out for other vehicles, and slowing down if there is a possibility that your paths could intersect. Cover your brake pedal with your foot. If two cars enter an uncontrolled intersection at the same time, yield to the car on your right. **(DC21 4131)**

According to the Delaware DMV, “Motor vehicle laws of Delaware and other states do not give anyone the right-of-way. The law describes who is to yield the right-of- way. When you can prevent a crash by yielding the right-of-way, regardless of who was supposed to yield, it is of course the right thing to do!”

The next most important rule of thumb is to be courteous and safe. Even though you may have the right-of-way, the law may still hold you partly to blame if you see that a collision may happen, and you do not back down. In other words, “right of way” is not always right.

Some intersections, especially in rural areas or open highways, do not have a traffic control device or signs. This can be a real surprise to people from urban areas, especially if they do not know the area, or are lost. When approaching an uncontrolled intersection, make sure you can see approaching traffic from the front and sides, and if necessary, slow down. Safety is especially important here, and you should never proceed unless you **SEE FOR YOURSELF** that it is safe. You become, as it were, your own traffic light!

Crossing an uncontrolled intersection at a divided highway or rural interstate requires that you judge accurately:

* The time it will take to execute your maneuver.
* The speed and distance of other vehicles
* An appropriate gap between traffic to accommodate your maneuver.

If you are turning left, you must yield and give the right-of-way to all vehicles on the highway coming from the opposite direction close enough to be dangerous. You may turn only when it is safe to do so.

#### Scan on Through (to the Other Side)

Always scan, or look attentively around, for things that can cause a collision in any intersection, but especially at uncontrolled intersections. Too many people stop looking once they are in motion, while there is still half the risk! Unlike making a turn, there is also too often a temptation to speed through the light when going straight. Resist the temptation to speed. Following the speed limit will decrease the risk of a serious collision, limit damages, and save you from a very expensive ticket.

#### Roundabouts (DC21 4121)

Traffic circles or *roundabouts* are becoming more commonly used in Delaware instead of signals or 4 way stops at intersections of heavily traveled streets and roads and when traffic flow can be optimized by them. Even if a complete stop must be made prior to entering a roundabout, the wait will likely not be as long as a wait at a traffic signal would be. “Roundabouts reduce the need for direct left turns, which are the major reason for intersection crashes,” says the Delaware DOT.

Common in Europe and Australia, roundabouts can seem quite mad-cap or even dangerous to first timers, but after an adjustment most consider the roundabout an improvement over signs or signals, both in terms of time and cost to the local government. According to highway officials, “Studies show a roundabout can reduce the number and severity of crashes at an intersection, compared to intersections controlled by stop signs and traffic signals.” Recently DelDOT has been working with farmers to build roundabouts that will accommodate farm machinery and tractor trailers.

All vehicles approaching traffic circles must yield the right of way to vehicles already in the circle and on the driver’s left. Traffic proceeds to the right around the center island. Exit from the roundabout is then made by making a right turn. If you are going to be turning from a rotary circle within two exits, it is suggested that you should be in the right lane, unless traffic signs specifically direct you into a different lane.

Extreme caution should be used when entering and leaving traffic circles and strict attention to highway signs and pavement markings is necessary. A speed limit is often posted before roundabouts, and, as in any driving situation, safe speeds are encouraged. Drivers should remember that the use of a roundabout is considered a turning movement, and they should use their turn signals accordingly.

#### Blind Intersections and Alleys

Blind intersections are intersections where you cannot see for 100 feet in either direction before crossing. There are 2 types of blind intersections, Controlled and Uncontrolled. **Uncontrolled Blind Intersections** are intersections that ***don’t have*** stop signs, yield right-of-way signs or traffic signals, and visibility is limited ahead. At these blind intersections drivers are required to travel at 15 mph - a speed that allows a sudden stop if other cars suddenly appear. Blind intersections that ***do have*** any of the above-mentioned traffic control devices are called **Controlled Blind Intersections**. Drivers at these intersections should travel at the posted speed limit.

Like school zones, the speed limit in alleys is often 20 mph, but people often race through them anyway. Think back. Have you? Alleys should be treated as long blind intersection, possibly littered with nails, drainage, and trash. People and objects often meander through alley recesses, and alleys often open onto parking areas, sidewalks, and service roads. If another vehicle is coming in the opposite direction, the fit can be quite tight.

Be especially aware that you are usually crossing a sidewalk when leaving an alley – this is where a lot of pedestrians and bicycle riders are hit by drivers. This matter is so problematic that Delaware has a statute that specifically addresses it: “The driver of a vehicle emerging from an alley, driveway, private road or building where there is no official traffic-control device shall stop such vehicle immediately prior to driving onto the sidewalk area extending across any alleyway, driveway or private road and shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian as may be necessary to avoid collision, and before entering the roadway shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles approaching on the roadway.” **(DC21 4165)**

**NEVER DRIVE OVER A SIDEWALK IN YOUR CAR BECAUSE YOU ARE GETTING IN POSITION TO TURN ONTO A ROAD.**

#### Bike Lanes

Always keep a lookout at intersections for pedestrians and bicyclists. As a rule, you should never drive in a bike lane. You may enter or drive in a bike lane:

* To prepare for a turn within a distance of 200 feet from the intersection
* To park where parking is permitted.
* To enter or leave the roadway.

**The Delaware Drivers Manual specifically states, “Bicyclists have the right to use all roads except those from which they are specifically excluded.” This means that they can be on interstate highways, on narrow rural roads, and on busy streets during rush hour.**

**BASIC TIP # 3 – LEFT TURNS**

#### No Left Turns Against RED Lights or Arrows

This may seem obvious to you, but you would be surprised at the number of people who decide the **RED** means something other than **STOP!**

#### Safe Left Turns

The left turn is **ALWAYS** made from the left-most lane **UNLESS** another lane has special turn markings and/or posted signs.

There are two parts to making good left turns: **(1)** As you approach, **BE ALERT** and scan for hazards of any kind (other vehicles, things lying in the road, pedestrians, bicycles, and motorcycles); **(2)** **POSITION** your vehicle closely to the center line--and avoid “cutting the corner” ---stay in your lane throughout the whole turn. Now, **LOOK** around and beyond obstacles in intersections.



When you are turning left, you must yield to vehicles on the same road that are coming from the opposite direction. “Yielding” can feel a lot like surrendering, but it is important not to let this feeling decide how you act. The truth is that yielding is really sharing the road and taking your turn. Obeying this rule means you are being fair and courteous, not submissive. When doing so it is also best to err on the side of caution, not just for the sake of others, but for your own. This means that if an oncoming car is close enough to be POTENTIALLY dangerous or if you do not know how far away is, wait. Sometimes it is impossible to judge how fast someone is approaching, and it is never good to take a chance when multi-ton metal objects are careening towards you.

Many drivers sit in the intersection while the light is green with their left turn signal on, waiting for the opposing traffic to clear before they complete their left turn. The bad news comes when they see the light changing to yellow: bad drivers often speed through the light at this time. Assuming other cars are going to stop is a big mistake.

**DO NOT ASSUME** that you have the **OK** to complete your turn when the light is yellow - the opposing vehicle still has the right of way on a yellow light; you do not!

Sometimes when you want to turn, you will see an approaching driver with the signal on. Never assume that the other driver will turn off before you. The other driver may want to make a turn beyond your position in the road. If you are not careful, they may collide with you. The signal may even have been left on by mistake, and a good driver takes all considerations into account.

**Note:** On a divided highway with a solid line, a driver may check to see that all traffic is clear and proceed across the markings prior to entering private property.

**This is important:** You **DO** have the right of way to complete a left turn IF you are already in the intersection on a red light and are sure that all traffic has cleared.

Here are some good left hand turn rules in intersections:

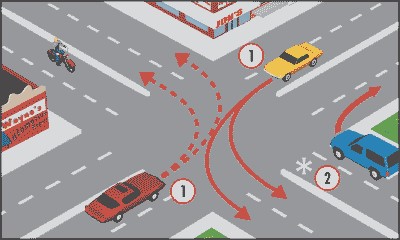
#### Left Turn against a Red Light onto a One-Way Street

Make a full stop for a red traffic light at what is called the “limit line,” the big painted section that engineers created especially for that purpose. If there is no limit line, stop before entering the crosswalk on your side of the intersection, or the entrance to the intersecting roadway. Do not “nose” your vehicle into the intersection. If you have already started through an intersection, keep going. If you have started to make a turn, follow through. Last second changes cause accidents. Don’t turn the wheels before you make the turn. If you are hit from behind, you may be pushed forward into oncoming traffic.

On a one-way street, you may be able to turn left into a left-moving one-way street….if there is no sign telling you not to turn. If the light is red, be very careful that you do not come dangerously close to pedestrians, bicyclists, or other vehicles moving. They will have a green light and may not even be thinking of watching you.

#### Left Turn from a Two-Way Street (DC21 4152)

As indicated below, start the turn in the left-hand lane. You may complete the turn in either lane of the cross street IF it is safe (1). You must use a designated “left turn lane” if there is one, unless signs indicate you can make the turn in an additional lane.



**BASIC TIP # 4 – RIGHT TURNS**

#### Right Turn at a Red Light: (DC21 4108)

Make a full stop for a red traffic light **BEFORE** the crosswalk. If there is no crosswalk, stop before entering the intersection. If there is no sign prohibiting a right turn on your red light, you may do so. Look around carefully for any hazard coming your way. Do not ever assume nothing is coming. If anything, assume something **IS** coming at you.

After starting your turn in the far-right lane, stay in this lane to complete your turn. Right turns are usually made from the right-hand portion of the roadway, unless otherwise directed by lane markings and/or posted signs. Sometimes, signs or pavement markings will let you turn right from a lane next to the far-right lane. Be very careful that your vehicle and the vehicles near you stay in their own lane as you cross over!



If you are turning right, get close to the right edge of the road **(1, 2).** Watch out for bicycles or motorcycles between your car and the curb **(3).** On a right turn, do not turn wide **(4).** Stay in the right lane until you have finished your turn.

You have probably seen this happen: a car is waiting at a light in the right-hand turn lane, and another driver is in a hurry, so they squeeze through next to the curb (sometimes even onto the sidewalk) to get by, making a new mini lane. The best way to avoid the right-turn squeeze is to move into the lane 200 feet before the intersection, get as close to the right curb as possible without menacing.

Motorcyclists and bicyclists should use their turn signals and then make their turn when it is safe to do so. At the same time, if someone manages to pull the big squeeze on you, do not lose your cool - let them go.

**BASIC TIP # 5 – DO YOU U-TURN…OR NOT?**

One of the biggest risks in a U-turn is that sometimes we have an impulse to turn one into a “spur of the moment” event. “Oops. Oh! I’ll just turn around there!” Not only are these types of turns illegal in Delaware, but that’s when those who are most at risk tend to get hurt...pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcycles. And there is always the risk of running into a speeding car.

By statute, Delaware places limitations on U turns. No driver can make a U turn on a curve or a grade which limits their visibility to other vehicles to 500 feet or less. In addition, it is the driver’s responsibility to make any U turn safely and without interfering with other traffic. **(DC21 4153)**

So, IF you make a U-turn,

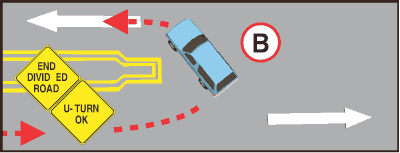
* Try to do it at an intersection.
* Make sure there are no signs forbidding you to do so.
* Always scan carefully for all potential problems: other things, people, or vehicles that might be in that road space suddenly.
* Never make a U-turn on a curve or on the crest of a hill where visibility will be limited.

It is helpful to think in terms of legal and illegal U-turns because a U-turn can be very dangerous.

#### Legal U-turns

At an intersection, it is legal to make a U-turn on a green light or green arrow unless a "No U-turn" sign is posted. Most people do not know that sometimes U-turns are legal, but limited, or “restricted.” It may be that U-turns, for example, are only allowed at certain times of the day, or in order to get to a certain lane. Watch for these posted signs at intersections regulating U-turns.

You can make a legal U-turn only from the far-left lane when you are at an intersection. For safety reasons (especially being able to see and be seen), a U-turn should be made only at intersections or in designated areas. This means NO U-turns in the middle of a block because you are lost!



Sometimes, the road is marked to make U-turns safer, as shown above **(B).** Look to see if there are arrows on the road. If the street does have a center left turn lane, use that for your U-turn.

Remember that residential areas also have more pedestrians, children, skateboarders, loose pets, and view-blocking vegetation. Be extremely careful executing driving maneuvers in residential areas.

In fact, be cautious when making a U-turn anywhere. Be sure there are no pedestrians on your left that are trying to cross the street at the same time! According to the traffic signal or stop sign, you may have the right-of-way, but cautious driving and keeping your eyes wide open can still avoid a collision or injury. Road markings give you an idea about whether a U-turn is legal. You may cross a double white or a double yellow line to make a U-turn, if the turn can be made safely and legally. (As would occur if you are in a center lane.)

#### Illegal U-turns

**BEWARE:** Never make a U-turn on a highway by crossing a curb, or strip of land, or two sets of double lines. Here are more “No U-Turns” please” -

* Where you can’t *clearly* see 500 feet in each direction; because of a curve, hill, rain, fog, or any other reason including your own eyesight.
* Where a "NO U-TURN" sign is posted.
* Where or when vehicles may hit you.
* On a one-way street.
* In front of a fire station. Never use a fire station driveway to turn around.
* In front of churches, apartments, multiple dwelling houses, clubs, and public buildings, other than schools. Letting people make U-Turns in these places would create too many traffic problems.

**BASIC TIP # 6 - SIGNALING FOR TURNS AND STOPS**

You must signal:

* Before making a turn, make sure to use your signal. You are required to signal 300 feet before turning.
* Signaling properly before a turn is vital at night.
* In bright sunlight, your signals might be partially obscured by the glare of the sun. If bright sunlight is making your signals hard to see, use hand signals in addition to your turn signals.
* Unless your turn signals are not working, do not use hand signals only.
* Once you signal, always look over your shoulder to check your blind spot. There may be a vehicle, bicycle, or motorcycle not showing up in your mirrors.
* Turn off your signal if it does not do so on its own. Failing to keep your signals off when they are not needed can cause confusion and misunderstandings with other drivers.
* If there are motorcycles around, remember that they often use hand signals so that others see them better. People on bicycles often use hand signals but unlike motorists, they are able to use an outstretched right arm to signal that they are turning right.

Be sure to check your signals to see if they are working at least once a month – sometimes you can do this easily by looking at your signals reflected in storefronts and office windows.

**As a review, here are your hand signals. Even if it feels silly, it will help to remember them if you try them out as you read along. (DC21 4157)**

**LEFT HAND TURN**



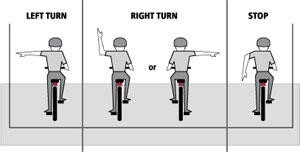
#### RIGHT HAND TURN



**Bicyclists may also use their right hand to signal a right turn. Bicyclists should signal their intent to turn at 100 feet before the intersection. They may signal intermittently if**

**SLOW OR STOP their hand is needed to control**

#### the bicycle. (DC21 4198A)





**1.) You can make a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on red, provided you have first stopped completely, there is nobody signaling across the road and you have checked to make sure there is no oncoming traffic.**

1. left turn.
2. u-turn.
3. 3 point turn
4. right turn.
5. None of the above.

**2.) When approaching \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, be ready to stop or yield, even if there is no posted sign, always keep a lookout for pedestrians and bicyclists, and be courteous, safe, and ready to stop if the light is yellow.**

A. a right turn.

C. a parking lot

1. a school
2. your home
3. an intersection.

**3.) When turning \_\_\_\_\_ at an intersection, you may turn only when it is safe to do so.**

A. right

1. left
2. u-turn
3. All of the above
4. None of the above.

**4.) Make a \_\_\_\_\_\_ for a red light before the crosswalk.**

1. right
2. full stop
3. left
4. all of the above
5. none of the above

**5.) You may not make a U turn on a one-way street, in front of a fire station or when vehicles may hit you.**

A. right turn.

B. left turn

C. 3 point turn

D.U turn

E.None of the above

**Chapter 3 2nd rotating quiz**

1:) You can make a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on red, provided you have first stopped completely, and you have checked to make sure there is no oncoming traffic.

A:) left turn.

B:) U-turn

C:) 3 point turn

D:) right turn.

E:) None of the above.

2:) When approaching \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, be ready to stop or yield, even if there is no posted sign, always keep a lookout for pedestrians and bicyclists, and be courteous, safe, and ready to stop if the light is yellow.

A:) a right turn.

B:) a parking lot

C:) a school

D:) your home

E:) an intersection.

3:) When turning \_\_\_\_\_ at an intersection, you may turn only when it is safe to do so.

A:) right

B:) left

C:) u-turn

D:) All of the above

E:) None of the above.

4:) Make a \_\_\_\_\_\_ for a red light before the crosswalk.

A:) right

B:) full stop

C:) left

D:) all of the above

E:) none of the above

5:) You may not make a \_\_\_\_\_ on a one way street, in front of a fire station or when vehicles may hit you.

A:) right turn.

B:) left turn

C:) 3 point turn

D:) U turn

E:) None of the above

# WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE A LICENSE

**4 of 10 This Chapter gives you 11 BASIC Tips about guarding your driving privileges in Delaware.**

Most of us count on being able to drive. Maybe that’s why we also usually take this privilege for granted. We think we’ll always be able to drive once we get a license. While that may be true for some, it is a mistake to believe that driving is so important, it is a “right.”

**BASIC TIP # 1 – KEEP IN MIND THAT DRIVING IS A PRIVILEGE**

While many people view driving as both a necessity and a right, it is important to remember that operating a motor vehicle is a privilege, which, should you abuse it, may be taken away. has over half a million licensed drivers. As each of them obtained their license, they agreed to follow the rules and regulations set forth by the state - and that is a big commitment. It is very much like a marriage!

By obtaining a driver’s license, you agree to love your fellow driver by being courteous, honor all DMV rules and driving statutes, and obey the indicated speed limits, traffic signs, and uniformed personnel. Whether for richer or poorer, you agree to assume your financial responsibility in case of collision, for as long as you shall drive.

Finally, by entering into this covenant with the state, you agree to engage in a blood, urine and/or breath test if requested by a police officer who has pulled you over on the suspicion of driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Failure to comply will result in a suspended license.

## Elderly Drivers

With an aging population, older drivers are becoming more of a concern. In 2022, older adults made up 19% of all traffic fatalities and 11% of all people injured in traffic crashes in the United States, according to the NHTSA. As a consequence, Delaware has joined with other states in implementing special written, road and vision testing requirements when an older driver has racked up a number of accidents or other points and infractions or has a specific physical condition. In addition, Delaware joins 9 other states in requiring that doctors report medical conditions that might affect an older person’s driving skills.

Easing elderly drivers into giving up their driver’s license can be a delicate process.

To aid the transition, the DelDOT offers some help. DART First State and the Intercounty Bus Service gives reduced rates to seniors. DART First State also includes a paratransit service which provides door-to-door transportation for eligible senior citizens. This service operates statewide Monday through Saturday. Reservations must be made 24 hours in advance. For information, call 1-800-553-DART.

***SCAT (Senior Citizen Affordable Taxi)***

Also sponsored by DelDot, SCAT provides half-price taxi service for persons aged 60 and over. The service is offered seven days a week, including holidays. Call 1-800-355-8080 for an application.

## Obtaining a License and Driving in Delaware

**State Residents –** Any resident who wishes to operate a motor vehicle on roads, freeways, and even public parking lots in the state is required to possess a valid Delaware driver’s license.

**New Residents** -If you move into Delaware from another state, you must apply for a Delaware driver license within 60 days after becoming a resident. You must turn in your previously issued out-of-state driver license, fill out an application and pass an eye screening. Written and road tests may be given, but they are normally waived if your license is valid. Suspended and revoked licenses cannot be transferred until the suspension is cleared.

**To Obtain a License**

You must apply in person at one of the offices of the Division of Motor Vehicles in Wilmington, New Castle, Dover, or Georgetown. All drivers must sign a driver license application and answer the appropriate questions on that form. Those applicants who are licensed in another state must surrender their license from the other state. If eligible for a Social Security Number, it must be provided. Most driver licenses will be issued for a period of five (5) years from the driver’s last birthday. Each driver must pass an eye-screening examination. Every driver license applicant is subject to a written and road skills test. All applicants must be able to prove their name and date of birth, social security number if eligible, and two proofs of Delaware residency.

**Graduated Driver License for First Time Applicants under Age 18**

The graduated driver license program is designed to reduce the high accident and fatality rate of minor drivers. Minors will receive additional supervised driving experience and reduced exposure to high-risk driving situations. The parent or sponsor will actively participate in training the minor and determining when the minor is capable of increased driving authority.

For a learner’s permit, applicants must be 16 years old and have passed an approved Driver’s Ed program. All minors’ driver license applications must be signed by a sponsor. The sponsor is held jointly liable with the minor for any damages resulting from the minor’s negligence. The sponsor has the final authority to determine if the minor is capable of handling the responsibility of operating a motor vehicle and the authority to designate who may supervise the minor driver. The sponsor may withdraw his/her endorsement at any time until the minor reaches age 18, thereby canceling the minor’s driving privileges.

There are many restrictions on Learner’s Permits including who may ride in the car, who may supervise them while driving, and a complete ban on using cell phones while driving. For complete information, visit the DMV website at www.dmv.de.gov/.

**Eligibility for a Class D Operator’s License**

A permit holder who is at least 17 years old, but less than 18 years old, may obtain a Class D operator’s license when the driver has held a Level 1 Learner’s Permit for at least 12 months, the sponsor has not withdrawn his/her endorsement, and the applicant’s driving privileges are not suspended, revoked, or canceled.

**Requirements for First-Time Applicants over Age 18 Temporary Instruction**

**Permit (Learner’s Permit)**

The purpose of the learner’s permit is to enable you to drive the class of motor vehicle forwhich you want a driver license. Before a learner’s permit will be issued, you must pass an eyescreening and written test. After you pass these tests and pay the required fee, a learner’s permit is issued for 60 days. While you are learning to drive you must be accompanied by a licensed driver who is qualified to drive the class of vehicle in which you are training, andhe/she must be at least 21 years of age. To obtain your license, you must take a road test, but not until 10 days after the permit was issued. If you do not pass the road test within the 60-day period, you are permitted one extension of the learner’s permit for an additional 60 days.

|  |
| --- |
| **Did you know?**      **Male applicants are to understand that their signature on license or identification card applications constitutes consent to be registered with the Selective Service System, if so required.** |

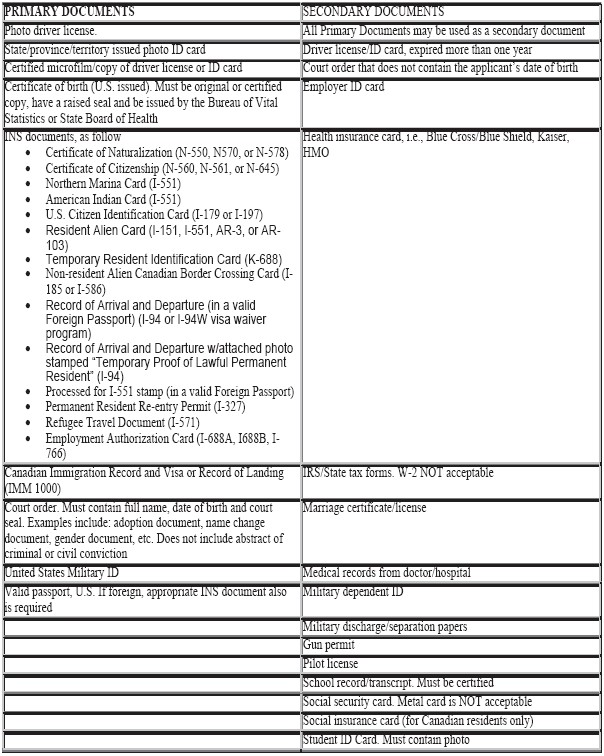
## Restricted License

If you have a disability which would interfere with driving a motor vehicle safely, it may be possible through use of special equipment to compensate for your disability. Special examinations are required by the Division in such cases, and a license with restrictions may be issued to you allowing you to drive only when you, your vehicle, or both are fitted with the specified equipment. A common example of a restricted license is one which requires you to wear glasses when driving or to restrict you to daylight driving only. If you drive without the required equipment, you are subject to arrest and your driver license may be suspended.

## Driver’s License as Identification

It is against the law to fraudulently provide information that is not true or sign a document that is not accurate on any DMV application. This is a serious offense which will result in the immediate revocation of your license and your privilege to operate a vehicle. Criminal action may be taken against you for any misstatement.

Here is a chart which helps explain what documents are acceptable to the DMV as identification to obtain a Delaware driver’s license:



## Always Carry Your License

Though it seems like common sense, you must remember to keep your license with you whenever you drive a motor vehicle. You must be able to show it to any police officer, should he/she desire to inspect it. If you do not have it in your possession when an officer asks for it, you most likely will be ticketed. You will also need your license if you are ever involved in a collision so that other drivers can write down your information. It is important not to tamper with your license in any way (no laminating, stapling, etc.). Changing information on a driver’s license carries severe penalties including the loss of the license.

## A Lost or Damaged License

Notify the DMV if your license is lost or destroyed. If your license is lost, stolen, or destroyed, you may apply to the Division for a duplicate license which will be issued for a fee. You must bring in three (3) identification documents of which one must have your signature on it.

Should the old license be found, you must destroy it.

## Name and Address Changes

Within 30 days after legally changing your name, you must personally go to an office of the Division to change the name on your license. Bring in your old driver license and the marriage certificate or court document as evidence of the name change.

After changing your Delaware address, you have thirty (30) days to notify both the

Vehicle Registration and Driver License Sections of the DMV. Write to the DMV, Driver License Section, P.O. Box 698, Dover, Delaware 19903. Be sure to include your driver license number, your name as it appears on the license and your new address. We will change our records. To change your license document, you must go to any DMV facilities, and they will replace your license at no cost.

## License Expiration

It may seem obvious, but driving with an expired license is against the law. As stated, your license is typically valid for five years. Delaware licenses can be renewed at any Division of Motor Vehicles facility. Renewal reminders are mailed to each driver approximately 60 days before the expiration date which is the driver’s birthday. You must turn in your previously issued license, fill out an application and pass an eye screening test. Written and road tests may be given, but they are normally waived. You may renew at any time during the 90-day period prior to the expiration of your license.

## Exemptions from Holding a Delaware License

The following do not need to have a valid Delaware license on their person:

* Individuals while driving or operating a road roller, road machinery or farm tractor or implement of husbandry temporarily on a highway.
* Nonresident operators, over the age of sixteen (16) years, currently licensed in their home state or country. The license must be in the driver’s possession.
* Members of the Armed Forces of the United States who are serving on active duty and any dependent of the member if they possess a valid driver license from their state of domicile.

**CLASSES OF LICENSES**

There are several different classes of licenses in Delaware.

## Class D Operator’s License

The most common type of license – the ones most of us drive around with - is the basic Class D. This class of license includes passenger cars, station wagons, pickup trucks, utility vehicles,and most panel trucks. This type and class of license is valid for any single motor vehicle, anda trailer, with gross vehicle weight ratings (GVWR) not greater than 26,000 pounds,designed to carry less than 16 passengers (including the driver), and not placarded for thepurpose of transporting hazardous materials.

## Temporary License

When temporarily out-of-state, a temporary license may be issued to the holder of a valid Class D operator’s license or commercial driver license to extend the expiration date, to replace a lost license or in lieu of the Class D or CDL licensing document, as long as the driver license is not suspended, revoked, disqualified, cancelled, or denied in this state or any other state. A temporary license or temporary instruction permit may be issued to an unlicensed driver for specialized training.

## Conditional, Occupational, and Hardship Licenses

These licenses grant limited driving privileges under very specific parts of Delaware law. The limited driving privileges granted are defined on the license.

## Ignition Interlock Device (IID) Endorsement/License

Authorizes the holder to operate a vehicle with full Class D operators driving privileges only when the vehicle is equipped with an ignition interlock device.

**ENDORSEMENTS**

## Motorcycle Endorsement

Any person who operates a motorcycle, motorbike, other 2 or 3-wheeled motor driven vehicle having less than 3 feet of distance between the adjacent wheels on the highway shall have a driver license with a motorcycle endorsement. Persons over the age of 18 must pass a written examination and road skills test to obtain a motorcycle endorsement. The written and road test examinations are waived for those who complete the approved Motorcycle Rider Education Program. This endorsement is valid for the same period as the license. Persons under the age of 18 must have the motorcycle application signed by their parents or the duly appointed legal guardian. They must complete the Motorcycle Rider Education Program as approved by the Division. The Division publishes a Delaware Motorcycle Operator Manual which covers the requirements for the motorcycle endorsement, procedures to acquire the endorsement, testing requirements, and the basic knowledge needed to obtain this endorsement.

## Motorcycle Learner Permits

Motorcycle permits are valid for 60 days. You can extend the permit only once for an additional 60 days. You must apply for an extension at DMV before the expiration date and pay a fee. Restrictions apply when operating a motorcycle with a temporary instruction permit.

**Restrictions on motorcycle learner permits**

* No passengers shall be allowed on the motorcycle.
* Operating a motorcycle between sunset and sunrise is prohibited.
* Approved safety helmet and eye protection must be worn.
* Operation is not permitted on the federal interstate highway system.

## School Bus Endorsement

To drive a school bus, the driver must have a CDL with a passenger and school bus endorsement. To obtain a school bus endorsement, drivers must not have had their licenses suspended or revoked in the last five years, and not have more than 5 points on their records for the past 3 years. They must pass written tests, a 12-hour classroom course, 6 hours of training aboard a school bus, a medical exam, and a criminal background check; as well as pass DMV skills and road testing in a school bus, and a DMV written school bus test.

## Taxi Endorsement

All persons who operate a taxicab on Delaware highways must have a valid license with a taxi endorsement. The driver must complete a Defensive Driving Course, be at least 18 years of age, provide a certified copy of a police background check indicating no serious criminal offenses, and not have had his/her license revoked for the past five years.



**Commercial Driver Licenses (CDL)**

There is a Delaware Commercial Driver Manual which covers the CDL requirements, CDL procedures, testing requirements, and the basic knowledge required to obtain a

CDL license which can be downloaded from the DMV website at www.dmv.de.gov/. The requirement for a CDL is waived when the driver is operating farm equipment, firefighting equipment, recreational vehicles, or military members operating military vehicles, including the National Guard.

**Non-CDL Class A and Non-CDL Class B licenses** are issued to those drivers who operate farm and firefighting equipment under this waiver. No special licenses are required when operating personal recreation vehicles and military equipment.

**CDL Temporary Instruction Permit (Learner’s Permit)** - After passing the knowledge tests and paying a fee, you may be issued a CDL learner’s permit which will allow you to drive a Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV), but only with another licensed CDL driver. This permit is valid for six (6) months and may be extended one time for another six (6) months.

**CDL Class A, B and C Licenses** - required according to how a commercial vehicle is configured, what it is hauling, and the vehicle’s combination registered, actual or gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR).

Drivers of commercial vehicles require special skills in order to maneuver safely on the roadway. The sanctions for any unsafe driving of these vehicles are serious. Truck drivers, bus, limo, taxi, and shuttle van drivers are considered DUI with a BAC of 0.04% and their commercial license will be revoked for one year on a first offense of DUI, leaving the scene of a collision, or vehicular manslaughter. The following chart is a good reminder of other penalties if you are a CMV driver:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A driver is disqualified from operating a Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) if convicted of any of the following SERIOUS offenses:** | | | | |
| Offense | 2nd conviction in separate incident within 3 years of any of these offenses in a  CMV | 2nd conviction in separate incident within 3 years of any of these offenses in a non- CMV, if conviction results in revocation, cancellation, or suspension of all driving privileges | 3rd or subsequent conviction in separate incident within 3 years of any of  these offenses in a CMV | 3rd or subsequent conviction in separate incident within 3 years of any of these offenses in a nonCMV, if conviction results in revocation, cancellation, or suspension of all driving privileges |
| Speeding 15 mph or more above the posted speed limit | 60 days | 60 days | 120 days | 120 days |
| Reckless driving | 60 days | 60 days | 120 days | 120 days |
| Making improper or erratic lane changes | 60 days | 60 days | 120 days | 120 days |
| Following too closely | 60 days | 60 days | 120 days | 120 days |
| Violating a traffic law which causes a fatal collision | 60 days | 60 days | 120 days | 120 days |
| Driving CMV  without obtaining a  CDL | 60 days | Not applicable | 120 days | Not applicable |
| Driving CMV without CDL in possession | 60 days | Not applicable | 120 days | Not applicable |
| Driving CMV  without proper class CDL and/or endorsements | 60 days | Not applicable | 120 days | Not applicable |

**Source: Synopsis Table 2 Section 383.51 Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**

## You Can Be Denied a Driver’s License

While you may never have thought of it before, the law does not permit the Division of Motor Vehicles to issue a driver license when:

* You are less than the required age for a specific license or endorsement.
* You are under the age of 18 and have not completed a Delaware Department of Education approved course in driver education.
* You are under the age of 18 and cannot obtain the required signature of consent on your application (usually parent, court-appointed custodian, or guardian).
* Your license or driving privileges are suspended or revoked in any jurisdiction.
* You are not a resident of Delaware or you do not have a social security number.
* You do not understand road signs in English.
* You are physically or mentally unable to drive safely. If you are subject to losses of consciousness from diseases of the central nervous system, you must furnish the Division a written certification by your family physician that your infirmity is under sufficient control to permit you to drive a motor vehicle safely.
* You are determined to be a habitual drunkard or to be addicted to the use of narcotic drugs.
* You make fraudulent statements on any DMV document, including any false legal/legal presence documents or social security information.
* You pretend to be or let another person pose as an applicant to falsely obtain a license.
* You cheat on the driver’s license examination.
* You decline to have your thumb imprinted.
* You abused any prior issued license, such as driving on a suspended license.
* You disregard a notice to appear for or pay a traffic violation that is listed on your driving record.
* You are delinquent in payments for family support.

**BASIC TIP # 2 – STEER CLEAR OF ANY ACTIONS THAT COULD**

**CAUSE YOU TO LOSE YOUR LICENSE**

## Revocation

This means your driving privilege is terminated and you will have to apply for a new license after a specified period which could be months or years. Licenses are revoked in cases where individuals commit serious offenses while operating a vehicle, such as aggravated assault, criminal threatening, vehicular manslaughter, or habitual offenses. For questions regarding license revocation call (302) 744-2508.

## Suspension

This means your driving privileges are temporarily withdrawn. You will not be able to drive again until you receive a notice of reinstatement. The period of suspension varies with the nature of the offense committed. For questions regarding license suspension call (302) 744-2509.

The Division of Motor Vehicles will suspend the driver license of any Delaware resident whenever the Division has reason to believe that such a person:

* Has committed any offense for which a license revocation is mandatory.
* Has by reckless or unlawful operation of a motor vehicle contributed to an accident resulting in injury or death to any person or caused serious property damage.
* Is incompetent to drive a motor vehicle for serious medical or mental conditions.
* Has committed a serious violation of motor vehicle laws.
* Has driven a motor vehicle without the consent of its owner.
* Has issued a non-collectible payment to the Division.
* Racing or Exhibition of Speed.
* Spinning wheels.
* Turfing (causing destruction to grass, yards, property, etc.).
* Failing to answer a court summons in any state.
* Has violated any of the licensing provision of the Delaware Code including:

**-Use of fictitious, suspended, revoked or borrowed driver license.**

* **Loaning a driver license to another person.**
* **Failure to surrender a suspended or revoked license.**
* **Giving a fictitious name or address or making a false statement in applying for a license.**
* **Unlawful manufacture or possession of a false insurance document.**
* **Driving an uninsured motor vehicle.**
* **Passing a stopped school bus.**

**-Altering a driver license or suing a fraudulent licensee.**

**-Failure to pay child support.**

## Child Support Delinquency

Any person who owes $1,000 or more in arrears or retroactive support and is 30 or more days delinquent in payment of a child support order from either Family Court or the Division of Child Support Enforcement may have his/her license suspended as defined in Title 13 Delaware Code Section 516. The suspension will remain in effect until a release is obtained from the requesting agency and received by the Division of Motor Vehicles. A reinstatement fee must be paid to the Division of Motor Vehicles in order to reinstate the license.

## Driving During Suspension or Revocation

A conviction for driving during suspension or revocation shall extend suspension or revocation for a like period up to one year. No driving authority during the balance of the initial suspension or revocation and the extended authority previously issued by the Division must be surrendered.

## Driver Improvement Problem Driver System (Division Reg #2208)

**This is the name for what is commonly referred to as the “points” system.** The Driver Improvement Problem Driver Program is designed to identify problem drivers, to change the problem driver’s behavior by providing information and training opportunities and, if necessary, to progressively impose sanctions as more convictions and points are accumulated on individual’s driving records.

Every time you are found guilty of a traffic violation, it gets reported to the DMV, and it WILL go on your driving record, along with the number of points accrued. This record is separate from a criminal record for the same offenses. You get points, but unlike a basketball game, racking up points is bad: very bad. More and more points mean a losing score.



The steps in the program are geared to the seriousness of the driving record and may result in an advisory letter, mandatory suspension, and/or completion of a behavioral modification/attitudinal driving course. The Division will also suspend or revoke the license of any Delaware resident who has been convicted of a violation in another state which, if committed in Delaware, would be grounds for suspension or revocation of a license. The driving record includes all convictions, even those committed in other states. The ultimate goal of this program is crash prevention.

## Points on Your Driver’s License

Different violations carry different point values, depending on the seriousness of the offense. Many common violations result in tickets that count as two points against your license. For example:

**Violation**

**Points**

* Speeding 1-9 miles per hour (MPH) over posted limit 2
* Other Moving Violations 2
* Disregarding Stop Sign or Red Light 3  Speeding 10-14 MPH over posted limit 4  Speeding 15-l9 MPH over posted limit 5
* Speeding 20 MPH or more over posted limit 5\*  Passing a Stopped School Bus 6\*
* Reckless Driving 6
* Operation of a Vehicle Causing Death 6\*
* Aggressive Driving 6

\*These violations may result in further actions against your license, including suspension

**Calculated Points**

Calculated points are credited at full point value for the first 12 months from the date of violation. After the initial 12 months have expired, the calculated points will be credited at one-half point value for the next 12 months. All actions are based upon total calculated points within a 24-month period following the offense.

**Driver Improvement Problem Driver Program Actions:**

**Points Action**

8 The Division of Motor Vehicles sends the driver an advisory letter.

12 Driver must complete a behavior modification/attitudinal-driving course within 90 days after notification (unless extended by DMV). Failure to comply or upon preference of the driver, mandatory 2-month suspension will be imposed.

14 Mandatory 4-month license suspension. To become eligible for reinstatement, the driver must complete or have completed a behavior modification/attitudinal driving course within the previous 2 years, as of the time of reinstatement.

16 Mandatory 6-month license suspension. To become eligible for reinstatement, the driver must complete or have completed a behavioral modification/attitudinal driving course within the previous 2 years, as of the time of reinstatement.

18 Mandatory 8-month license suspension. To become eligible for reinstatement, the driver must complete or have completed a behavior modification/attitudinal driving course within the previous 2 years, as of the time of reinstatement.

20 Mandatory 10-month license suspension. To become eligible for reinstatement, the driver must complete or have completed a behavior modification/attitudinal driving course within the

previous 2 years, as of the time of reinstatement.

22 Mandatory 12-month license suspension. To become eligible for reinstatement, the driver must complete or have completed a behavior modification/ attitudinal driving course within the previous 2 years, as of the time of reinstatement.

## The Good News

A speeding violation of 1 to 14 MPH over the posted speed limit will NOT be assessed points, if:

* It is the first violation within any three (3) year period; and
* The ticket is paid through the Voluntary Assessment Center or Alderman’s Court recorded as a “guilty mail in.”

In addition, The Division may consider the satisfactory completion of a Defensive Driving course, approved by the Delaware Department of Insurance, as a 3-point credit when determining driver penalties. This credit is at the discretion of the Division and may vary from case to case.

**Occupational License**

The DMV may issue an occupational license during the period of suspension under the Driver Improvement Problem Driver Program if the suspension has created an extreme hardship unless the driver is suspended or revoked for other Title 21 convictions. An occupational license won’t be issued if the driver has had 2 previous suspensions under this policy within the previous 3 years or has been issued an occupational license during the previous 12 months. Occupational licenses are not issued during the first month of the suspension.

If the calculated point level reaches 15 or more points in a 24-month period, an occupational license will not be issued until the calculated points are less than 15 points. Upon receiving a conviction of any person for a charge of operating a motor vehicle in violation of the restrictions of the occupational license, the DMV will extend the period of suspension for an additional like period. The DMV will also direct the person to surrender their occupational license.

## Suspension by Judge

A judge has the discretion to decide that you are endangering others on the road and take away your driving privileges. A judge may suspend a driver’s license for serious crimes involving a vehicle, such as a hit and run, failure to stop at a railway crossing and speed contests. But a judge can also suspend your license if you are found in contempt of court by failing to pay a fine in ANY criminal or civil violation proceeding – a vehicle does not have to be involved. A judge will also impose fines and/or imprisonment for more serious levels of crimes.

Mandatory Revocations

* Driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or narcotic drugs
* Hit-and-run driving involving death or injury to another person.
* Attempting to flee from a police officer after having received a visual or audible signal to stop your vehicle.
* Three convictions for reckless driving in a period of twelve consecutive months
* Contributing to the death of anyone by operating a vehicle
* The crime of assault in which a death occurs from operating a vehicle.
* Using a motor vehicle in committing any serious crime
* Making a false statement or using fraudulent information
* Underage possession/consumption of alcohol by persons under 21 years of age
* Any drug offense which results in a conviction

## Failure to Appear

Failure to answer to a motor vehicle summons to court is one of **the most common** reasons for license suspensions. If you post a bond after being arrested for any of the causes listed above, and you do not appear in court, your license shall be revoked just as if you had been convicted.

## Habitual Offender Revocation

After an accumulation of certain types of traffic violation convictions, a driver may be declared a habitual offender and his/her license may be revoked for up to five (5) years. No work or hardship licenses are issued to those convicted of being a habitual offender. Any combination of three of the following offenses in a five (5) year period may convict you as a habitual offender:

* Manslaughter
* Use of a motor vehicle in the commission of a felony
* Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
* Driving without a license
* Driving during suspension or revocation
* Reckless driving
* Failing to stop at the scene of an accident.
* Failing to identify yourself at the scene of an accident.
* Making a false statement to the DMV
* Violation of an occupational license
* Failing to stop on the command of a police officer.

Any combination of the above offenses and lesser offenses, such as speeding, that result in 10 convictions in three years may convict you as a habitual offender.

**Minors and the Law School Expulsion (DC21 4130)**

Any student expelled from a school district will have their license suspended until the length of expulsion is complete, the student reaches his/her 19th birthday, or 2 years has elapsed since the date of expulsion. A release must be provided from the school district or superintendent in order to be eligible for reinstatement. A reinstatement fee must be paid to the Division of Motor Vehicles in order to reinstate the license.

Any student suspended under this section may apply for an occupational license if they:

·         Held a current Delaware driver license prior to this suspension.

·         Have not been issued an occupational license within the immediate past 12 months.

·         Are not under suspension or revocation for any other reason.

·         Turn their Delaware driver license in to the Division of Motor Vehicles.

·         Submit the appropriate application, notarized documents, and sign the sworn compliance statement.

A copy of the occupational license must be carried by the driver at all times when operating a motor vehicle on the highways of this State.

**BASIC TIP # 3– TAKE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY SERIOUSLY**

|  |
| --- |
| **Did you know?**  **Delaware lost 26 pedestrians to motor vehicle crashes in 2023.** |

Drivers AND pedestrians need to be aware of their surroundings at all times.

 You can think of pedestrians and drivers as being on a seesaw. Both

have responsibilities to each other and must try to balance with each other.

**Crosswalks:**

At all marked and unmarked crosswalks people walking have the right of way. Therefore, as a driver you must always stop for pedestrians crossing. If, for example, they simply put one foot into the crosswalk, on the other side of the road, and hesitate while talking on the cell phone or deciding what to do, it doesn’t matter. A pedestrian is in the crosswalk, and you must STOP.

For their own safety, pedestrians are not supposed to suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle**.** However, if a pedestrian attempts to cross in the middle of a road, avoiding the crosswalk and jaywalking, you technically have the right of way, BUT you still must do everything in your power to prevent harm from coming to them. Within a crosswalk, marked or unmarked, you are responsible for exercising “due care” to avoid a collision with any pedestrian in your path. **(DC21 4144).** With that said, it’s a wise choice to use caution when traveling through any area with pedestrian traffic. At night, especially, use extra caution. When the tables are turned and you are a pedestrian, try to make yourself more visible by wearing light-colored clothing and/or reflectors, keeping off the crosswalk until it is your turn to go, and never jaywalk or risk running through the middle of the road.

## Brake for Crossing Pedestrians (DC21 4142d)

Oftentimes, a vehicle in front of you will stop at a crosswalk for a pedestrian. As a responsible driver, you should *KNOW* not to change lanes in order to pass the stopped car. This is extremely dangerous to pedestrians, and you would be at fault should a collision occur.

Too many drivers fail to look and wait for pedestrians when crossing over a sidewalk, such as when they exit an alley. It should seem obvious by now that pedestrians on sidewalks always have the right of way, as do bicyclists, skateboarders, pets and all the other sidewalk traffic. Drivers must brake and wait until the sidewalk is clear. **(DC21 4151)**

Also, when exiting a building or underground parking lot, you may sometimes be forced to drive over and through a crosswalk. At no time is it acceptable to stop your vehicle in the crosswalk. Instead, pause before the crosswalk. The same goes when making a turn. Do not ever block a crosswalk - stop before it. If no pedestrian is present, a driver may then enter the crosswalk to ascertain that it is safe to proceed.

## Pedestrians on Roadways

The place for a vehicle is on the road, and not the sidewalk. The same idea goes for pedestrians: use the sidewalk, and not the road. But sometimes there is NO sidewalk.

When there is no sidewalk available to pedestrians, they ARE permitted by the law to walk on the side of the road. If they choose to do so, they must walk on the side facing traffic (this way they can see vehicles coming at them).

## Pedestrian Duties (DC21 4141)

It is necessary to obey all traffic signals. Should the intersection you are attempting to cross have pedestrian signals, only cross when the signal flashes “Walk” or displays a walking man, after **LOOKING BOTH WAYS** to ensure that no cars are coming. When the “DON”T WALK” or orange hand flashes, do not attempt to cross. Wait for the next turn. Should you be midway across the street when the signal changes, you may finish crossing.

Remember, DO NOT:

* Cross between adjacent intersections at which traffic-control devices operate, except in a marked crosswalk.
* Cross an intersection diagonally, unless authorized by official traffic control devices.
* Suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle that is so close that it is impossible for the operator to yield.
* Pedestrians can be fined and punished just like drivers who make mistakes and hurt pedestrians. It really is a two-way street!

## Visually Handicapped Pedestrians (DC21 4150, DC16 9503)

Only persons who are wholly or partially blind are allowed to use a white cane or white cane with red tip while walking on the roadway, and they always have the right-of-way. You may be cited and even imprisoned should you fail to yield and cause a collision with such a person.

## Road Workers

Many times, when you are driving, you may notice orange cones, barricades, flashing lights, and workers in orange vests or jackets. These are all signs of roadwork zones, and it is imperative that you adhere to all posted signs, such as reduced speed limits and lane merging. You may not feel the need to slow down or follow the lane change requests in these zones, but remember, should a collision occur, you will be severely penalized. The workers are out there to make the roads safer for you. Respect them enough to ensure their safety.

Remember:

When driving offenses such as speeding, reckless driving, etc. occur in construction and maintenance zones.

**FINES ARE DOUBLED**

**BASIC TIP # 4 – BE AWARE OF MOTORCYCLE SAFETY WHEN YOU DRIVE OR RIDE**

Operating a motorcycle means abiding by the same laws that automobile drivers do.

One must be careful operating a motorcycle - **because of their size, they are often hard for other drivers to see.** Also, motorcycles can be very difficult to handle at high speeds or on winding roads.

A study conducted by the University of Southern California looked into almost 4,000 motorcycle impact reports, and found:



Three quarters of all motorcycle crashes were in a collision with an automobile.



In these incidents, the driver of the car violated the motorcycle right-of-way and caused the impact two thirds of the time.

 The failure of motorists to detect or recognize motorcycles in traffic is the predominating cause of motorcycle crashes.

 Intersections are the most likely place for a motorcycle collision. Most crashes also occur on short trips associated with shopping, errands, and entertainment.

 The typical motorcycle collision allows the motorcyclist just less than 2 seconds to complete all collision avoidance action.

 98% of collisions with cars and motorbikes resulted in injury.

**Car drivers take note:** Motorcycles ARE out there on city streets, and they are vulnerable. You will most likely be responsible for injury, damages, lost property and quite possibly - loss of life.

**Motorcycle drivers, take note:** Injuries on motorcycles involve the foot, leg and significant impact on the groin area (ouch!) as well as deadly injuries to the neck, chest and head. The use of the safety helmet is the *single* critical factor in the prevention and reduction of neck and head injury.



* In 2022, motorcyclists accounted for 15 percent of all traffic fatalities.
* Motorcyclists were 24 times more likely than passenger car occupants to die in a crash in 2022, per vehicle mile traveled, and 22 times more likely to be injured.
* The majority of motorbike fatalities occurred between 3 pm to 6 pm on weekdays and 6 pm to 9 pm on weekends.
* In 2022, 35 percent of all motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were speeding. Thirty-five percent of motorcycle operators who were involved in fatal crashes were riding without a valid license in 2022.
* Some 82,687 motorcycles were involved in crashes in 2022.
* In 2022, 29 percent of motorcycle operators involved in fatal crashes had a blood-alcohol concentration (BAC) over 0.08 compared with 24 percent of drivers of passenger cars.
* In 2022 there were 22 motorcycle fatalities in Delaware.
* Here’s a happier fact: According to the CDC, motorcycle helmet use saves more than 1,800 lives each year. Helmet use might save an estimated 800 more lives if all riders chose to wear motorcycle helmets.

## Motorcycle Safety Equipment

If you are driving or riding on a motorcycle, you are required to wear a federally approved safety helmet and eye protection if you are under 19. The operator of a motorcycle is required to keep at least one hand on the handgrip of the handlebars at all times. Motorcycles that carry passengers must have footrests for them and a permanent passenger seat.

Note: Every motorcycle manufactured and first registered on and after January 1, 1978, are required to be equipped with at least one and not more than two headlamps which automatically turn on when the engine of the motorcycle is started, and which **remain lighted as long as the engine is running**. This ensures that people in cars can see you better on the road.

## Smart Driving Means

**Drive a motorcycle as though you cannot be seen.**

**In a car, you must watch for motorcycles as though they cannot see you.**

Here are a few suggested actions any car driver should take when traveling next to a motorcyclist to ensure safety:

* Be sure to check your side and rearview mirrors when changing lanes. Motorcyclists often come up fast, and it is important to be aware of their whereabouts. Look into your blind spots to make sure there are no motorcycles there.
* Do not attempt to ride close behind a motorcycle. Always leave plenty of room between his/her car and a motorcycle – if the rider falls for any reason, you will have enough time to stop or swerve to avoid hitting him/her.
* Do not take advantage of the fact that a motorcycle does not use a full lane. Drifting into their lane is extremely dangerous for everybody involved and at best could land you a ticket. **MOTORCYCLES ARE ENTITLED TO THEIR OWN LANE**.
* Pay attention to road conditions. Potholes, debris, and weather conditions can be dangerous for all drivers, but especially for motorcyclists. Be sure to give them extra room when driving conditions are less than ideal. Skilled motorcyclists will slow down when they hit these conditions – less skilled ones may not.
* Rain, wind, dust, and smog affect the cyclist’s vision more easily than yours in an enclosed vehicle. The cyclist’s face shield, windshield, or goggles help, but cannot completely overcome all the vision limitations under these conditions.
* Cross winds can be hazardous to motorcyclists. Windy conditions can actually move a motorcycle out of its lane of travel. Areas to look out for are wide open, long stretches of highways.
* and bridges. Fast-moving large trucks have been known to create wind blasts which can startle.
* a motorcyclist, and under certain conditions actually move the motorcyclist out of his path.
* Railroad grade crossings may be rough or cross the road at an angle. The rider may slow down or change direction so the tracks can be crossed head on. The cyclist may rise up off the seat to help cushion the shock of a rough crossing.
* Metal or grated bridges create a wobbling sensation in the front tire of the motorcycle greater than the feeling you experience in your car. This wobbling sensation may cause the inexperienced motorcyclist to quickly change direction or slow down.

**In Delaware,** No portion of the handlebars on a motorcycle may extend more than 15 inches above the level of the operator's regular seat. Apparently, it was necessary to spell out in the statutes that, “A person shall ride upon a motorcycle only while sitting astride the seat, facing forward, with 1 leg on each side of the motorcycle.” Furthermore, “No person shall operate a motorcycle while carrying any package, bundle or other article which prevents the person from keeping both hands on the handlebars.”

In this state as in most, motorcyclists are not permitted to “**lane split**” in that they may not drive down the middle of two lanes of traffic or between adjacent rows of vehicles. **In some states, this is allowed** in partbecause many older motorcycle engines are air cooled and will overheat if left to idle in bumper-to-bumper traffic.

**BASIC TIP # 5 – TAKE A PROTECTIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS BICYCLISTS**

## THE WARREN PRITCHETT JR. ACT

In 2003 the Delaware State Senate passed this bill, which was signed by Governor Ruth Ann Minner, closing a gap in the Delaware legal code that had allowed some drivers to face little more than a reckless driving charge and 30 days in jail when involved in a crash, even if their actions caused the death of another person. Warren Pritchett was a bicyclist who was killed when he was struck from behind by a truck on a rural road.



Since bicyclists have the same rights as motor vehicles, when attempting to pass a biker, one must regard him/her with the same respect as a slow-moving vehicle. Wait to pass until it is safe for all parties. Bikes are only going to be more popular as fuel prices stay high, so let’s go over a few safety guidelines:

* Persons operating a motor vehicle must display extra caution when attempting to pass a bicyclist. Be sure that there is a safe amount of passing room.
* When attempting a turn, check that there are no bike riders near you, either coming at you or “under your wing” next to the curb.
* You are in violation of the law if you open your car door without checking for any type of traveler.
* It is important to be aware of bicyclists at all times, but especially on a road that allows street parking. A car may be parallel parking, or a door may open suddenly, causing the bicyclist to swerve into traffic. You should also beware of bicyclist when opening your door. On one-way streets, this may happen on either side of the road, so be doubly aware.

Many people may not realize that bicyclists must obey the same regulations as other drivers on the road. Bike riders must follow all the same traffic lights and marked signs (such as stop and yield), must yield to pedestrians on sidewalks, and should use hand signals to indicate their intentions. Any bicycle rider under sixteen years of age, including any child being towed behind or in a “bike seat” MUST wear a federally approved helmet. Should this law be violated, a fine should be expected. Bicyclists must not wear ear phones or headsets which cover both ears.

**A Bicycle Being Pushed by the Rider Has the Same Rights and Responsibilities as a Pedestrian**

When a cyclist gets off their bike and pushes it, they are considered a pedestrian under the law. This means their rights and responsibilities change from those of a cyclist to those of a pedestrian. As a pedestrian, the rider must follow pedestrian rules, like using crosswalks and obeying pedestrian signals. They must also give way to motor vehicles and other pedestrians when necessary.

Even while pushing their bike, the rider must remain aware of their surroundings to avoid blocking walkways or creating hazards for others. They should follow the same rules of care and consideration as anyone walking without a bike, helping ensure safety and smooth movement for everyone on the road.

## Mopeds and Tripeds

Mopeds and Tripeds may not be used on interstate and limited access highways. They may not be used on bicycle paths unless the helper motor has been turned off. Most importantly:

* You cannot legally operate a Moped and Triped upon any public road unless you have a valid driver license.
* Mopeds and Tripeds must be registered with the DMV, must have a light on front and rear and have a bell or horn that can be heard from at least 100 feet.
* It is recommended that every person operating or riding a Moped or a Triped wear a safety helmet and bright, reflective clothing.

**BASIC TIP # 6 – AID EMERGENCY VEHICLES, DON’T OBSTRUCT THEM**

## Emergency Vehicles

The picture below illustrates the proper procedure when an emergency vehicle comes

up behind you -



Pull over safely and quickly to the right side of the road and yield as needed. It is extremely important to remember that all emergency vehicles (ambulances, fire trucks, and police cars using red lights and sirens) have the right of way at all times. When seeing or hearing one approaching, all surrounding traffic must pull over and yield completely, the best option being to come to a stop. This means on both sides of the roadway! Do not stop in intersections. Wait for the vehicle to completely pass and move down the road before resuming driving as normal. Needless to say, never try to pass an emergency vehicle!

**Remember:** Emergency vehicles can and do travel down the wrong side of the road in an attempt to avoid traffic! Under no circumstances are you to follow an emergency vehicle to the scene. **(DC21 4188)** You will only get in the way of personnel trying to control the situation. Should you fail to abide by this law, you may be arrested.

* Motorists are now required to take extra precautionary actions such as slowing down and changing lanes, etc, when passing a stopped emergency vehicle with lights flashing.
* Be sure not to drive over unprotected fire hoses, without the consent of the police or fire officials at the scene. **(DC21 4188)**

**EASY TIP # 7 - PROTECT CHILDREN AND PASSENGERS IN YOUR CAR**

## KAITLYN' S LAW

This law passed in California is named after a little girl who died after being left in a car. It is sad that children are continuing to die from being left unattended in motor vehicles. It should not happen. Since this legislation was passed many states have adopted similar laws.

Serious injury or death can occur when an unsupervised child has access to brake and gas pedals, ignitions, and gearshift levers, leading to unplanned vehicle movements that put both the child and others at risk. Extreme temperatures can also result in fatalities due to hypothermia or heat exhaustion. According to a 2023 National Safety Council study, 29 children have died from hot car incidents. Additionally, leaving a child alone in a vehicle exposes them to potential danger from predators or kidnappers.

In Delaware, the laws governing this fall under child endangerment and abuse laws. In most states, it is unlawful to leave a child under the age of six unattended in a motor vehicle, without being supervised by a person over the age of 12. This also includes leaving the car running or leaving the keys in the ignition.

Knowing these laws may give you reason to call the police if you think a child is in danger. A grateful parent may thank you later. After all is said and done, we are all on the same roads, and we need to look out for each other.

**BASIC TIP # 8 – KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU WITNESS TO OR**

**INVOLVED IN A COLLISION**

## If You See a Collision

* If you are the first person at a collision scene, pull completely off the road after you have passed the crash site. Check to see if anyone is injured.

* Tell the next person who stops to call 9-1-1. Give that person information on the injured persons.

* Ask other people to warn approaching traffic and put out flares or emergency triangles, if any are available. Watch for and avoid gasoline!

* Help anyone who is not already walking and talking.

* Do not move the injured unless they are in a burning vehicle or in other danger. Moving often makes injuries worse.

* If a motorcyclist is unconscious, removing his or her helmet could make the injuries worse. If possible, let a trained medical person remove the helmet.

* Move the vehicle(s) involved out of the traffic lane if it is not disabled. Turn off the ignition off. Don't smoke! Fire is a greater danger.

* Search the area for victims thrown from the vehicle. They may be hidden in grass or bushes.

## 9-1-1 Emergency Medical System

To report a traffic collision, dangerous road condition, drunk driver sighted, or other hazard: Dial 9-1-1. In cities or towns, report to the local police or dial 9-1-1. The person calling 9-1-1 for emergency help must be ready to answer questions and provide information such as:

* The location of the emergency: cross streets, freeway on/off ramp information etc., and the number of the phone you are using.
* What happened: know as much as possible about the collision, injury, etc.
* How many people need help - is anyone bleeding, unconscious, or without a pulse? Is first aid being given?
* Don't Hang Up First! Be sure you have provided all necessary information. Let the emergency dispatcher hang up first.

## Trauma and/or Bleeding At the Collision Scene

* Check the injured person (s) for breathing. If the victim appears to be unconscious and is not breathing, and you are trained and certified to give artificial respiration, then begin artificial respiration (Rescue Breathing) at once.
* If there is no pulse, then start CPR. "CPR," Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, should be given to the victim along with Rescue Breathing only by a person properly trained and certified. You are urged to learn CPR. Courses are offered by the American Heart Association and the American Red Cross.
* To stop bleeding and prevent contagion from blood borne diseases (e.g., hepatitis) cover the wound with a compress, handkerchief, or other piece of clothing. Use a "covering" of some sort with an open wound to prevent your coming in contact with the victim's blood. Press hard and elevate the wound above the heart unless this movement causes the victim pain.
* Shock victims have pale or bluish skin which is cold to the touch. The victim may also feel weak and have a rapid pulse. Keep the victim lying down and warm.

## Stopping Requirements (DC21 4301, 4202)

If you are involved in an accident in which any person (including yourself) is injured or killed, the police must be notified *immediately*, by law. It is a crime for you to leave a crash site where your vehicle was involved, if there is an injury or death, before police have talked to you and gotten all the information they need about the crash.

You will be guilty of “hit and run” if you do not stop in these situations. If convicted of this charge, you will lose your license, go to jail for up to 2 years and pay stiff fines of up to $3000.

## If you hit a parked car or other property,

**YOU MUST STOP** your vehicle immediately and attempt to find the owner of the property that you damaged. If you cannot locate him/her, leave a note detailing the time of the collision, and information that explains how he/she will be able to easily contact you. If you do not feel comfortable leaving your personal information, leave a work number. Failure to do so can earn you a fine of over $1000, but that’s not all – you could land in jail for up to 6 months!



## Aid to The Injured

The law requires you to give reasonable assistance to any person injured in a collision in which you are involved. First, check to see if you, your passenger, or the other vehicle’s occupants are injured. Be prepared to transport any injured person to a hospital or physician as necessary. Immediately call or ask another person to call 911.

Do not move an injured person unless it is a life-threatening situation (their car is on fire, for example). Though you might want to give first aid, moving the person may cause more injuries.

## Preventing Further Damage

If you are stopped on the roadway, you should use your emergency flashers (if they are still working after the crash) or flares or reflective triangles to warn other drivers and prevent further collisions or damage.

* When involved in a non-injury collision, a motorist is required to move their vehicle out of the roadway to the side of the road near to the collision scene to prevent other cars from crashing into it.However, you must not move the vehicle from the scene of the accident except to move an injured person for medical help. **(DC21 4206)**
* Turn off your ignition as soon as possible to reduce the risk of fire.
* Do not stand or walk in traffic lanes. You could be struck by another vehicle.
* Turn off the ignition of wrecked vehicles. Do NOT light up a cigarette around wrecked vehicles. Fuel could have spilled, and fire is a real danger.
* If there are power lines down with wires in the road, do not go near them.
* Use flares with caution, as fuel may be leaking onto the roadway from a wrecked vehicle.

## Exchanging Information

If you are involved in a collision (whether someone is injured, killed or not), you must provide to the other person or the police the following:

* Your Driver’s License
* Your Vehicle Registration Card
* Evidence of financial responsibility, including the name and address of your insurance company and policy number
* Your current address

If there are witnesses to the collision, you should get their names, addresses, and phone numbers. You should also record damage to your vehicle and injuries. It is a good idea to keep a camera in your vehicle for recording damage to all vehicles involved and to aid in giving the most accurate report to the police. Seek proper medical attention, if necessary, and do not forget to file a report!

## Reporting Requirements (DC21 4203)

The driver of any vehicle involved in an accident must immediately report it to the nearest police agency:

* When the accident results in injury or death to any person OR
* When the accident occurs on a public highway, and it results in property damage to an apparent extent of $500 or more OR
* Anytime it appears that an accident involves a driver whose physical ability has been impaired as a result of alcohol or drug use, it results in property damage to an apparent extent of $1,000 or more.

Accident forms are available from the DMV website. most insurance agents.

If you neglect to submit a report, or do not provide all the required information, the DMV will suspend your driving privileges until you submit one. Collisions reported to DMV by law enforcement will show on your driving record unless the reporting officer says another person was at fault. All reports you submit are available for confidential use of the departments involved in your particular collision, such as the

DMV, Delaware state troopers or the DelDOT, for example.

**BASIC TIP # 9 – DRIVING MEANS TAKING ON FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

## Required Liability Insurance Coverage (DC21 Chapter 29)

The purpose of insurance is to make sure that you will be able to pay for injuries and damages if you are involved in a collision. Delaware has a compulsory financial responsibility law that requires all drivers to maintain motor vehicle liability insurance and to present evidence of it at the request of a law enforcement officer. This means that you should carry proof of insurance in your vehicle at all times.

Any vehicle that you are operating must be insured even though you are not the owner. Verify that there is proof of valid insurance in the vehicle before you drive it. Motorists are also required to show proof of insurance to register a vehicle.

The first step in obtaining a Delaware vehicle title/registration is to establish your financial responsibility. This is done by purchasing a liability insurance policy from a company licensed by the Insurance Commissioner to operate in Delaware. The minimum coverage is:

* **$15,000 for bodily injury or death of one person in any one accident.**
* **$30,000 for bodily injury or death of two or more persons in any one accident.**
* **$10,000 for injury to or destruction of property of others in any one accident.**

The DMV requires verification that the car to be registered is properly insured. One of the following documents will be necessary:

* A Delaware Insurance Identification Card - The card must be carried in the vehicle at all times and include the period of coverage and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) company identification number (NAIC code). The ID card must have a valid expiration date. ID cards are re-issued every 6 months.
* A valid insurance policy.
* A written binder within 30 days of issue from an insurance company or agent on the insurance company’s letterhead.

It is a crime to present evidence of insurance that is fictitious or altered.

The penalty for operating an uninsured vehicle is a fine of up to $2,000 and mandatory suspension of driver license and/or driving privileges for 6 months. Subsequent offenses occurring within 3 years of another such offense is fined at $4,000.

Providing false proof of insurance will result in an additional fine of $500 and/or 30 days in jail and suspension of driver license for 6 months. Specialized personnel with the Delaware State Department of Insurance and/or law enforcement officials may confiscate the registration plate of a vehicle absent affirmative proof a vehicle is insured, after proper notice has been sent to the assigned owner.

## Canceling Insurance

If you cancel your insurance for any reason, you should submit your (valid) license plate to the DMV. Failure to surrender your place PRIOR to insurance cancellation results in, you guessed it – fines!

## Random Audits

The Division of Motor Vehicles randomly audits for proof of insurance on active registrations. The penalty for being uninsured is $100 for 1-30 days and an additional $5 per day until insurance is obtained, tags are surrendered, or the registration expires. In addition, suspensions are imposed on the registration and on the driver license of all owners who fail to respond to the request. Once suspended, reinstatement fees will apply for your driver license and registration.

**BASIC TIP # 10 – HANDLE YOUR TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS AND TICKETS**

In “National Lampoon’s Vacation,” Chevy Chase looks in his rear view mirror and discovers he’s being followed by a police officer with his lights on. Whether from personal experience or through movies and TV, we all know what it means when a police officer follows you, turning the siren and lights on. In this section, we will shed some light on the consequences of receiving a traffic citation, and how it can be resolved.

When a police officer signals for you to pull over, you MUST direct your car to the side of the right-hand lane. It is unlawful to willfully fail or refuse to comply with any lawful order of any peace officer whose vehicle is distinctively marked, exhibits a lighted red lamp and is sounding a siren. *Willfully eluding, resisting or obstructing* such an officer result in fines, suspension of your license, and jail time for aggravated offenses. Possibly worse yet, you could find yourself in an embarrassing, unpaid starring role on the TV show “Cops.”



Signing the ticket, the officer issues to you means that you agree to show up for Traffic Court. In most cases, you have the decision to pay for your ticket by mail or actually make an appearance. People who show up have two options - either to admit that they were in the wrong and pay the fine or contest the ticket and get a court date to plead their case.

As noted above, “Failure to Appear” to a summons to deal with a traffic violation of a serious nature is one of the main causes for driver’s license suspensions. Keep your appointment with the court and keep your license.

|  |
| --- |
| **Did You Know?**  **Attending traffic school can earn some drivers insurance discounts. Contact your insurance company to see if they credit for driving school.** |

**BASIC TIP # 11 – IF YOU ARE STOPPED, REMAIN CALM AND COOPERATIVE**

What should you do if you get pulled over?

* Signal your intent to pull over by using your turn signal.
* Pull over as soon as it is safe to do so.
* Remain calm and relaxed. Take a deep breath. It’s not the end of the world.
* Roll down your window and wait for the police officer to come to your window. • Keep both hands resting on the steering wheel as the officer approaches your vehicle and don’t make any sudden moves.
* If it is nighttime, turn on your interior light dome to illuminate the inside of your car.
* Don’t reach for your glove box (for paperwork or ID) until the officer directs you to.
* Don’t get upset if an officer shines a light in your eyes. It is standard procedure and not meant to purposely intimidate or harass you. Officers encounter many dangerous and volatile situations. Using the flashlight to perform a quick visual search of a person and a vehicle that has been pulled over at night is routine.
* Most officers prefer (or they should prefer) that you stay in your car when you are stopped. If they want, you to get out they will ask you to. From an officer's standpoint, many criminals will exit their car to try to prevent the officer from seeing what is in their vehicle with them.

## Some Police Humor

Policeman: "When I saw you driving down the road, I guessed 55 at least."

Lady: "You're wrong, officer, it's only this hat that makes me look that old."

## \* \* \*

A driver was pulled over by a police officer for speeding. As the officer was writing the ticket, she noticed several machetes in the back seat. "What are those weapons for?" she asked suspiciously. "I'm a juggler," the man replied. "I use those in my act." "Well, show me," the officer demanded.

So he got out the machetes and started juggling them, first three, then more, finally seven at a time - overhand, underhand, behind the back - putting on a dazzling show and amazing the officer.

Just then another car passed by. The driver did a double take, and said, "My god, I've got to give up drinking! Look at the tests they're giving now."

## \* \* \*

While driving along the back roads of a small town, two truckers come to an overpass with a sign that reads CLEARANCE 11'3." They get out and measure their rig, which is 12'4." "What do you think?" one asks the other. The driver looks around carefully, then jumps in the driver’s seat and shifts into first.

"Not a cop in sight. Let's take a chance!"

### \* \* \*

Police Chief: As a recruit, you'll be faced with some difficult issues. What would you do if you had to arrest your mother?

New Recruit: Call for backup!

❖ **CHAPTER 4 QUIZ**

**Choose the *best* answer.**

1.) Minors may not \_\_\_\_\_ while driving.

A. asks for directions.

B. use a cell phone.

C. listen to the radio.

D. use the 3 second rule.

E. yield to bicyclists

2.) If the DMV learns that you do not have insurance:

1. you can still drive in a nearby state.
2. your driver’s license and registration will be suspended.
3. you will get a letter requesting that you get it soon.
4. you will not be able to attend driving school.
5. your insurance rates will be higher later.

3.) When a police officer signals for you to pull over:

1. you must slow down while driving home.
2. correct any poor driving problem you were exhibiting.
3. you must direct your car to the side of the road and stop at the first safe place.
4. you should immediately call 911 if you have a cell phone.
5. None of the above.

|  |
| --- |
| 4.) The failure of motorists to recognize motorcycles in traffic is \_\_\_\_\_ cause of motorcycle crashes. |

1. the primary
2. never the
3. rarely the
4. sometimes the
5. the unlikeliest

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 5.) No one, other than those totally or partially \_\_\_\_\_, can carry or use a white cane (with | |
| or without a red tip). |  |

1. deaf
2. handicapped
3. blind
4. injured
5. rehabilitating

**Chapter 4 2nd rotating quiz**

**1:) Minors may not use a cell phone while \_\_\_\_\_\_.**

A:) walking

B:) driving

C:) bicycling

D:) running

E:) none of the above

**2:) If the \_\_\_ learns that you do not have insurance your driver's license and registration will be suspended**

A:) nearby state

B:) DMV

C:) I.R.S.

D:) traffic school

E:) your insurance company

**3:) When a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ signals for you to pull over you must direct your car to the side of the road and stop at the first safe place.**

A:) parking enforcement officer

B:) street cleaner

C:) police officer

D:) fire chief

E:) None of the above.

**4:) The failure of motorists to recognize \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in traffic is the predominating cause of \_\_\_\_\_ crashes.**

A:) motorcycles

B:) planes

C:) curbs

D:) trees

E:) none of the above

**5:) No one, other than those totally or partially blind, can carry or use a \_\_\_\_ cane (with or without a red tip).**

A:) blue

B:) green

C:) white

D:) red

5:) none of the above

**THE DEMANDS OF**

# OPEN HIGHWAY DRIVING

**5 of 10 This Chapter gives you 13 BASIC Tips about safe driving on Delaware’s open freeways and turnpikes.**

Whether it’s the World Championship Punkin Chunkin, the Big August Quarterly, or perhaps just a drive to the beach, at one time of the year or another you’ll find yourself on Delaware’s open highways on your way to something interesting. Possibilities abound in Delaware as it is home to the Firefly Music Festival and the Monster Mile racetrack at Dover International where fans of this sport come twice a year. Or it could be that you are curious to see the salty marshes of Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge. Either way, you’ll have to make use of Delaware’s highway system.

Open highway is usually characterized by its lack of traffic congestion, scenic landscapes, and clean air. These may be in sharp contrast to what you find in town, and as a result, you may let your guard down.

Sometimes it is a relief to just get onto the freeway and leave behind the stressful grind of traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, four-way stops and children at play. Many drivers try to forget their cares during this part of their commute or trip, perhaps switching on the stereo and settling back into "auto pilot," or doing the opposite and really "letting loose" when they hit the open road.

Keep in mind that the open road has its own set of dangers to be aware of that require flexibility and mental alertness to deal with. Make sure you are well rested before going on a long trip or driving late into the night out in the countryside.

**BASIC TIP # 1 – OPEN ROADS OFFER UNUSUAL HAZARDS**

Here are a few examples of hazards that the open road can offer:

**Unmarked Farm and Field Driveways:**

Open roads are in rural areas, where farms can have direct access to the highways. Always be aware of unmarked farm and field driveways as slow-moving tractors or machinery may suddenly appear in your path. Remain alert, even if the road seems to stretch out into the horizon with nothing to look out for but blue skies.

**Animal Crossing Areas:** 

The open road may have areas very similar to pedestrian crosswalks, but for animals. If you come across an animal crossing area, slow down and be alert. Stop if you have

to. Always drive within the posted speed limit…an animal might take to the road in front of you without regard for where animal crossing signs are actually posted!

The Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife would like to remind drivers to remain alert for deer crossing roadways. Deer are just beginning their busiest time around dusk, when drivers are heading home. Fall is mating season for deer and bucks single-mindedly pursue does – sometimes right into the path of your car. The average white-tailed deer in Delaware weighs 130 pounds, with bucks tipping the scales at 180 pounds and more. Hitting an animal that size can do serious and expensive damage to your vehicle. Such a collision may also cause injury to you or your passengers or trigger an accident involving you and other motorists.

Statistics from State Farm estimate that between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, there were over 1.8 million animal collision insurance claims in the U.S., resulting in 200 deaths and 26,000 injuries. The average cost per insurance claim for collision damage is $5,992, with higher costs in cases involving injuries. In 2023, the Delaware State Police reported 1,758 animal-vehicle crashes, the vast majority of which involved deer.

Keep these tips in mind:

* When there is no oncoming traffic, switch to high beams to better reflect the eyes of deer on or near the roadway.
* If you see a deer crossing the road ahead, slow down immediately until you are past the crossing point. If you see one deer, there are likely to be others.
* Slow down and blow your horn with one long blast to frighten deer away. Do not rely on devices such as deer whistles, deer fences and reflectors, as they have not been proven to reduce deer-vehicle collisions.
* Do not swerve to miss a deer – brake and stay in your lane. Losing control of your vehicle, crossing into another lane, hitting an oncoming vehicle, or leaving the roadway and hitting a tree or a pole will be much more serious than hitting a deer.

• If you hit a deer, stop at the scene, get your car off the road if possible and call the police. Do not touch the animal or get too close. You could be bitten, kicked, or even gored by a buck’s antlers. It’s safer to keep your distance.

If you would like to keep a deer killed on the road, the Delaware State Police can issue a vehicle killed deer tag.

**Unmarked shoulders (the sides of roads, often covered with gravel or dirt) can be like quicksand.**

Shoulders can be composed of soft materials. Often open roadways may lack painted shoulder lines. Don’t let this fool you into thinking the road is wider than it really is. Soft shoulders and drop offs are very hazardous and can make you lose control. This is especially true when driving at night or when visibility is poor. A soft, poorly marked road shoulder *can* make you lose control of the wheel!

**Roadway stands and gas stations pepper the open highway.**

Quaint and nostalgic, fruit stands, antique stores, and unusual local attractions remind us of highway driving in a bygone era. They also can bring unexpected traffic into your path, often suddenly. Always be aware that you may need to stop suddenly when passing places that have people pulling on and off the shoulder, or possibly running across the road to get a closer look.

**More than “Garden Variety” Vehicular Traffic.**

Different types of vehicles operate at different speeds and take different amount of space on the road. Many times, you will find a tractor traveling well below the posted limit and taking up more than one lane. Giant trucks that you’ll never see in a city can dominate the open road. When you need to pass a vehicle, make sure you can see far down the road ahead of you and do not pass on hills or near curves.



**BASIC TIP # 2 – PLAN YOUR FREEWAY TRIP IN ADVANCE**

Freeway drivers should not only plan their route in advance, they should also be familiar with alternative routes, exits, and side streets. Don’t rely on a single travel route or exit choice to get where you are going. Road repair, collisions and unexpected congestion may force you to exit and find another way to your destination. In addition, watch for traffic guide signs which indicate distances so that you may safely choose your lane and make a safe exit.

Too many collisions happen when lost, frustrated, or angry drivers go too slowly because they don’t know where they are, or too fast to make up lost time. These drivers let the freeway do the driving! By planning ahead, you probably won’t be one of them. Good drivers have more than one way to get where they are going and a little extra time to get there.

**BASIC TIP # 3 – BE SAFE GETTING ON THE FREEWAY!**

Entering the freeway can be the most terrifying aspect of driving for some people. It involves timing, speed control, and awareness of your surroundings. Furthermore, drivers must recognize and obey the speed limit for the on-ramp and acceleration lane and heed all freeway entrance warning signs. All these things aside, your attention should be primarily focused on accelerating to “freeway speeds” before merging with traffic traveling on the freeway. Entering the freeway too fast will surprise drivers; entering too slowly will have drivers suddenly braking to let you in. Either way, entering the freeway at the wrong speed may earn you some colorful hand gestures!

When entering a freeway, check the speed of freeway traffic. The most common mistakes made at this point are merging at too slow a speed, or suddenly slowing or stopping. Be sure to watch vehicles ahead for sudden stops or brake lights and keep your entrance smooth. You should keep in mind that there should be a gap or big space between you and any cars trying to merge in front and behind you too. However, since you cannot control another driver behind you, focus first on a safe speed to merge. Once you reach that speed, you can then look for your gap, or space, to enter the flow of traffic. Signal until entering a through-traffic lane.

If entering directly onto a freeway with no acceleration lane, here’s how to stay safe: Obey yield or merge signs before entering, and then look for a gap or “space cushion” that is a bit longer than the usual 3 seconds – at least a 4 second gap is recommended. Then, accelerate your speed to blend into the gap and move with traffic, maintaining your space cushion as you go.

## Timed Entrance Signals

Some freeway on-ramps have what are called “timed-entrance signals.” On ramps with time-entrance signals come in different varieties. Often there is more than one lane and may even include a designated carpool lane. Carpool lanes are often without a timed signal and are marked with a diamond just like on the freeway through lanes. When there is a double merge lane, the signals are often timed in a staggered fashion...this means taking turns with vehicles in the other lane. No matter how the ramp is timed, the best rule is to merge in a courteous manner. The same rule applies when there are fewer cars, in off-peak hours, when the signals may not be in operation. Merge with traffic cautiously and courteously.

**BASIC TIP # 4 – SELECT YOUR BEST LANE OF TRAVEL, AND PASS SAFELY**

Once you get on to the freeway, you should choose the proper lane to travel in. Traditionally, the right-most lane is used by slower traffic while the far-left lane is used for faster traffic or for passing. For regular travel at the pace of traffic, the center lanes are usually the best, especially if you don’t have to exit the freeway anytime soon.

When the highway has only two lanes, use common sense; right for slower, left for faster traffic. Take special care when a merging lane or interchange is approaching, there may be cars entering or exiting at different speeds. Keep an eye out when driving around freeway interchanges... those famous places where lanes for entering and exiting are all over. Some drivers just do not (or will not) pay enough attention and then have to make sudden lane changes. Move in advance into the lane that you need to take.

Freeway lanes marked with large broken lines indicate that the lane is about to end, look for signs that indicate your options (merge right; right lane must exit, etc.)

## Toll Roads and Turnpikes

Take notice of signs warning you that you are approaching a turnpike entrance. Follow any signs telling you to slow down and eventually stop. Use lanes designated for your type of vehicle. Once on the turnpike, the speed limit is generally 55 miles per hour in Delaware.

Entering or leaving the Turnpike or any part of its right of way except through the regular Toll Plaza lanes or committing any act with intent to evade payment of fare is prohibited. U-Turns at any point on the Turnpike are also strictly prohibited. Also prohibited are bicycles or tricycles and motor driven cycles, including motor scooters, animals, and farm implements.

## Lane Changes

Lane changes should be gradual, one at a time, and with the signal on. The best lane changes do not force drivers around you to apply their brakes. When changing lanes, use your turn signal (5 seconds before changing) and check the traffic all around you. Use your mirrors to see if any other drivers are in the lane that you are intending to enter. Turn your head to check your blind spot and accelerate slightly to change into each lane, one at a time. Make sure that the traffic opening is adequate to allow other drivers behind you to continue driving without slowing down. Keep your speed steady with the flow of traffic around you, without stopping or slowing down.

As a good safety rule keep this in mind when you change lanes: it’s possible the car in front of you will move into the space, possibly without courtesy or safe driving practices. Look out. You need to watch for vehicles ahead, behind, and to the sides. In other words, look for unexpected vehicles when making a lane change. This same advice goes for motorcycles that may be coming up behind you. The bottom line in making lane changes is to watch out for others, since they may not be watching out for you!

**BASIC TIP # 5 – FOLLOW SPEED LIMITS**

Guard against unconsciously going too fast on the freeway by checking your speedometer regularly - other traffic may be speeding, and you may not realize how fast you are actually driving. In a similar way, it’s easy to become transfixed or drowsy when driving on freeways. This is called "highway hypnosis," or a trance-like condition brought on by continuous or monotonous driving. Always be aware and alert of your surroundings.

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| --- |
| **Did you know?**    **Velocitation - when a driver unconsciously goes too fast on the freeway.** |

Although most freeways have a speed limit of 55 to 70 mph, your speed should be appropriate for conditions. In traffic congestion or when the roads are wet, driving too fast, even when you are still driving UNDER the posted limit, can be very dangerous and may lead to a traffic citation.

**Here is an example:** say the speed limit is 65. It is very crowded, and it’s foggy. Everyone is going at 35: everyone except you. If you’re going 50 (15 miles under the speed limit), you are a danger to everyone else going 35. You can get a ticket, even though you are driving under the speed limit. Just because you are under the speed limit does not mean a cop will not pull you over for speeding.

This does not mean that you should drive too slowly. However, you obviously need to pay attention to other vehicles and things like weather condition. Driving at too slow of speed will obstruct the flow of traffic and force others into lane changes. The worst example of driving too slow comes from drivers slowing to observe a scenario after a crash. We call these drivers, “lookieloos,” and “gawkers.” You may be familiar with these terms; they describe those drivers who slow at a crash scene, not to help, but to gawk at the aftermath. These freeway gawkers are an annoyance and pose a danger to other drivers. They can actually get a ticket for creating a risk. So, if you come across a pile up and see that your assistance is not needed, please drive on and keep traffic moving so there is not another collision and help can move in and out.

## BASIC TIP # 6 – USE A “SPACE CUSHION”

Safe drivers keep a “space cushion” between themselves and the traffic ahead.Driver reflexes take time and cars need distance to avoid a collision. The more space you have between your car and traffic ahead, the more time you have to react to hazards in front of you. When cars behind you want to pass, slow down a bit to allow that driver to pull into a sufficiently large gap in front of you.



Why is a space cushion so important? It’s important because gradual movements are important. When a driver cuts you off, people tend to slam on the brakes and swerve out of the way. When cars unexpectedly slow down or swerve into another lane, the drivers around them must quickly react as well. This ends up causing other drivers to swerve without properly checking their surroundings, possibly causing multiple collisions. Remember, gradual movements are best, so plan ahead with a space cushion and be aware of your surrounding conditions and traffic. If you must react, try not to overreact.

Rear collisions are caused mostly by having insufficient distance between cars (Tailgating). When someone tailgates you, allow extra room between yourself and traffic ahead of you. The reason for this is to be able to slow down more gradually so that a rear collision can be avoided. If there is a person tailgating you, you need to be able to slow down gradually if there is a hazard ahead.

When the road is wet or slippery, you will need more distance to stop. When following a motorcycle, leave extra space on wet or icy roads, metal surfaces, bridge gratings, railroad tracks, and gravel - since motorcycles tend to fall in such road conditions.

Cars that carry heavy loads, large vehicles, and trucks all need additional distance to stop. This is because the increased weight makes it harder to stop. Keep this in mind when following these types of vehicles, or when they are behind you. If you are driving with extra weight on board, consider increasing your space cushion and do the same when large vehicles ahead of you block your view ahead.

**BASIC TIP # 7 – DRIVE DEFENSIVELY AROUND BIG RIGS, SMV’S AND RV’S**

Even if there are fewer cars than in the city, there’s often a lot more variety of vehicles on the open roads, The other types of ‘life’ on open roads might include enormous trucks, slow-moving vehicles (or SMVs), and all kinds of animals. Take your pick...you’ll see trailers, big rigs, SUVs, SMVs, old cars, old trucks, farm trucks, hay transports, livestock movers, bins, tractors, trailers. As you’d expect, all these different types of vehicles operate at many different speeds and take different amounts of space on the road.

### TRACTORS AND OTHER SLOW-MOVING VEHICLES (SMVs)

Some vehicles can’t help it: they travel slower than the flow of traffic. Keep this in mind and slow down before you reach them. Farm tractors, animal-drawn carts, and road maintenance vehicles usually travel 25 mph or less. Slow moving vehicles may have an orange triangle on the back.

**The SMV orange triangle looks like this:**



Many times, you will find a tractor traveling well below the posted limit. The tractor has to take up more than one lane. When you need to pass a vehicle, make sure you can see far down the road ahead of you. Do not pass on hills or near curves. Pay attention to the driver if you can, he or she may know the road well and maybe have a good view to warn you if a car is coming if you try to pass them.

If there are slow moving vehicles in front of you, pass them only in designated passing zones. If you are part of the slower moving traffic, allow others to pass when it is safe to do so.

### TRUCKS, SEMIs, and BIG RIGS

Trucks may not be slow moving, but they are so common on the open road you need to know a lot about them. Drivers on the open road must be aware of the peculiar habits and abilities of large trucks and big rigs. Large trucks take twice the distance to stop than other vehicles. The average car traveling at 55 MPH will be able to come to a stop in 400 feet. A truck can easily take more than 800 feet to stop from the same speed.

In real life, delays in our reaction time (from seeing something to putting on the brakes) will always lengthen the stopping distance. Any vehicle larger than a car - such as a recreational vehicle, camper van or trailer - will take longer...sometimes, much longer, to stop. A chain reaction pile up can happen even when everyone is trying to use his or her brakes to stop, and even at what “feels” like some distance away.

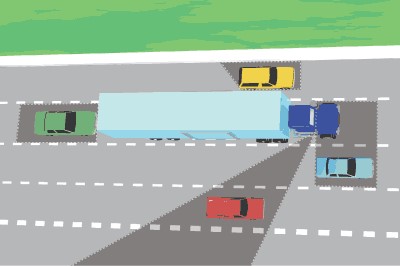


**Braking:** As mentioned, large trucks have a lot more difficulty braking than passenger vehicles. This is why it is so important that you do not pull in front of a large truck and suddenly slow down or stop. The driver will not be able to avoid crashing into to you, plus the weight and size of the truck can cause extreme injury or death that is beyond what would happen with a passenger car.

**Turning:** The rear wheels of all vehicles take a shorter path than the front wheels when making a turn. The longer the car or truck is, the bigger the distance between the front and rear wheel path. It is for this reason that large trucks swing out wide to make a right turn. You have probably noticed those signs that say, “This truck makes wide right turns.” They do this so that the rear of their truck does not hit the curb and hop onto the sidewalk. As a result, when there is a large truck in front of you, pay attention to his turn signals before you start to pass. The truck may seem to be turning left, but he really may be turning right. If you try to pass on the inside lane, you might get caught between the truck and the curb.

**Truckers’ Blind Spots:** Drivers incorrectly assume that just because trucks are higher off the road, truck drivers can see better. In actuality, large trucks have substantial blind spots even though they are high off the ground. While truckers do have a good view of traffic in front of them and are equipped with large mirrors, cars can get completely lost in their blind spots. The general rule is that if you cannot see the truck driver in his or her side mirror, he or she cannot see you.

**Trucker's Blind Spots - The NO ZONE**



**All Shaded areas represent the driver's blind spots- the "NO ZONE"**

**Don't drive alongside a truck without passing:** Always pass a large truck on the left and do it without lingering. After you pass a large truck, move ahead of it. If the truck needs to make an evasive maneuver to avoid an obstacle, you had better not be next to him.

**Do not tailgate!** If you are following behind a truck, and its rearview mirrors are not visible, the driver of the truck has no idea that you are behind him or her and you are tailgating. If you tailgate a big rig, you remove your vital cushion of safety and take a huge and unnecessary risk.

**Tractor-trailers may be closer than they appear.** Because of its size, a tractor trailer can appear to be traveling at a slower speed. When in an intersection, keep in mind this optical illusion - many collisions occur because drivers underestimate the closeness and speed of large trucks.

**BASIC TIP # 8 – PAY ATTENTION TO THE WEATHER, ENVIRONMENT AND THE TERRAIN**

### Driving In High Altitude

Driving at higher altitudes can have strange effects on your car. The air at high altitudes has less oxygen than air at sea level. As a result, your engine has to work harder to give the same power. This can promote overheating and possibly cause vapor lock in some vehicles. Vapor lock will cause your car to behave as if it has no fuel. If you think your car is vapor locked, get it off the road to a safe place to stop. Letting it cool down usually solves the problem. Carrying extra water can be a real help for situations like these.

If you are approaching a steep uphill grade, think about getting into the right lane for slower vehicles as you shift into a lower gear; it may save your car. The idea is to avoid overstraining your engine. And while you are in the higher elevations, fog, clouds or even snow may be a real problem. Slow down. If you are stuck in a thunderstorm or snowstorm, and you cannot see more than 100 feet ahead, you should not be going more than 30 MPH. The odds are you will have lots of company at a safe slow speed without tailgating. You should also drive more slowly if the steep angle reduces your visibility ahead. When you know you are going to be going down a hill, always check your brakes before you need them.

If your brakes fail when coming down a hill, you must not panic. Use your transmission to slow down by changing into successively lower gears.

### Taking In the Whole Scene

Tunnel vision is dangerous when you’re driving. Looking ahead 10 to 15 seconds does not only mean looking forward. You need to scan the roadside to spot warning signs of trouble ahead and also to take in road signs, highway advisories and the terrain you are heading into. To see the whole scene, keep your eyes moving intentionally. Look near, look far. Turn your head before changing lanes, and check in your rearview mirrors frequently.

### Driving On Hills and Curves

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**Curves**

When driving through a curve, there is a strong outward pull on your vehicle. You can feel the pull of gravity when driving through a turn; this outward force has an effect on your car’s tires. When going through a turn, your tires are not only fighting to keep traction while moving forward, but there is a sideward pull as well. It is important to avoid overwhelming your car’s handling ability by choosing a speed that is appropriate for your car as well as for road conditions. Drivers should go slow over loose gravel or in the rain and avoid making sharp turns in vehicles like trucks and SUV’s. Rain, mud, snow, or gravel make roads slippery, and your tires will lose some of their grip. Sometimes there is no posted speed limit on a curve – more than ever, *that* is the time to use your best judgment.

### Hills and Mountains

Sometimes when you go uphill, you will approach steeper grades that require you to shift to a lower gear. Doing so will prevent damage to your engine.

When approaching a steep downward grade, you might want to shift to a lower gear to avoid overheating your brakes. Your engine will provide some braking force so that you don’t overwhelm your regular brakes. Whatever you do, never shift into neutral to coast downhill because it may cause the brakes to fail from overheating. Furthermore, to coast in neutral is so dangerous that it has been declared *illegal*. If your brakes ever fail, do not panic! Just use your transmission to slow down by shifting into lower gears one by one.

When you are stopping on a hill and a car is in front of you, you should always try to have a space cushion. A "four-second or more" cushion between you and the car ahead is a good idea because the other car may roll back into you when it starts up.

If there are slow moving vehicles in front of you and a line of cars has formed, pass them only in designated passing zone. If you are part of the slower moving traffic, allow others to pass when it is safe to do so.



If you are going to drive in mountainous areas, make sure your car can handle the trip. It is very important to keep your vehicle in good mechanical condition. A disabled vehicle in a mountainous area is not only difficult to retrieve but help in general is harder to find. Be alert for unexpected changes in driving conditions as well as sharp turns. Keep to the right side of the road and occasionally honk your horn when you cannot see over 200 feet ahead of you. If you are driving in an area that can have snow, always keep chains in your car and use them when necessary. Make sure you’ve tested the chains beforehand so that they will fit when you need them and that you’ll be able to get them on. Finally, it may seem simple, but it is very important - keep the correct number of chains!

**BASIC TIP # 9 - KNOW HOW TO APPROACH OTHER VEHICLES**

Along with these tips on how to deal with oncoming cars, always remember, whenever meeting another car at night on the open highway, switch to your low beams.

**Oncoming Vehicles:**

Remember, whatever speed you are traveling at, oncoming traffic is likely to be going just as fast. Let’s crunch some numbers; if you are traveling at 55 mph, both you and oncoming traffic will travel over 800 feet in 10 to 12 seconds. Since the two cars both will travel 800 feet, which means that you will need to leave a cushion of over 1600 feet to pass safely. You must also consider that oncoming traffic appears to approach slower than it really is - if you can actually see the vehicle approach, you don’t have enough room. Generally, it is only safe when the oncoming vehicle is far enough away that you cannot see it actually coming closer.

### Space to Pass

It’s very dangerous to pass cars on two lane two-lane roads, especially since these roads usually have blind turns. Furthermore, you are almost always passing in a lane designated for oncoming traffic. To illustrate, if you are going 50 miles per hour, you need to have over a 10 second gap to pass safely. That means that you will be in oncoming traffic for 10 seconds at highway speeds. Test it out the next time you are driving on the highway. Count slowly to 10. When you are going the speed limit, 10 seconds is a long time! You need that much free space to pass safely at high speeds. You have to keep this in mind if you want to pass and you see any **(1)** oncoming car **(2)** hill or curve **(3)** intersection or **(4)** a road hazard or obstruction.

### Passing on a Two-Lane Highway

Now, what if you are driving on a two-lane highway where passing is unsafe because of traffic in the opposite direction?…If you are moving too slow and there are five or more vehicles forming a line behind you, turn off the roadway at designated turnout, or other safe location, so the other drivers can safely pass you.

### Passing on Hills or Curves

Don’t try to pass unless you can see at least one-third of a mile. If your view is blocked by a hill or curve, an approaching vehicle can be just out of sight. Always follow the one-third mile rule to avoid a head-on collision. Furthermore, you must keep to the right side of the roadway when coming upon a curve or at the top of a hill. Edging over to the left to get a better view is highly dangerous. Finally, only pass slow vehicles in designated passing zones.

### Passing On A One-Lane Mountain Road

Some mountain roads have two directions of traffic sharing one lane. The first thing to do is to drive slow enough to be prepared for oncoming traffic. If you meet face to face with another car on a steep grade and you can’t pass, the car going downhill must yield. The car going uphill must go backwards until the car going downhill can pass safely. The reason for this is that the vehicle that can back downhill has more control when going in reverse. If you find yourself on one of these roads, take note of spots where you can pull off as you go in case you get into a tight spot with another vehicle and are forced to back up.

**BASIC TIP # 10 – BE FAMILIAR WITH DIFFICULT ROAD CONDITIONS**

A good general rule of thumb is to “take your dangers one at a time.” Here are five pointers about being safe in potentially dangerous road conditions.

**Rough roads:** Rough roads that have fallen into disrepair, or are simply unpaved, can make controlling your vehicle extremely difficult. Beyond simply being hard to drive on, rough roads can cause serious damage to a vehicle, and even shake cargo loose from it. Watch out for precipitous changes in the road surface: whether rough, gravely, wet, rocky, sandy, or slick.

**Poor Traction:** Keeping tire traction on the road is essential to keeping your vehicle under control, and yourself out of a collision. Wet and/or slick roads present a real danger to drivers. When in poor weather, make sure to reduce your overall speed by between 5-10 mph. This will help you react to situations sooner, as well as help keep your tires in contact with the road. Moving at too fast a speed greatly increases the chances of skidding, wheel-locking, and hydroplaning.

**Narrow Road:** Narrow roads present a great many difficulties to drivers; less space to maneuver, less time to react, and reduced field of vision. As a road narrows be ready to merge lanes while watching out for other drivers doing the same. Reduce your speed so that you may judge distance and speed accurately, as tight spaces means there is very little room for error. A slight miscalculation can mean the difference between passing a car smoothly and losing a side view mirror, or worse!

**Poor Visibility:** Vision is the primary sense all drivers use to operate their vehicles. When this is limited by external factors such as weather, other vehicles or the environment, there is only one appropriate response: slow down. In the case of extreme fog, it may be necessary to completely forego driving until the weather improves.

**BASIC TIP # 11 - ROAD EMERGENCIES HAPPEN TO EVERYONE**

Sometimes freeway lanes are blocked by emergencies, disabled vehicles,

or roadwork. You have to slow down and drive around the obstacle. Just

like when you are changing lanes to get off a freeway, let the drivers around you and to the rear know what is happening by using your signals, braking, and taking gradual action. Be courteous and help others change lanes in front of you. If necessary, use your hazard lights to avoid a pile up in low visibility situations.

Sometimes, it just happens - vehicles can and do stop working properly. Tires burst, engines overheat, and radiators spew. Depending on where this happens you may have to do a variety of different things. Freeways mean big problems and dangers when it comes to breakdowns and collisions, whether it happens to you or others. You have to keep an eye out for emergency vehicles and personnel on the road and on the way to help. Know how to work your hazard lights quickly and efficiently. If you are having any vehicle trouble, consider your next move - you need to find a safe place off the road immediately.

If you find your car having a breakdown, signal, turn on your hazards, and pull over to the shoulder quickly and safely, or if possible, exit the freeway. If you are stopped on the shoulder:

* Be sure you are completely off the road.
* Try to be far enough off the road that your door will not open into traffic.
* If necessary, get out from the passenger’s door for safety.
* Warn traffic by setting up cones or using flares if you have them. Lift the hood. Tie a white cloth around an antenna, side mirror or door handle.

* Find a freeway call box if possible and use 911 to report emergencies. When calling 911, be ready to tell the operator your location and the number of the phone you are using.

If you find yourself needing to reenter traffic from a shoulder pullover, pick an adequate gap in traffic and use the shoulder to accelerate to the proper speed. Look out for any hazards on the road and keep checking on traffic as you reenter the freeway lane. Having your vehicle regularly and professionally checked out is a good idea. Carrying equipment to help in an emergency or breakdown means that you also need to check your emergency equipment every once in a while. For example, is your spare inflated, are batteries in your flashlight charged, do you have flares or replacement fuses and bulbs? Carrying a cell phone can be a lifesaver.

If you are crossing dangerous country - very hot or cold environments, for example- have on hand things you might need to address those conditions: blankets, extra water, warm clothing, sunscreen and perhaps food. Tell someone where you are going and how you are traveling. Try giving yourself a little extra time for long trips. Sometimes collisions happen because people forget to check things like fluid levels (oil, water, or transmission). Be aware of the locations of emergency call boxes and, in remote areas, the last houses or businesses you passed. Pay attention to signs that say things like “Last chance for gas for 50 miles.” Pull over and fill up! You won’t make it across a wasteland on fumes, no matter how much you believe in the power of positive thinking.

**BASIC TIP # 12 – FREEWAY ABUSE AND MISUSE**

Sometimes, people you are passing may wave you down, apparently for help. Be cautious. If you have a cell phone, pull off further down the road or at a business and call for help. If you see someone standing in the median, slow down and move to the right, if possible. Pedestrians and animals occasionally take their chances and run across the freeway. It is illegal for pedestrians to solicit rides or business from drivers on the freeway. **(DC21 4147)** It is also illegal for pedestrians to be walking on highways while under the influence of drugs or liquor “to the degree that it renders the person a hazard.” Evidence of intoxication could cause them to be found at fault if they are hit by a vehicle traveling on the highway **(DC21 4149).**

Many strange things are dropped, discarded, or lost on freeways. It is not unheard of for people to throw things from overpasses and bridges at cars driving underneath. Collisions can occur because people react to foreign objects or animals on the freeway by hitting their brakes and momentarily forgetting about the people driving behind them. Unfortunately, Delaware has found it necessary to create a specific statute forbidding putting glass “or other items” on a highway. **(DC21 4189)**



Abandoning animals on the roadway is not only morally wrong, it carries strict legal penalties as well. This action can be prosecuted under Delaware’s animal cruelty laws and carries strict fines and penalties, even for a first-time offense. Dover and Wilmington’s Animal Control Ordinances specifically forbid this act. **“**No person shall abandon any dog, cat, or domesticated animal in any public place, including the right-of-way of any public highway, road or street…” Sec. 18-11.

### Construction Zone Safety

There are always ongoing “work zones” on Delaware highways. Watch for orange signs, cones and flashing lights that warn of upcoming speed limit reductions. Here are some important tips:

* Do not change lanes or pass in work zones.
* At mergers, move left or right as soon as possible to maintain a smooth flow of traffic and to minimize sudden braking.
* Watch for flaggers and follow their instructions. Their job is to keep everyone moving and safe.
* Watch for special speed limit signs and obey them.
* FINES ARE DOUBLED for speeding and other infractions in work zones.

**BASIC TIP # 13 – BE SAFE GETTING OFF THE FREEWAY!**

Exiting the Freeway involves the same issues of timing, courtesy, and speed control as entering the freeway. The danger involved with crossing over lanes of high-speed traffic demand extra planning. Always be aware of an upcoming exit - then you will not have to dart across several lanes of traffic to get where you are going. Poorly thought-out lane changes - with the goal of “making it” to the exit in a hurry - are some of the most dangerous moves in freeway driving. If it looks like you might miss an exit, go ahead, and miss it completely. Go to the next exit and learn a lesson.

When exiting, make sure you practice these 3 rules:

1) Change lanes one at a time

2) Signal your intention to exit

3) Be at the proper speed so as to avoid losing control at the exit and to avoid obstructing the flow of traffic (not too fast, not too slow).

There is only one safe place to exit the freeway - through the marked freeway exit.

Even though there may be a way to exit onto surface streets by going over a little dirt, **TAKE THE EXIT!** Failure to do so is both unsafe and illegal. It is never ok to cross over dirt or cement medians. Freeway exits are named in advance notice with the approximate distance until the ramp appears. So, if you see a sign “Glenview Rd. ½ Mile” the exit is approximately ½ mile away and you should go ahead and make your way to the exit lane.



Deceleration (or exit) lanes allow you to reduce your speed without endangering traffic to your rear. Once you are on the exit lane, be aware that you are about to exit onto a roadway with a lower speed limit than on the freeway. Do not suddenly hit the brakes at the very end! Reduce your speed and be aware of other drivers in lanes beside you who should also be slowing down. Once you reach the freeway exit lane, you should safely reduce your speed to posted speed limits and yield to other drivers who are also approaching the ramp. If you miss an exit, don’t panic. Usually, you’ll be able to get off at another one up ahead and turn around on the highway, or take surface streets back. It’ll take a few extra minutes, but it’s a lot better than bobbing and weaving your way towards an exit that is speeding by you, endangering yourself and everyone else on the road.

Finally, expect sharp curves on the exit ramp! Leave the extreme centrifugal force thrill rides to the amusement parks. Exiting a curved freeway ramp too fast is a great way to lose control of your vehicle and ruin an otherwise fine day of highway driving.



❖ **CHAPTER 5 QUIZ**

**Choose the *best* answer.**

**1.) Freeway drivers should always be familiar with \_\_\_\_.**

A. alternative routes.

B. exits.

C. Side streets.

D.A and B are correct.

E.None of the above.

**2.) Cars that carry heavy loads, large vehicles, and trucks all need \_\_\_\_\_ distance to stop.**

1. air
2. horsepower
3. distance
4. elevation
5. none of the above

**3.) The far left lane on the freeway is used for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

1. stopping
2. passing
3. speeding
4. nothing
5. All of the above

**4.) A \_\_\_\_\_\_ blind spot is called the No Zone.**

1. Dead Zone
2. Anger Zone.
3. Dark Territory.
4. Trucker’s
5. None of the above

**5.) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lanes are marked with a diamond.**

A. Carpool.

B. Right

C.NO

D.Freeway

E.none of the above

**Chapter 5 2nd rotating quiz**

**1:) Cars that carry heavy loads, large vehicles, and trucks all need more \_\_\_\_ to stop.**

A:) air

B:) horsepower

C:) distance

D:) elevation

E:) none of the above

**2:) The far left lane on the freeway is used for \_\_\_\_\_\_.**

A:) stopping

B:) passing

C:) speeding

D:) nothing

E:) All of the above

**3:) Never drive a vehicle through, around, or under any closed crossing gate at a \_\_\_.**

A:) railroad crossing

B:) home

C:) warehouse

D:) office building.

E:) none of the above.

**4:) If you are convicted of participating in a \_\_\_\_\_ you will get several points on your record and your license will be suspended**.

A:) traffic accident

B:) intersection blockage

C:) revolt

D:) vandalism

E:) speed contest

**5:) When a police officer signals for you to pull over:**

A:) you must slow down while driving home.

B:) correct any poor driving problem you were exhibiting.

C:) you must direct your car to the side of the road and stop at the first safe place.

D:) you should immediately call 911 if you have a cell phone.

E:) None of the above.

**CHOOSING YOUR**

**PATH AND MAKING A**

# PASS

**6 of 10 This Chapter gives you 9 BASIC Tips about different types of lanes and safe passing.**

Drivers must be able to make quick decisions at any time regardless of what they are doing. Driving is much easier when cars have reached a kind of balance on the road with other drivers, everyone pretty much agreeing on their positions in traffic. If you or someone else decides to make changes to that balance and make a pass, awareness of the positions and speed of other drivers is essential.

So, as you start out onto the road, determine your position in the whole traffic situation. Know which lane to use depending on the area where you are and the type of vehicle you are driving.

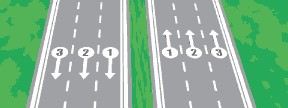
**BASIC TIP # 1 – THE THREE MAIN TYPES OF ROADWAYS ARE…?**

**If you said the 3 main types of roadways are:**

## Divided Roadways, with double solid lines



## Divided Highways, with sets of solid double lines



## Lane Roadways, with dashed lines



They all look pretty familiar, right?

Let’s talk about how these roads look to a driver who wants to make the most of road space. In other words, how are we supposed to use these lanes?

Your vehicle must be centered in the lane. If the roadway is narrow, you must drive as close to the right-hand edge of the roadway as is safe. This is true on narrow roads and mountain roads as well. The exceptions are:

When passing vehicles going in the same direction on a one-way road



When the right half of the road is blocked, or

When turning left at an intersection or into or out of a private road or driveway.

## BASIC TIP # 2 – KNOW THE MEANING OF LANE LINES AND COLORS

### White Lines

**Broken White lines** are painted on the pavement to show traffic is going in your direction – such as on one-way streets or on your side of a multi lane road, or in the case of a bicycle lane, all illustrated below.





**Solid White lines** discourage lane changing. They should not be crossed except in special circumstances, such as to avoid a collision. Double solid white lines prohibit lane changing.



### Yellow Lines

**Solid Yellow lines**, (as shown in the picture above, left) divide two-way roads, and separate traffic moving in opposite directions.

You should never pass a solid yellow line, with these few important exceptions:

* When you are turning left at an intersection
* When you are turning into or out of a private road, or a driveway.
* When the right half of the road is closed or blocked by an obstacle. Proceed with extreme caution here.
* Certain carpool lanes allow drivers to cross but you must enter and exit at designated places only.

When a solid and a broken yellow line are together, you may not pass if the solid line is on your side of traffic. If the broken line is in your lane, you may pass. If in doubt,

don’t pass!



### Broken Yellow Lines

Passing on a two-way road is allowed only if the yellow center line is broken.



Now, let’s get a little bit more technical! Here are more descriptions of lanes and their uses, along with some of the relevant statutes.

**BASIC TIP # 3 – KNOW REQUIRED LANE USE**

#### Right Side of Roadway (DC21 4114)

Keep it simple. Basically, the law requires drivers to favor driving on the right side of the road at all times. Here are 5 exceptions to the rule:

* When overtaking or passing another vehicle
* When making a left turn
* When the right side is closed to traffic
* On a roadway restricted to one-way traffic
* When the roadway is not of sufficient width

#### Lanes for “Through Traffic”

Many roads have two or more lanes going in your direction. These lanes are separated by broken white lines. You must choose which lane to use. Drive in the lane that has the smoothest traffic flow. You will save fuel.

If you can choose among three lanes on your side of the road, pick the middle lane for the smoothest driving. If you want to go faster, pass, or turn left, use the left lane. When you drive slowly, enter, or turn off the road, use the right lane.

If only two lanes go in your direction, pick the right lane for the smoothest driving.

Don't weave - stay in one traffic lane as much as possible. Before changing lanes, check your mirrors for vehicles that may be ready to pass you; also turn your head and check beside your vehicle to see if any vehicle, such as a motorcycle, is in your blind spot and to be sure there is enough room for your vehicle in the next lane.

Once you start through an intersection, keep going. If you start to make a turn, follow through. Last second changes may cause collisions. If you missed a turn, continue to the next intersection, and work your way back to where you want to go.

#### Lanes for Turning

Below are some rules to help you when turning at a street corner:

**Left turn**: Get close to the center divider line or into the left turn lane if there is one. Don't turn too soon and "cut the corner" of the lane belonging to cars coming toward you.

**Right turn**: If you are turning right, get close to the right edge of the road (watch for bicycles or motorcycles between your car and the curb). On a right turn, don't turn wide. Stay in the right lane until you have finished your turn.

#### Bicycle Lanes

A bicycle lane is shown by a solid white line along either side of the street, four or more feet from the curb. This line will usually be a broken line near the corner. The words **"BIKE LANE"** are painted at various locations in this lane. Don't drive in a bike lane *unless* you are making a right turn at a corner or other entrance, such as a driveway. If you are making a right turn, first watch for any bikes in the bike lane, then move into the bike lane no more than 200 feet from the entrance or corner before your turn. You may park in the bike lane unless signs say **"NO PARKING."**

Pedestrians should never walk in bike lanes – this is hazardous for the pedestrian, bicyclists and for any motorists that happen to be passing by.

#### Sidewalks

Never drive on a sidewalk unless you are crossing a sidewalk to enter or leave a driveway or alley. When driving across a sidewalk, stop first to check for any pedestrians. They have the right of way.

#### Lanes for Passing

As a rule, you should never drive off the paved or main-traveled portion of the road or on the shoulder to pass. You will know the edge of the main-traveled portion of the road by the white line painted on the road surface. When you want to pass a vehicle or bicycle going in your direction, pass on the left. Passing on the right is dangerous and is legal only:

* If an open highway is clearly marked for two or more lanes of vehicles moving in your direction of travel.
* If the driver of the other vehicle is making a left turn.
* If you are on a one-way roadway and there are two or more lanes.

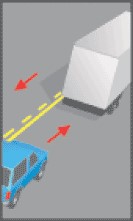
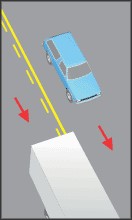
According to Delaware statute, it is permitted to pass on the right using the shoulder when the “vehicle overtaken is making or about to make a left turn.” **(DC21 4117 c)**

#### Approaching Vehicles (DC21 4115)

Drivers of vehicles in opposite directions should pass each other to the right and should give each other at least 1/2 of the main traveled portions of the roadway whenever possible.

#### Divided Roadways and Highways (DC21 4122)

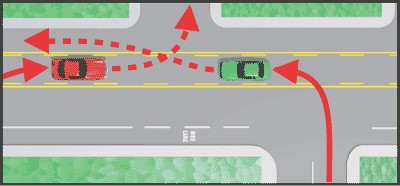
Some roads and highways are divided by two solid lines, or similar markings:



When these markings are present, do not drive over them. Never drive to the left of them unless you are:

* Turning left at an intersection
* Turning into or out of a private road or driveway
* In a carpool lane that has a designated entrance at the left
* Instructed to drive on the other side of the road because your side is closed or blocked.

#### Two-way Streets with Center Lanes



When you are driving on a two way road that also has a designated center lane, you should not drive in the center lane except when you are preparing for a left turn. Found mainly in city driving, the center two way turn lane should be driven in for a maximum of 200 feet only.

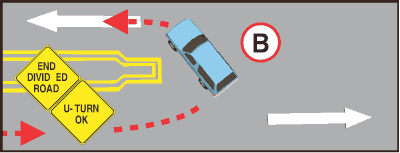
#### Divided Highways with Center Lanes

Unlike its city cousin, the center lane in a two-way highway may be used for passing, although it is sometimes called a “suicide lane” because it is possible for vehicles traveling on a collision path at high speed to be in them simultaneously. You cannot use the center lane for passing when it is divided with solid lines – only pass when there is a broken line. It should be understood that you may not drive in the far-left lane (used by opposing traffic), or use the center lane at any time it is unsafe.

#### Laned Highways

When a roadway is divided into two or more clearly marked lanes for traffic in one direction, drive within a single lane and stay there unless you need to pass another vehicle. If there are three or more lanes on your side of the road, the left lane is the fast lane, used for passing. The right lane is the slow lane. The middle lane should be the best for a steady stream of through traffic.

#### U-turns



On a divided highway, making U-turns are not permitted if it means that you must cross over any dividing section, curb, or strip. U-turns must be made on paved surfaces and at breaks in sets of double solid lines, as illustrated above. You cannot make U-turns over two sets of double lines. In general, you cannot turn or drive on an unpaved median.

**Speed Bumps**

Speed bumps are common traffic-calming devices designed to reduce vehicle speed, especially in areas with high pedestrian activity, such as residential neighborhoods and school zones. They are typically used to improve safety by forcing drivers to slow down, reducing the risk of accidents. However, speed bumps can also cause discomfort for drivers if not approached correctly, potentially damaging vehicles or disrupting traffic flow if placed too closely together. It is important to always reduce speed when approaching speed bumps and follow posted signs to ensure safety for both drivers and pedestrians.

**Rumble strips**

Rumble strips (also known as **sleeper lines** or **alert strips**) are a [traffic calming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traffic_calming) feature to alert inattentive drivers of potential danger, by causing a tactile fuzzy vibration and audible rumbling transmitted through the wheels into the vehicle interior. A rumble strip is applied along the direction of travel following an edge line or centerline, to alert drivers when they drift from their lane. Rumble strips may also be installed in a series *across* the direction of travel, to warn drivers of a stop or slowdown ahead, or of an approaching danger spot.

#### Slow-Moving Vehicles and Turn Outs (DC21 4125)

If you are traveling at a slower speed than normal, you should stay at the right-hand lane so that other vehicles can pass. Stay in your lane unless you are passing another vehicle, turning left at an intersection or into a private road or driveway. If a slow-moving vehicle drives on the left-hand side of the road, the driver is violating state law.

On a two-lane highway where passing is unsafe because of traffic in the opposite direction or other conditions, slow moving vehicles should use turn-outs to let lines of cars pass them whenever possible and are required to do so when 5 or more vehicles are behind them. The people who build highways are required to build special "turnout” areas. These are provided for people who are driving slower than other traffic and are blocking others from passing.

#### Reserved Lanes for Special Vehicles

On various roadways, one or more lanes may be reserved for special vehicles.

Reserved lanes are marked by signs stating that the lane is reserved for special use

and often have a white diamond posted at the side of the road or painted on the road surface.

* “Transit” or “bus” means the lane is for bus use only.
* “Bicycle” means the lane is reserved for bicycles.
* “HOV” means high occupancy vehicles, which will be discussed further on.

Even where no signs are posted, the right-hand lane should be used for certain heavy vehicles. These can include:

* Motor trucks or truck tractors having three or more axles or drawing another vehicle.
* Passenger vehicles or buses drawing any other vehicle.
* School buses (when transporting pupils)
* Farm labor vehicles (when transporting passengers)
* Vehicles transporting explosives.
* Trailer buses

#### Reversible Lanes

You may find some travel lanes are designed to carry traffic in one direction at certain times and in the opposite direction at other times. These lanes are usually marked by double-dashed yellow lines. Before you start driving in them, check to see which lanes you can use at that time. There may be signs posted by the side of the road or overhead. Special lights are often used. A green arrow means you can use the lane beneath it; a red “X” means you cannot. A flashing yellow “X” means the lane is only for turning. A steady yellow “X” means that the use of the lane is changing.

#### HOV Lanes

The white diamond HOV or High Occupancy Vehicle signs and lane markings indicate special use lanes for vehicles with more than one person in them. Signs say how many people must be in the vehicle, as well as the days and hours to which it applies. For example, “HOV 3” means there must be at least three people in the vehicle. Motorcyclists are the only exception to this rule, who may use the lane unless expressly prohibited. Do not cross over the double parallel solid lines. Wait for the designated entry or exit point. Crossing the line can result in a very expensive violation, whether you qualify to ride in the lane or not.

**Note for carpoolers:** Delaware has a special program for those who register with Rideshare and carpool. It’s called the “Home Free Guarantee” and it will provide a ride home for you in a taxi, shuttle or rental car in the event of an emergency or problem with your regular carpool ride home. Simply register with RideShare and you will automatically qualify for this benefit.

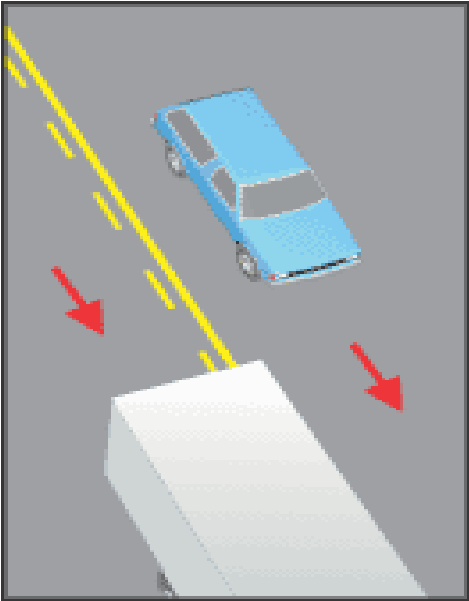
#### Mountain Driving

You will need extra precautions when driving on mountain roads. If the roadway has no marked centerline, drive as near to the right-hand edge as possible. Some mountain roads have two directions of traffic sharing a lane. If you are driving in one, you should give audible warning with your horn if you are approaching any curve where the view is obstructed within a distance of 200 feet.

Try to avoid passing on two-lane roadways because it is dangerous. Every time you pass, you increase your chances of having a collision. Every time you pass, you increase your chances of having a collision.

**BASIC TIP # 4 – PASSING TESTS YOUR GOOD JUDGMENT**

This part of the chapter talks about the facts of life – regarding making a pass. Passing is not a necessarily an unsafe maneuver when done correctly, but good judgment and careful execution are essential. Drivers must be able to make quick calculations while carefully surveying the road, traffic, and other vehicles. If you really get to know the following “passing principles,” you will learn to leave any of your passing problems…in the past.



*Be sure you are going to complete the pass before you even start to make it!* It is especially important to be sure you can safely execute a pass when attempting it on a two-lane highway. If you start going into the lane of oncoming traffic and suddenly change your mind, you might find that the original space you were driving in has disappeared!

Try to avoid passing on two-lane roadways because it is dangerous. Every time you pass, you increase your chances of having a collision.

**BASIC TIP # 5 – PASS LEGALLY OR TAKE A PASS ON IT**

Road designations (markings and sometimes signs) will tell drivers when passing is okay. This helps everybody: even if you are not passing, you need to know whether to expect other cars to pass.

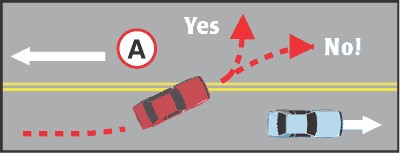
Always check to see if passing is legal. Remember that there are likely to be limits on passing, comprised of zones or areas where you can begin and end your passing. Try never to pass when you are fatigued or angry because that is when you start to make mistakes and get tickets.

#### When it is Illegal to Pass

These situations present real danger. An otherwise good driver who passes in these circumstances can be stopped “dead” by bad luck. Take a moment and visualize these scenarios.

#### Never Pass

* On any hill (if you are on a two-lane road)
* To the left side at intersections on a two-lane road, no matter how busy or slow
* At railroad crossings (this will get you a very expensive fine, and a reckless driving charge as well!)
* Any emergency vehicle driving and displaying lights, a horn or siren.
* To the left side on bridges or abutments
* When a school bus stopped and has turned on red flashing lights.
* If there is a long line of vehicles ahead of you.
* When you are unsure of the intentions of the driver you want to pass.
* On two-way roadways, where there is a double yellow line, or solid single yellow line on your side of the roadway, passing is prohibited (see illustration below). As indicated, it is permitted to cross the double yellow line to make a left turn.



* If you can see an oncoming vehicle coming, and you have a doubt that it may be too close for you to safely execute the pass.
* If you are coming to a blind turn (you cannot see any oncoming vehicles or pedestrians), a blind intersection, or when your sight of the distance ahead is limited by *anything* (from trees to brush to fog to a big truck with circus elephants).
* When the no-passing zone is too close to complete your full passing maneuver.



**BASIC TIP # 6 – TAKE THE HINT— PASSING CAN BE DANGEROUS**

So many drivers do almost everything right as far as looking at the road and staying in control of their vehicle – perhaps you are one of them. According to police reports, here are some of the most common passing mistakes made by otherwise good drivers:

* **There is a long line of cars ahead.**

A long line of cars ahead defeats the reasons for passing. Be patient, and do not pass in this situation.

* **The car coming at you is too close.**

Just before sundown, it can be hard to tell their speed coming out of the shadows; weather and small hills can also make vehicles look further away than they really are. Err on the side of caution - we should assume *all* vehicles are closer than we think.

* **A driver ahead may appear to be passing, but is turning left.**

If there are many left turns or busy tourist stops (especially on a two-lane road), then passing becomes dangerous. Vehicles will be turning and stopping, often suddenly, especially if they do not know the area.

* **The vehicle we are trying to pass is at (or near) the speed limit.**

Sometimes, we may be driving at the same speed as the vehicle we want to pass. If the vehicle ahead is driving at or near the speed limit, don’t exceed the speed limit just to pass them up.

* **The passing zone will end before we finish passing.**

This can happen because we do not know the road very well, take too long to pass, or perhaps have to wait for other vehicles to complete their passes first. There are often signs telling you how many feet until the passing zone ends. Do not pass outside that zone.

* **The sight distance ahead is very limited.**

There is a good chance that the window for passing is small, or you cannot detect a hazard. Do not risk a head on collision.

**BASIC TIP # 7 – EVERY PASSING MOMENT COUNTS**

**Here are the factors you need to consider before making that pass:**

**FACTOR 1: How is road traction?**

**(1 MPH)**

One of the most important things when passing is maintaining control of our vehicle under changing speeds – speeding up to pass and slowing down to merge. When conditions on the road change, it can lead to loss of road traction and some unpleasant surprises such as slipping, sliding, and spinning out.

Be aware of the condition of the road at all times and watch for changing conditions. Ice, water, sand, and gravel can and *do* change the way our wheels hold the road and react to changes in speed. Before passing, ask yourself - Can your wheels keep a steady grip on the road? If there is any doubt, wait for better conditions.

**FACTOR 2: Can you see a gap in traffic you can fit into at the end of your pass?**

The rule of thumb is, it is safest to be able to see a position on the road you are going to occupy after you complete your pass before you even start to make the maneuver. Look at the road ahead. If you look ahead and can only see a curve or other obstacle, it is best to wait until conditions are better for passing. If you can see a spot, then other drivers will also probably see where you are going.

Keep in mind other safety considerations - what will you do if a hazard appears? For example, what if the vehicle you want to pass is swerving or having problems that might affect you? If a deer runs across the road in front of them, what will happen to both of you? If there is a scenic overview where cars pull over, are you ready for slow traffic and pedestrians?

**FACTOR 3: How long does it take to complete a passing maneuver?**

**(25 MPH)**

Every time you pass, you should be thinking about how long it will take to accomplish from start to finish. Think about all the other vehicles on the road around you and where they are going - cars coming toward you, the car right in front of you, the vehicles further in front, and the cars behind or beside you. Each of these vehicles as well as their speed will open up possibilities for passing, as well as set limits on your passing time. It is up to you to determine whether you have enough time to pass under current and changing conditions.

**BASIC TIP # 8 – HOW TO PASS WELL: PASS IT DOWN**

Knowing when to start and end a pass helps you execute your pass smoothly. Driving with your low beam headlights ON all the time will increase your visibility, and using signals to show you are making moves can really help. First, check for hazards such as oncoming vehicles, vehicles approaching from the rear and merging vehicles.

Always, always be aware of and check your blind spots in a passing situation.

Using turn signals to indicate you are passing is a courtesy that other drivers are likely to respond to with courtesy. Not using turn signals for passing is likely to surprise other drivers and could earn you a honk if another driver becomes surprised or exasperated by your movements.

**Space to Merge**

Have **a four-second space cushion or gap** any time you merge into traffic passing you in the next lane. This gives both you and the car behind you a **Three-Second following distance**. You need a four-second gap whenever you change lanes, enter a freeway from an entrance lane, or merge with another road. Leaving a big enough space cushion is important to avoid aggravating others and to avoid unsafe hazards.

We all have to share the road, but safety requires that we drive in our own space. Don’t think that another driver will share a space in the roadway with you.

#### Space to Pass

A 10-12 second gap is necessary to pass safely at open highway speeds of 50 to 55 mph. traveling at 65 or 70 mph requires even more space. As we have discussed, it is your good judgment that plays a crucial role in passing safely – don’t always trust what you see because your eyes can deceive. Usually if you can actually see the oncoming car come closer, the car is too close for you to attempt to pass.

**- HERE’S A PASSING CHECKLIST-**

**.**

* **Spot the gap ahead that is your destination.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **Check for hazards, check your blind spots** | |
|  **Signal your intent to pass.** |  |

* **Pick up speed.**
* **RE-check ahead.**
* **Get into your passing lane.**
* **Find your space to merge.**
* **Signal your intended move.**
* **Check your blind spots,**
* **Create space for the passed vehicle.**
* **Merge back into your lane.**
* **Make sure your signal is off.**

**BASIC TIP # 9 – YIELD WHEN YOU ARE BEING PASSED**

We need to think about passing safely even when we are not the ones doing the passing. There are two very important factors to being passed safely.

**First:** Keep your speed steady. You are being passed by someone who is probably making decisions because of the speed you are driving. If you have been driving at a steady speed, stick with it. If you have been changing speeds, you should drive at the speed safest for the road conditions.

**Second:** Yield. Be sure to help the passing vehicle go by. Sometimes, a vehicle will attempt to pass you but is only going a few miles an hour faster than you are. Yield so that they can get back onto the right side of the road. They are more dangerous trying to get by you on a two-lane road. If a passing vehicle is presenting a continuing danger, get clear of them and consider pulling off the road and calling 911.

Many collisions happen when lane-hopping and passing maneuvers turn into a battle between a couple of hotshots. Good drivers choose the smoothest lane for driving. Your reward will be good fuel economy and fewer headaches from bad and aggressive drivers. Birds of a feather tend to drive together.



## \* \* \*

❖ **CHAPTER 6 QUIZ**

**Choose the *best* answer.**

**1.) You should always drive on the right side of the road except \_\_\_\_.**

1. when passing another vehicle.
2. when making a left turn.
3. when it’s closed to traffic.
4. All of the above

**2.) A designated place where you can stop to let other vehicles pass you is called \_\_\_\_.**

1. a roadway.
2. a slow-moving vehicle lane.
3. a turn-out.
4. a grade.
5. a toll booth.

**3.) You should not pass another vehicle if the following conditions are present:**

1. There is a long line of cars ahead.
2. The sight distance ahead is limited.
3. A driver ahead is making a left.
4. You are approaching a curve.

E All of the above

**4.) When approaching a curve at a mountain road, blow your horn if the view is obstructed within \_\_\_\_.**

1. 50 feet
2. 100 feet
3. 150 feet
4. 200 feet

E 500 feet

1. **On a two-lane road a slow-moving vehicle should use the designated area to let cars pass after\_\_\_\_\_\_ or more are behind them.**

* 1. 1
  2. 2
  3. 3
  4. 4
  5. 5

**Chapter 6 2nd rotating quiz**

**1:) You should always drive on the \_\_\_\_\_\_ except when passing, making a left turn or when it's closed to traffic**.

A:) left side of the road

B:) middle of the road

C:) sidewalk

D:) right side of the road

E:) None of the above

**2:) A designated place where you can \_\_\_ is called a turn-out.**

A:) let other vehicles pay you

B:) let other vehicles get gas

C:) let other vehicles pass you

D:) let other vehicles reverse

E:) none of the above

**3:) You \_\_\_\_ another vehicle if the following conditions are present. There is a long line of cars ahead, the sight distance ahead is limited, a driver ahead is making a left, and you are approaching a curve.**

A:) should pass

B:) should not tailgate

C:) should bump

D:) should make a u-turn to avoid

E:) should not pass

**4:) When approaching a \_\_\_\_\_ at a mountain road, blow your horn if the view is obstructed within 200 feet.**

A:) line of cars

B:) hill

C:) turn out

D:) curve

E:) cliff

**5:) On a \_\_\_\_ lane road a slow moving vehicle should use the designated area to let cars pass after 5 or more are behind them.**

A:)5

B:)4

C:)7

D:)6

E:)2

# SPEED LAWS AND BACKING UP SAFELY

**7 of 10 This Chapter gives you 5 BASIC Tips about safe speed on the road and proper backing.**

As a responsible young person like Peter and Sally, you are taught to do certain things and avoid doing other things. Following the requirement to tell the truth, obey the law is the rule that you should *never speed or drive in such a way as to be reckless with your vehicle*. The speed laws and guidelines for backing up your vehicle safely will be explained in greater detail below.

Some people would never think speed has much to do with backing up. This chapter is here to remind everyone that speed has a lot to do with all aspects of control over a vehicle’s direction: whether going forward or backward!

**BASIC TIP # 1 – SPEED LAWS HAVE A PURPOSE**

The reason why we have **maximum speed limits** is to keep the roads as safe as possible. The posted limits are set at a speed at which drivers can maintain control of their vehicles and avoid hazards. These limits are set for ideal conditions, so if there is a condition like snow, ice, gravel, fog, etc., you must adjust your speed for safety.

Speed laws also serve to avoid gridlock caused by drivers going too slow! Driving too slowly can block traffic: slow going can cause many unsafe conditions. This is why there are **minimum speed limits** too.

## Speed Limits (DC21 4168)

The basic rule of thumb with speed is that you must never drive faster than is safe for the conditions, regardless of posted speed limit. “An operator shall operate a vehicle at a careful and prudent speed not greater than is reasonable and proper having due regard to the traffic, surface and width of the way and of other conditions then existing.”

The law expects you to know the speed limits in the area where you are driving. A driver cannot claim they did not see a speed limit sign for two miles (or two hundred yards) and just “felt the urge” to go 100 MPH. No. A driver needs to understand the type of road they are on and the road conditions and set their speed correctly. Posted speed limits give us guidance for ideal conditions and it is never legal to exceed the limit posted.

## When Driving Slowly (DC21 4171)

The speed laws work both ways. You may receive a ticket for driving too slowly if you block the “normal and reasonable movement of traffic.” When you are driving at the speed limit, but the flow of traffic is faster, do not speed up and avoid traveling in the “fast lane.”

Some vehicles just don’t move as fast as others – farm vehicles and antique autos are examples of these. These vehicles are required to stay to the right and yield to motorists who wish to pass them. If you drive a low-speed vehicle, such as a golf cart, you should drive on roads where the speed limit is 35 mph. You should keep to the right lane unless you are passing or making a left-hand turn.

**Speed Limit and Speed Advisory Signs**

There are two speed signs: speed limit signs and advisory (recommended) speed signs. Speed limit signs have black letters and numerals on a white rectangular background and are the legal allowable limits. Advisory speed signs have black letters on a yellow background and often are shown under a warning sign. Advisory speed signs are posted along portions of highways to warn you that conditions may often make it unsafe to drive faster. Although an advisory speed is not a specific speed limit, if you exceed it and have an accident, it may well be concluded that you violated the general speed restriction, and you could be subject to arrest.

## Words of Caution to Passengers of Ride-Haling Company Cars and Drivers of Such Cars

Have you ever noticed that as a passenger in a ride-hailing company car such as *Uber and Lyft*, the car moves at a more rapid rate, dodges pedestrians and stretches the limit of what is acceptable when it comes to the speed limit? Whether you are a driver or passenger, along with the right to work for these companies or the privilege of begin a passenger is no corresponding right to flout society’s driving conventions in the name of “getting a driver to a destination safely” or “earning a tip.”

Recently, a law was passed making it illegal for Uber and Lyft drivers to be intoxicated while on duty. As a passenger or driver for one of these companies, one should expect more regulations and pressure from the local government and state legislature to make sure Uber rider and passengers are not “above the law.”

|  |
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| **Did you know?**    **A trailer bus is a motor truck or truck tractor pulling a trailer or semi-trailer designed, used, or maintained for the transportation of more than 10 persons, including the driver.** |

**If you are towing a trailer or following another towed vehicle or three-axle truck...**

… keep a safety cushion of at least 300 Feet. You already know how long it can take to stop a car: towing a vehicle is dangerous, even for professional big rig drivers! (This rule does not apply when you are in a business or residential district.)

**BASIC TIP # 2 – OBSERVE SPECIAL SPEED LIMITS**

### Speed Limits for Designated Areas (DC21 4170)

Local authorities are allowed to set the speeds for their jurisdiction if they come to the conclusion that the standard statewide speed limits are too high or too low for their particular road conditions. They must clearly post these speed limits and give proper warning of speed changes, and all such local speed laws must be approved by the Department of Safety and Homeland Security.

Let’s look at the typical speeds on Delaware roads:

**Place Speed Limit School Zones 20 miles per hour**

**Business Districts 25 miles per hour Residential Districts 25 miles per hour Two-Lane Roads 50 miles per hour Divided Roads & Roads Having Four or More Lanes 55 miles per hour**

### Controlled Access Highways (Turnpikes & Expressways) 55 miles per hour Route 1 and Interstate 495 65 miles per hour

Whenever any of the above speed limits are unsafe for conditions, they may be reduced to lower speed limits. Signs may be placed along the highway showing the speed limit in such conditions.



**School Zones**

You must reduce your speed to 20 mph when traveling in a school zone:

1. During recess.
2. When children are going to or leaving school during school opening or closing hours.
3. When school speed limit signs are flashing during school opening or closing hours; or
4. At any other times designated by a local traffic ordinance.

The fines for violations in these zones are very costly. Here’s some other tips to keep kids safe:

 If a school ground has no fence NEVER go faster than 20 mph, even after school hours.

 Some school zones have reduced speeds that are below 20 mph, so look at the posted signs.

* Obey crossing guards and signals from school busses. If a school bus is displaying flashing red lights, you must stop until the children are safely across the street and the lights have stopped flashing.

In 2022, approximately 59 children were injured in pedestrian crashes in Delaware, with many of these incidents occurring as the children were on their way to or from school. The issue is not only that some children are in unsafe areas, but also that many people treat local streets as speedways or shortcuts—designed for cars to pass through, rather than for the people who live, walk, and play in the community.

Delaware participates actively in the federally funded “Safe Routes to School” program, in which 9 schools are actively implementing safe walking and bicycling routes to school, with the help of local authorities. Do your part and watch for kids on the roads – especially between the hours of 8 and 9 am, and 3 and 4 pm.

Children are known to suddenly enter the roadway without warning, giving you very little time to react. Young children may lack the physical ability to cross a street quickly, and their small size limits their visibility to drivers. They are also likely to choose the shortest rather than the safest route to cross the street. Be extra alert around ANY area where children are likely to be present – such as

**Outside of schools,**

**Playgrounds,**

**Parks,**

**Malls and Libraries,**

…**and around Ice Cream Trucks.**



### Seniors

As a group, senior citizens are particularly dependent on safe streets for walking because many of them no longer drive, cannot react quickly and may be more vulnerable to mortality when they are hit and injured.

When passing a senior center or any other facility primarily used by senior citizens, maintain a speed limit of 25 mph whether or not signs are posted as such.

### Animals on or around the road

If you see animals or livestock being herded (yes, this can still happen in some areas,) slow down and obey the person in charge of the animals. If you see a stray animal in your path, slow down or stop, if safe to do so. Do not swerve into an oncoming lane! It is likely that a tragic accident with an animal will be less serious than an accident with another vehicle.

If you are on a roadway that displays animal crossing signs, be careful - many people will instinctively swerve around an animal, even if it means hitting other vehicles, including yours!

### Speeding Contests (DC21 4172)

There are several laws on the books that law enforcement may use to issue tickets and arrests for driving in a “…race, speed competition or contest, drag race or acceleration contest, test of physical endurance, exhibition of speed or acceleration.” No matter what you call it, it is illegal and seriously prosecuted in The First State!

Additionally, it is illegal to aid, abet, promote, assist or in any manner participate in such a race. That would include being a spectator as well.

The statute gets even tougher on anyone remotely involved, or not even present at a street race. “If any vehicle is witnessed by a police officer to be in violation of this section and the identity of the operator is not otherwise apparent, the person in whose name such vehicle is registered as the owner shall be held prima facie responsible for such violation.” **(DC21 4172 c)** That means that your girlfriend, boyfriend, sister, or dear old dad sleeping at home could get ticketed if you decide to race in their car!

Although you will probably earn at least 5 points on your driving record for engaging in speed contests, the DMV will most likely take further action, like suspending your license for 6 months. Street racing carries penalties of hundreds of dollars and a minimum of 10 days in jail. But you could spend as much as a month in jail for a first-time offense, depending on how the court sees it. Subsequent offenses cost hundreds of dollars more, will cause your license to be suspended longer, and can land you in jail for up to a couple of months! Any racing which involves a collision or injuries will result in extended jail time and civil lawsuits as well.

## Serious Speeding Violations

* Upon a conviction for speeding 20-24 mph over the posted limit, you will receive an advisory letter from the DMV. Take this seriously as you are close to having your license taken away.
* For driving 25 mph over, your license will be suspended for 1 month.
* The length of suspension will increase by one month for each additional 5 mph over the initial 25-mph threshold.
* The driver may elect to attend the behavior modification course in lieu of a license suspension when driving 25-29 mph over the posted limit.
* For speeding 30 mph over the posted limit or more, suspension is mandatory.
* To become eligible for reinstatement, the driver must complete or have completed a behavior modification/attitudinal driving course within the previous two years.

The suspension period jumps to 1 year if you are convicted of driving 50 mph or more over the posted speed limit or driving 100 mph on a highway. To become eligible for reinstatement, you must complete or have completed a behavior modification driving course within the previous two years.

## Near Railroad Tracks

When it comes to car accidents at railroad tracks, most people think, “It couldn’t happen to me.” This is false. Please consider the following (compiled by the Federal Railroad Administration):

• Every 90 minutes there is a train collision or derailment.

* A train carrying hazardous material goes off the tracks about every 2 weeks in the United States.
* Railroads are self-regulated and fall under the scrutiny of the federal government.
* Local jurisdictions have little or no control over train travel in their community.
* More than 50% of all railroad accidents occur at unprotected crossings.

**STATISTIC:** According to the Federal Railroad Administration, **over 80%** of railroad crossings lack adequate warning devices.

**At railroad crossings that DO NOT have** an electric/mechanical cross signal device or flagman – Before crossing REDUCE YOUR SPEED to 15 mph, LOOK BOTH WAYS DOWN THE TRACKS, and make sure there is no approaching train visible or close enough to be a hazard. If there is a train, stop no closer than 15 feet to the rail.

**At a railroad crossing that DO have** an electric/mechanical cross signal device or human flagman – If an oncoming train is indicated stop within 50 to 15 feet of the rail. If no train is indicated, reduce your speed to 15 mph anyway, and visually inspect the track in both directions before you cross. If there is no indication of an oncoming train from a crossing signal device or flagman, you should continue traveling at the posted speed limit.

NEVER drive a vehicle through, around or under any crossing gate or barrier at a railroad crossing while it is closed or is being opened or closed.And NEVER pass someone on a railroad track under any circumstances – this is a serious offense.

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| **Did you know?**    **Speaking of speed, trains cannot stop swiftly. An average 150 car freight train traveling 30 mph requires about 3000 feet to stop – that’s quite a bit more than half a mile. At 60 mph, the same train requires over 8000 feet, or over 1 and a half miles to stop.** |

### Blind Intersections and Alleys

Sometimes as we approach an intersection, there may be buildings, parked vehicles or plants that block the view - this is what we call a “blind intersection.” When you approach an intersection and you cannot see 50 feet in either direction during the last 200 feet before crossing, you must reduce your speed to 15 mph to be prepared to stop suddenly. If there is a **YIELD** sign that gives you the right of way, you may proceed at the posted speed limit. Also remember that the speed limit in any alley is 15 mph. In business or residential districts, the speed limit is 25 mph unless signs show other limits.

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| **Did you know?**  **The faster your speed, the more distance you will need to stop and the less time you will have to react. The danger of impact exponentially increases the faster you go. The force of a 60 mph crash is not double the impact of a 30 mph crash, it is four times as great. Do the math!** |

**BASIC TIP # 3 – SPEED/STOP – SPEED IS THE KEY TO STOPPING DISTANCE**

According to studies surveyed by University of West Virginia\*, driver’s response times are as follows: “When fully aware of the time and location of the brake signal, drivers can detect a signal and move the foot from accelerator to brake pedal in about 0.70 to 0.75 sec. Response to unexpected, but common signals, such as a lead car's brake lights, is about 1.25 sec, whereas RTs (reaction times) for surprise events, such as an object suddenly moving into the driver's path, is roughly 1.5 sec.”

At 60 mph your car is traveling 5,820 feet per minute, or roughly 88 feet per second. This means that if a hazard comes up, your vehicle is likely to travel over 130 feet forward *before you even hit the brake*. This is the time it takes to perceive, react and begin applying the brakes under normal, or average, conditions. As we all know, most days are not average - sometimes we are not at our best, and often the weather and the roads contribute their own negative factors.

Consider this:

**As a rule of thumb, at 35 mph, your perception time is 1/2 second and a distance of 18 feet. Your reaction time is 3/4 second and a further distance of 28.5 feet. So, you have traveled about 50 feet before you have actually begun to apply the brakes. Braking time will take your car an additional 160 feet!**

At **55** MPH, it takes about 400 feet to react to something you see and bring a car to a complete stop.

At **35** MPH, it will take about 210 feet to react, and then to bring a car to a complete stop.

So, stopping distances are also increased if the road conditions are not perfect, or if the vehicle is larger than a passenger vehicle - like a large truck, SUV, van or trailer.

The overall point is clear – Stopping distance increases more than you probably think with even minimum increases in speed. Be aware of the speed/stop factor – it could keep you out of harm’s way one day.

\*This study is viewable at http://www.leaonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/STHF0203\_1

**BASIC TIP #4 – BACK UP YOUR BACK UP!**

Some people would never think speed has much to do with backing up, but they are grouped together in this chapter to remind everyone that speed has a lot to do with all aspects of control over a vehicle’s direction: whether going forward or backward!

The Delaware Code puts the extra burden of care onto the driver that is backing up. **(DC21 4184**) It requiresthe driver of a vehicle to determine whether a backing movement can be made “safely and without interfering with other traffic.” If a collision occurs while a car is backing, out of a garage for example, it is most likely that the car traveling backwards would be found at fault.

The driver backing up has the higher duty of care because the act of backing up is inherently unsafe. It takes coordination. You must be able to look over your right shoulder and back up in a straight line. In fact, these very skills were part of the driving test when you went to get your license at the DMV….remember?

**Check:**

###  Behind and around your vehicle before getting in

Even before you get into your car, check to see if there are any children sitting at the curb near the rear or side of your vehicle. Also check for pets or small objects. Once you get inside your car, they probably won’t be visible to you anymore.

 **Your visibility and body posture**

Make sure that your body and head are in the right position as you back up. Your left arm should be at the steering wheel and your right arm behind the passenger seat’s headrest. Turn and look over your right shoulder to look behind you while you back up to make sure you are seeing all the traffic. Do not just rely on your rearview and side mirrors, as this will not take into account your blind spots.

###  Your speed

Remember to back up slowly using your brake pedal to control your speed. Once you have your gear in reverse, slowly release your brake pedal (avoiding sudden jolts) until you have reached the right speed to safely back up.

 **Your steering**

While backing, do not make sharp turns or swerve. Try to avoid backing around corners or sharp curves unless you can see in all directions. Instead of backing around a corner, it is safer to go ahead and turn at the next intersection to work your way back to the spot you wanted. If you're backing up straight, put left hand at the top of the steering wheel. If you're backing to the left or right, keep your hands at 9 o'clock or 3 o'clock. Backing around a corner is always a dangerous maneuver. Go slowly and stop until you get a clear view of any traffic or pedestrians or other objects in your way.

 **Your lights**

Periodically check your back up lights to see if they are working.

### When Your Movement is Constricted

If you have difficulty turning your head or moving your shoulders (perhaps due to a medical condition), avoid backing up, if at all possible. Find parking spaces where you can safely park in one move. If you do not have a choice, make sure that you check all your mirrors, control your speed and if possible, get another passenger to help you with your navigation.

**BASIC TIP # 5 – BACKING UP IS UNSAFE AT ANY SPEED**



***Q:*** Why is backing up always dangerous?

***A:*** It is almost impossible for a driver to see everything in back of the average vehicle.



***Q:*** What’s the solution?

***A:*** Do not use guesswork in backing up!



**Choose the *best* answer.**

**1.) The “basic speed law” says that you \_\_\_\_\_\_ drive faster than is safe for the present conditions, regardless of the posted speed limit.**

1. may sometimes
2. can
3. must never
4. shouldn’t
5. will always

**2.) You should always reduce your speed \_\_\_\_\_.**

1. when children are present
2. in residential areas
3. in business districts where people are walking
4. around the elderly

E. All are correct.

**3.) You might receive a ticket under our speed laws for driving too \_\_\_\_.**

1. slowly
2. fast
3. variably
4. Both A and B are correct
5. None of the above.

4.) Never drive a vehicle \_\_\_\_\_.

1. through, around or under any closed crossing gate at a railroad crossing.
2. at less than the speed limit.
3. with the flow of traffic.
4. into a passing lane when it is safe to do so.
5. over an obstacle.

5.) If you are convicted of participating in a speed contest \_\_\_\_.

1. you will receive a hearing regarding your license.
2. your will get several points on your record.
3. you will be given a strict warning.
4. your license will be suspended.
5. B and D are correct.

**Chapter 7 2nd rotating quiz**

**1:) The \_\_\_\_\_ says that you must never drive faster than is safe for the present conditions, regardless of the posted speed limit.**

A:) speed law

B:) basic law

C:) basic speed law

D:) basic speed

E:) none of the above

**2:) You should always reduce your \_\_\_\_ when children are present, in residential areas, in business districts where people are walking and around the elderly.**

A:) pollution

B:) food intake

C:) spending

D:) exercise

E:) speed

**3:) You might receive a ticket under our speed laws for \_\_\_ too fast or slow.**

A:) walking

B:) swimming

C:) flying

D:) driving

E:) None of the above.

**4:) Never drive a vehicle through, around, or under any closed crossing gate at a \_\_\_.**

A:) railroad crossing

B:) home

C:) warehouse

D:) office building.

E:) none of the above.

**5:) If you are convicted of participating in a \_\_\_\_\_ you will get several points on your record and your license will be suspended**.

A:) traffic accident

B:) intersection blockage

C:) revolt

D:) vandalism

E:) speed contest

**HAZARDOUS**

# CONDITIONS AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT

**8 of 10 This Chapter gives you 18 BASIC Tips about your car’s safety equipment and the hazardous conditions you could encounter.**

Fog, rain, sleet and snow’s location in the “middle of everywhere” can also mean that travelers may find themselves in “the middle of anything” weather wise. All kinds of weather conditions are commonplace for the First State.

To get you where you are going, modern cars are engineered with essential equipment to help you get through some of the most hazardous conditions anyone can face anywhere as a driver. The NTSA has now made it much easier for you to find and buy a car that has a good safety record. As of 2007, dealers are required to post 1-to-5-star safety ratings next to the sticker price of any new vehicle. They test all major cars in categories such as front end or side end collisions. In addition, www.safercar.gov provides 15 years of safety ratings for most new and used cars. Log on to find out how your car stacks up for safety and handling in rough conditions.

Besides a safe vehicle, you must also develop the basic skills to handle emergencies such as breakdowns, mechanical failures and getting stuck. It is important to understand how to use and maintain your safety equipment. Misuse or non-use of your lights, brakes, windshields and even your horn will make this equipment less effective or even *ineffective*, possibly just when you need it the most. It’s an exciting chapter, and no driver, hopefully, has had to face all the conditions included here, so everyone should have something to learn.

## Required Safety Equipment (DC21 chapter 43)

* **Lights:** It is important to check that all lights in your car are clean, visible, and working properly. These include the front and rear lights, as well as the turn signals, flashers, and license plate lights. No light, lamp or reflector that tends to change the original design or performance of the vehicle may be installed. • **Brakes:** These are used to control the car and make abrupt stops. Don’t risk a collision! Make sure your brake pads and brake fluid are maintained. All cars must have 2 separate means of applying the brakes. **(DC21 4303)**
* **Windshields and Mirrors:** All windows of a vehicle must be made of safety glass. **(DC21 4313) The** windshield and mirrors should always be clean and unbroken for better visibility. Mirrors should be positioned according to the driver's position in the seat. Make sure you can see properly from all mirrors. Windshield wipers must be in good condition.
* **Reflectors:** All vehicles manufactured after 1953 must have at least two red reflectors on the rear, either separate or as part of taillight assembly. (Motorcycles need only one.)
* **Horn:** This is an important element of the car to keep other drivers and pedestrians safe on the roadways. The horn should make others aware of your car, not threaten or overpower them with noise.
* **Tires:** It is essential that the tires work properly. They help move and control the car and therefore the air pressure should be checked and rotated when necessary. Tire tread should be no less than 2/32 of an inch deep measured in two adjacent treads. Tires should have no bulges, cuts, bald areas, or fabric showing and must have rubber at least 1 inch thick. **(DC21 4301)**
* **Safety Belts:** The law requires the driver and all passenger’s adult and minors to have their seat belts buckled while in a vehicle. This is for added safety in the event of a collision and can save your life. Always buckle up, even if you are only driving a short distance, because a collision can happen close to home and at any time!
* **Airbags:** The “Supplemental Restraint System” or airbags is the perfect partner for your seatbelt. It works hand-in-hand to protect your body in a crash. The airbags provide extra frontal protection in crash situations.
* **Exhaust System:** All vehicles must have a properly maintained muffler to prevent excessive or unusual noise. **(DC21 4311)** It is illegal to sell or offer for sale any muffler without interior baffle plates or other effective muffling devices or to sell or offer for sale any vehicle with a "muffler cutout" or drive a car on the road with this modification.

## Safety Inspection and Emissions Testing

To be registered in Delaware, your car must be inspected at one of the four DMV facilities - inspections are performed for no fee. Usually, all vehicles being titled for the first time in Delaware must be inspected. Owners are required to provide DMV with valid proof of Delaware liability insurance and a Vehicle Inspection Report for their vehicle to renew their registration. Owners renewing registrations of vehicles in the first five model years can proceed to the nearest DMV registration renewal section to complete the registration process. Signs, located at the entrance of each facility, allow owners to check if their vehicle requires inspection.

A typical inspection covers such items as tires, brakes, windows, and an exhaust emissions test. A vehicle inspection may occur up to 90 days before the registration expiration date. Early inspections do not change the normal expiration date.

The seven most recent model years of vehicles being titled for the first time in Delaware are only required to have a vehicle identification number (VIN) verification. Diesel fueled vehicles model year 1996 and older are currently exempt from exhaust emissions testing but must pass safety testing for registration renewal. Diesel fueled vehicles model year 1997 and newer must pass an OBD-II test.

The Division mails registration renewal notices to each vehicle owner of record approximately 90 days before the registration expiration date of a vehicle. The notification allows some vehicle owners to renew their registration by mail without having their vehicle inspected. The mail-in registration renewal option is only available for certain model year vehicles and depends on the vehicle’s weight, type of vehicle and the number of years renewed in the last renewal cycle. Owners who change their address during a registration period must notify the DMV to assure that the next renewal notice goes to the correct address.

**Anti-Lock Brake Systems (ABS)**

Newer automobiles and trucks are equipped with Anti-Lock Brake Systems (ABS), which prevent vehicles from locking wheels and skidding in emergency or slippery conditions. A typical ABS includes a central electronic control unit (ECU), four-wheel speed sensors, and at least two hydraulic valves within the brake hydraulics.

**What does the Central Electronic Control Unit do?**

The ECU constantly monitors the rotational speed of each wheel; if it detects a wheel rotating significantly slower than the others, a condition indicative of impending wheel lock, it actuates the valves to reduce hydraulic pressure to the brake at the affected wheel, thus reducing the braking force on that wheel; the wheel then turns faster.

Conversely, if the ECU detects a wheel turning significantly faster than the others, brake hydraulic pressure to the wheel is increased so the braking force is reapplied, slowing down the wheel. This process is repeated continuously and can be detected by the driver via brake pedal pulsation. Some anti-lock systems can apply or release braking pressure 15 times per second. In other words, an ABS will attempt to keep all four wheels on a vehicle turning at the same speed, so that none of them lock up and cause you to skid. As it operates you may feel a pulsing in the brake pedal, telling you that the system has been triggered.

**More on certain Anti-Lock Systems**

Some anti-lock systems can apply or release braking pressure 15 times per second. In other words, an ABS will attempt to keep all four wheels on a vehicle turning at the same speed, so that none of them lock up and cause you to skid. As it operates you may feel a pulsing in the brake pedal, telling you that the system has been triggered.

With an ABS you should brake as hard as needed and steer to avoid crashing if necessary. Without an ABS, you will need to do what an ABS does manually. Space out you’re braking with rapid pumps rather than slamming down on them, as suddenly applying full pressure on your brakes will likely cause them to lock up.

**Tips from the DMV for passing inspection:**

* Make sure your engine is thoroughly warmed up before you arrive, so it is operating at peak efficiency.

* Turn off all accessories (air conditioning, heater, radio, etc.) before entering the inspection facility.
* Fast idle your engine for 30 seconds just prior to entering the inspection facility.
* Make sure that all front seat occupants have their safety belts fastened. All children must be secured in a child restraint seat or safety belt.
* Provide the key for fuel caps that lock.
* Pay careful attention to the maintenance of your brakes and tires. For safety reasons inspectors have very strict standards for the passage of these two items.
* If you have any questions, ask the DMV inspector for assistance.

**Now, let’s take a closer look at all of this essential equipment:**

**BASIC TIP # 1 - BE “BRIGHT” WITH YOUR LIGHTING EQUIPMENT**

## When to Use Your Lights

The lights on your vehicle make the road and anything on or around it, like animals, pedestrians, and debris, more visible. They also make other people aware of your vehicle. Both the right and left headlights should always be working. Never drive around with just one light working - an oncoming driver may confuse your big car for a small motorcycle. Don’t drive with only your parking lights on…parking lights add safety to **HEADLIGHTS**, but never replace them. Every vehicle (other than a motorcycle) must operate with headlamps ON in these situations:

* Anytime or place when you have difficulty seeing your surroundings. If it is happening to you, others are probably having the same problem seeing.
* Whenever weather conditions prevent a driver from clearly discerning a person or other motor vehicle on the highway from a distance of 1000 feet.
* Whenever your windshield wipers are being used continuously.
* In weather like rain or fog that makes it harder to see and be seen. Generally, you should use low beams in fog.
* When outside temperatures and moisture make the windows fog up or collect a layer of ice.
* If you are in an area with winding or narrow roads - leave your lights on. Even if conditions are clear, lights let people know you are there, and help tell them how fast you are moving. This will help keep you and others safe.

## Time of Use

The law requires that you use your headlights from sunset to sunrise. Lights should be used at any time when, due to insufficient light or unfavorable atmospheric conditions such as rain, freezing rain, fog or snow, you have trouble seeing 1,000 feet in front of you. By law, you must use your headlights whenever your windshield wipers are in constant use. Never drive with only your parking lights on.

**Headlights:**

Headlamps or headlights work best when they are set at a certain range of height above the road. Cars must have two lighted headlamps, with one on each side of the front of the vehicle. The intensity of the light should be sufficient to reveal a person or a vehicle at a distance of at least 350 feet ahead. During darkness and inclement weather, these headlamps should always be ON, and at any time that your windshield wipers are in use.

**Using High and Low Beams:**

Your upper beam should be able to help you see clearly at a distance of at least 350 feet ahead and your lower beam should be sufficient for a distance of at least 100 feet. They must be adjusted so as not to strike the eyes of approaching drivers. In poor weather, especially fog, use low beam headlights to avoid any unwanted glare. When using your high beams, switch to low beams when an approaching driver is less than 500 feet away from you. Also, use low beams if you are **FOLLOWING** less than 300 feet behind a vehicle. High beams will interfere with almost every driver's vision, especially in dark, low-traffic areas.

## Fog Lamps

Morning and evening fog can be common in some places, and it is essential to safe driving that our vehicles be properly equipped for this condition. Here are some legal requirements:

* Your car should not be equipped with more than two fog lamps.
* Fog lamps may be used with but not in place of your headlamps.
* Fog lamps are to be front-mounted and must be between 12 and 30 inches above the ground.
* The light beam must drop at least 4 inches in the first 25 feet.
* On a motorcycle, the fog lamps should be mounted at a height of not less than 12 inches and no more than 40 inches.

## Multiple Beams

If your vehicle is so equipped (headlights and other auxiliary lighting) you should be able to automatically switch and use any or a combination of them depending on the condition of the road you are driving in. No more than 4 lights of 300 candlepower or more on the front of the vehicle may be lighted at one time.

## Upper and Lower Beams

Your upper beam should be able to help you see clearly at a distance of at least 350 feet ahead and your lower beam should be sufficient for a distance of at least 100 feet. Whichever kind of beam you are using, make sure that your lights or the glare from your lights are not blinding to the eyes of other drivers!

## Tail Lights

Imagine you are driving at night and suddenly realize that you can hardly see the car in front of you...it is missing its taillights!Tail lamps or taillights are those red lights usually located at the left and right side of the rear of your vehicle. These lamps help you become more visible to the drivers behind you, especially at night. They should be visible from all distances of 500 feet to the rear and should be the original design installed on the vehicle**. (DC21 4314)**

## Brake Lights

When you slow down or when you come to a stop, your brake lights or stop lamps.

MUST light up bright red or amber. The vehicle’s original design is required, and it must light when the brake pedal is pushed and be visible from a distance of at least 100 feet in normal sunlight. If the vehicle is equipped with two stop lights, both must be in working order.

## Back-up Lights

When you go into reverse gear to back up, white or amber back up lights should come on. These lights (sometimes accompanied by a beep-beep) alert others that you intend to move backwards.

## Signal Lights

These are required on all vehicles operated on public roads including trailers or semi-trailers. All vehicles manufactured after 1953 must be equipped with two turn signals in front and two in rear. Those in front may be any shade between white and amber; those in rear any shade between amber and red. Both sets must be visible at least 100 feet in normal sunlight. Older vehicles equipped with turn signals must have them in working order.

If you are traveling in challenging sun glare, you may choose to use hand signals as well as your turn signals. Be sure to check that your turn signals are properly functioning on an ongoing basis.

## Using Signal Lights

When you use your turn signal, activate it 100 feet before you begin to turn – on the freeway, turn it on at least 5 full seconds before you change your path. Just to be safe, use your signal even if you think you are the only vehicle on the road. It’s a great habit to form and it could help you to avoid a collision someday with a vehicle that is driving in your blind spot.

You **NEED** to have your signal on whenever you are pulling onto or off the side of the road. If you are unsure if other drivers can see your signal (sun glare for example), use your left arm to signal direction along with your turn lights.

You should always look in your mirrors and behind you to make sure you can move in the direction you are signaling, especially when changing lanes. Other drivers may not be paying attention. Please turn your signal light **OFF** after you complete your move, otherwise you will confuse and probably annoy other drivers, and could be the cause of a collision as well.

## Hazard Lamps

These blinking lights are the only flashing lights allowed on an ordinary vehicle. Hazard signals keep other drivers at a safe distance from you. When you see someone’s hazard lights flashing, drive cautiously, as you are probably approaching a breakdown, collision scene, or other emergency ahead.

## Spotlights

Two may be mounted. No part of the intense beam shall be aimed to left or more than 100 feet ahead of vehicle.

## License Plate Lights

Must be white and strong enough for number of registration plate to be seen from a distance of 50 feet. Must illuminate registration plate without projecting light towards vehicles traveling in the same direction. Unauthorized frames, accessories, designs, or symbols on or attached to the license plate are prohibited.

## Other “Bright” Ideas

* Make sure all of your car lights are equipped with bulbs of the correct voltage.
* If you feel a driver is not able to see you, flash your lights, just to be on the safe side. Remember to flash from a safe distance to warn the driver but not blind them with your lights.
* Make sure you switch your lights off before you get out of the vehicle so that your battery does not die.
* Don’t fall into “Parking Lot Syndrome” – that’s when you forget to turn your headlights on as you exit a well-lit parking lot, and drive around city streets without realizing your mistake. All those drivers honking and pointing at you? It’s probably because your lights aren’t on. This is one of the easiest ways to get pulled over for a quick ticket and conversation with your local friendly Police Officer.
* If another driver’s high beam headlights are affecting your vision, focus on the right corner of the lane. This allows you to look a little away from the bright lights but keep your eyes on the road. Your eyes need time to adjust to rapid changes in light. Drive cautiously until your vision adjusts.

**BASIC TIP # 2 – GIVE YOURSELF A REAL “BRAKE”**

Brakes are obviously necessary to avoid a collision as they control the way your car stops. There are two braking systems. First, there are your regular brakes on a hydraulic system connected to your brake pedal. The hydraulic brake system is what is used most of the time and it is commonly called the service brake. The other system is the parking brake, controlled manually by a lever inside the vehicle. Use this when you are stopped on a steep hill or incline. Parking brakes CAN act as a brake if your regular braking system fails. To be safe, it is best to have both checked regularly.

## Distance to Brake

The foot brake must stop vehicle within distance of 20 feet from a speed of 20 miles per hour on dry pavement. Brakes must be adjusted to work evenly on opposite sides of the vehicle. The parking or emergency brake must stop a vehicle within a distance of 54 feet from a speed of 20 miles per hour. **(DC21 4304)**

**BASIC TIP # 3 – BE CLEAR ABOUT WINDSHIELDS AND MIRRORS**

## Windows and Mirrors

All vehicles, except motorcycles, must have two mirrors minimum with one attached to the left side of the vehicle**.** The rear-view mirror must be placed so that the driver can see any vehicle traveling in the same direction. If the view from inside mirror to rear is blocked, the vehicle must have outside mirrors on the left and right side of the vehicle**. (DC21 4308)**

Your windshields, windows and mirrors should be clean and easy to see through at all times, and may never be cracked, broken, clouded, or blocked. Use your windshield wipers to clean the windshield if visibility is lessened by debris from the road, insects, rain, or snow. Keep your windshield and windows clean on the inside too. Bright sun or headlights on a dirty window make it hard to see out. You should clear ice, frost, or dew from all windows before you drive. If you notice the wipers are not cleaning as well as they should - replace them! It is inexpensive and necessary for safety. Also check your defroster.

There are instances when you need to clean your windshield while you are on the road. Keep all your fluids topped off, including your windshield wiping fluid. The windshield reservoir lets you spray the windshield, and even the rear window in some cars, while driving down the road.

Avoid putting things on windows and windshields that block your vision. No stickers or signs shall be placed on windshield or other windows other than certificates required by law or those approved by the Division of Motor Vehicle. **(DC21 4309)** Toys hanging in the way just makes it harder to see and can even distract you from watching the road.

Make sure you are able to see and be seen. If you drive in rain or snow, you may have to stop sometimes to wipe mud or snow off your windshield, headlights, and taillights. If either your windshield or rear mirrors are cracked and impair your driving vision, do not drive your vehicle. Get the repair done or a ticket may be coming your way!

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| **Did you know?**  **Maintaining your vehicle with frequent oil changes every 3,000 to 5,000 miles, and engine tune ups at 10,000 to 15,000 miles will serve as prevention against many common motor vehicle problems as well as maximize your car’s performance.** |

## Tinting and Screening

Window tint is prohibited on the front windshield below the top few inches of the windshield (specifically not below the ASI masking on the windshield), and on the left and right driver side windows. Tint material also may not be installed over any lights or the vehicle's license plate. Window tinting must allow 70% of light in for the front side windows, but on the back and rear windows any darkness may be used. No metallic or mirrored tinting is approved for use in the state, but any color may be used. The law allows for medical exemptions for special tint. For more details about the specific terms of the exemption, consult your state law.

Get a professional installation. Ask questions about how much tinting you need, based on your driving habits. Tinting can crack and fade to an unlovely purple, making visibility problems even more dangerous. Do not buy tinting based on how it makes your car look, but rather on how it makes your driving safer**. If the tint is too dark or starts to bubble, it must be and needs to be removed.**

**Don’t Wear Your Sunglasses at Night. Seriously.**



Never wear dark or sunglasses at night. Consult your eye doctor before wearing tinted contact lenses at night. They can make it hard to see. Don't wear eyeglasses with temples wide enough to keep you from seeing clearly to the sides.

## Windshield Wipers

Every motor vehicle, except motorcycles, equipped with a windshield must also be equipped with a self-operating windshield wiper. Windshield wipers must be maintained in good operating condition and must provide clear vision through the windshield for the driver. Wipers must be operated under conditions of fog, snow, or rain and be capable of effectively clearing the windshield under all ordinary storm or road conditions while the vehicle is in operation.

## Mirrors

Mirrors are like vital organs in your vehicle. They help you “see” the road and other cars behind and beside you. While there are times, such as when you are backing up or changing lanes, that you need to turn your head and look for yourself, in general well positioned, clean and properly adjusted mirrors will go a long way towards providing a measure of safety for you in everyday driving conditions, and hazardous conditions as well.

You should always adjust the seat, mirrors, and safety belt before starting your car. You are courting danger if you try to adjust them while driving. Before putting on your safety belt, adjust your seat so that you are positioned high enough to see the road. If you are still too low at the highest setting, you should use a seat cushion. If your vehicle has a day/night mirror, learn how to switch it from one setting to the other. The “night” setting reduces the headlight glare from cars behind you and helps you see better.

**Know What Is Behind You**

It is very important to check in your rearview mirror:

* Before changing lanes. Be sure you are not getting in the way of vehicles in the lane you want to enter.
* Before slowing down quickly. Take a quick glance in your mirrors. Also check your mirrors when you are preparing to turn into a side road or driveway, and when you are stopping to pull into a parking space.
* When driving down a long or steep hill. On long, steep downgrades, watch any large vehicles behind you. They can gather speed very quickly.
* Before backing up. Do not depend only on your mirrors or only looking out a side window- turn and look over your right shoulder while backing. As a safety measure, also look over your left shoulder before you begin backing slowly to avoid a collision.
* In traffic to know if you are being tailgated (another driver is following too closely). If this is the case, tap on the brakes to let the tailgater know you are slowing down.

Mirrors are “part of the team” when you are scanning the road for hazards during everyday defensive driving. Don’t develop a "fixed stare" when you drive. Keep scanning the road and checking your rear view mirrors every two to five seconds so you know the position of vehicles near you. While your driver-side mirror is essential to observing traffic behind you prior to merging or changing lanes, you will also want to actually turn your head and check your blind spot before easing into position.

If your vehicle is towing another vehicle or a loaded trailer which obstructs your view, you need mirrors on both the left and right-hand sides of the vehicle that are positioned to reflect a view of the highway through each mirror for a distance of at least 200 feet to the rear.

**BASIC TIP # 4 - THE USE OF HORNS: WHEN TO SOUND OFF**

## When to Use Your Horn

Only use your horn when it is necessary to prevent a collision OR to make someone aware, for his or her own safety. We all have the urge to pound on the horn when we are angry or in a hurry. In some countries, such as Britain, it is considered extremely bad manners to use a horn at almost any time except in a life-threatening emergency. Travelers are charmed and amazed to report sitting in rush hour traffic in London and never hearing a horn honk.

Back here in America, horns blown out of anger just create unnecessary noises and annoyance. An alternative to honking may be to make eye contact with other drivers and polite gestures. Stopping, pulling off the road, or simply slowing down are other alternatives. Oh, and there is always the option of deciding to be deeply relaxed and - patient.

**When is a horn not a horn?**

The horn is for safety - not for irritation. It should not be louder or go on longer than necessary. It should not emit an unreasonably harsh sound and should not play songs from the land of Dixie. **Only law enforcement and emergency vehicles are allowed to have a siren!** Bells and whistles are also prohibited. **(DC21 4306)**

A horn should be able to be heard 200 feet away under normal conditions. If your vision is obstructed from that distance, you may want to honk to let other drivers know you are on the road. You can and should test your horn once in a while to make sure it works.

**BASIC TIP # 5 – KNOW YOUR TIRES**

Tires help move and control the vehicle. Without properly working

tires, you are not going to get very far in any car. Just forming the simple habit of  **LOOKING**  at your tires every time you get in the car could go far towards preventing flats, blowouts, lost time, and a dangerous collision on the freeway.

Tires need to be inspected often - at least twice a year. Whenever you are having any kind of car maintenance done, have them look at the tires. Air pressure in each vehicle tire should be checked with an air pressure gauge and the tires rotated or changed on a regular basis.

You can do a daily check every time you go out to take a drive:

* Look into the grooves of your tires. As you go by your tires, press against them with your foot to check the pressure. See if there are things stuck in and on the tires.
* Learn to check the amount of tire tread remaining usually, tread should be no less than 2/32 of an inch deep on every tire in order to be safe on the road.
* Listen to your tires. Do you hear a clicking or tapping sound when going down the road? You may have picked up something that can pierce the tread with time.

Before going on a trip and during seasonal weather changes, be sure to check and see if your spare tire is still good. Do you have the equipment to change a tire if necessary? Remember – spare tires are *not* meant for long or fast trips. You can get a ticket if you use a temporary spare tire incorrectly. For example, you may get a ticket for riding on a tire with an inadequate tread depth, if an officer stops you and determines it has not been used just as an emergency measure. So, if you are put in the position of riding on a spare tire, be ready to replace it with a new tire immediately - and make sure a good spare is replaced your trunk.

## Studded Tires

These are legal from October 15 to April 15 inclusive; illegal from April 16 to October 14 inclusive. Other states have different time periods when studded tires are permitted; a few states do not allow their use at any time. You must abide by their laws when passing through those states.

**BASIC TIP # 6 – BOOST SAFETY WITH SEAT BELTS AND CHILD**

**SAFETY SEATS**

Seatbelts first appeared in American automobiles in the early 1900s. With few other cars to collide with at the time, seatbelts were popular not for their role in crash protection but because they kept occupants inside their cars during bumpy rides. Seatbelts were later installed in airplanes to keep pilots from falling out during upside-down maneuvers and added to race cars in the 1920s. In 1950, the first factory-installed seatbelts in the U.S. appeared in the 1950 Nash Statesman and Ambassador models. This was nearly 20 years after U.S. physicians had begun urging auto manufacturers to provide seatbelts in cars.Most vehicles from 1968 forward are equipped with seat belts; however, some trucks and motor homes didn’t jump on the bandwagon until 1972.

The Crash Test Dummies characters have passed into modern pop culture and are familiar to everyone as reminders to buckle up. Seat belts, also called “restraints”, are a key to motor safety. Plainly stated, using a seat belt is required by law anytime you are in a moving vehicle. The driver of a vehicle is held directly responsible if any passenger is not buckled up in a car. The owner of the car must also maintain seat belts in proper working condition. **(DC21 4802)**

**Pregnant women have specific safety guidelines.**

Expecting mothers should wear their lap belts below the belly and the shoulder belt should fit in the middle of the chest and to one side of the belly. This has been proven safe in many crash test studies using seat belts. Always wear BOTH lap and shoulder straps if available in your vehicle. The chance for survival in the event of a collision is four times better when both are worn. Otherwise, you are putting your life at risk.

## Myths about Seat Belts

Here are some common, false rumors heard about seat belts.

### MYTH # 1"You are trapped in your vehicle by seat belts."

Seat belts are easy to remove. Seat belts WILL keep you from suffering worse injuries in a horrible collision. A seat belt will keep you safer and more likely to escape dangers conditions after a crash.

### MYTH #2“I’m not going very far, so I will not need to wear it “

A car crash can happen 5 miles or 500 miles away from home. In fact, most collisions occur less than 30 miles from your house. No matter how far or fast you are driving, put your safety first. Always wear your seat belt.

### MYTH#3"You don’t need them if you have airbags.”

Wrong again. While air bags are good protection against hitting the steering wheel, dashboard, or windshield, they do not protect you if you are hit from the side or rear, or if the vehicle rolls over. And an air bag will not keep you behind the wheel in these situations. Safety belts and air bags are designed to work together, and injuries may occur if safety belts are not used in air-bag-equipped vehicles.

### MYTH#4"I don't have time to mess with a child seat; my kid will be fine for a few miles.”

This may be the saddest excuse yet. You have to be the responsible one with young children. It is not only the law, but tragically, most children who die in a vehicle collision would have survived if someone had taken the time to secure them properly. **In fact, not seat belting kids is the LEADING cause of preventable child death!** A child can sustain more injuries at slower speeds than adults can. So make sure all children are buckled in a baby or booster seat before driving or even moving the vehicle.

### MYTH#5 Child Passenger Seat Restraints: Requirements (DC21 4803)

Here are some things to know about Child Seat Belts and specific guidelines:

 **Children under 2 years and 30 lbs:**  
Must ride in a **rear-facing car seat**. Rear-facing seats are safest for infants and toddlers, and they should remain in this position for as long as possible.

 **Children under 4 years and 40 lbs:**  
Must ride in a **harnessed car seat**. This car seat provides the best protection as they grow, until they outgrow the height or weight limits set by the manufacturer.

 **Children in booster seats:**  
Should remain in their **booster seat** until they reach the maximum height or weight limits specified by the manufacturer.

 **Children under 13 years:**  
Should always ride in the **back seat**, even if they can use a seatbelt. This is the safest location in a vehicle for children under 13, as airbags in the front seat can be dangerous for them.

**General Child Car Seat Safety Tips:**

* **Harness straps:** Make sure the harness straps are near or below your child’s shoulders (for rear-facing seats) or above their shoulders (for forward-facing seats).
* **Chest clip:** The chest clip should be at **armpit level**.
* **Follow car seat instructions:** Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions for installation and use.
* **Rear-facing as long as possible:** Keep your child rear-facing for as long as they fit within the height and weight limits of the car seat. This provides the best protection for the head, neck, and spine in the event of a crash.
* **Don’t rush transitions:** Don’t move your child to the next seat type (forward-facing, booster seat) until they’ve outgrown the previous seat according to the manufacturer’s limits.
* **Set a good example:** Children are more likely to buckle up when they see their caregivers wearing their seat belts.

### Additional Key Guidelines:

* **Delaware Law:**  
  Children under **age 8** or **65 lbs.** must be properly secured in a child safety seat or booster seat.
* **Primary Enforcement:**  
  This is a **primary enforcement law**, which means that law enforcement officers can pull over a vehicle if they observe an unrestrained child inside.
* **Airbags & Front Seat Safety:**  
  Children under **age 12** and **65 inches** in height should not sit in the front seat of a vehicle with an active airbag. If possible, children should always sit in the back seat.
* **Back Seat Safety:**  
  Children **12 and under**, or those who weigh less than **100 lbs.**, are safest when buckled up in the back seat.
* **Proper Installation:**  
  It is crucial to properly secure baby seats. Incorrectly installed seats can lead to serious injury during a crash.
* **Never hold a child in your lap:**  
  Holding a child in your lap while driving is extremely dangerous. In the event of a crash, the child could be crushed between your body and the dashboard.

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| **Did you know?**      **When you are renting a car, make sure they provide you with child safety seats that are clean and in good condition.** |

**BASIC TIP # 7 THE LAW PROTECTS THE “FORGOTTEN CHILD”**

**The forgotten child. Who is that?**

A child whose size is in-between needing a baby seat and seat belt,  usually from ages 1 to about 12 years of age. y from ages 1 to about 12.

Which brings us to an important point - How do you know if the adult seat belt fits your child properly?

To find out for sure, **try this 5-part test**:

* Does the child sit all the way back against the auto seat?
* Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat?
* Is the lap belt below the tummy, touching the thighs?
* Is the shoulder belt centered on the shoulder and chest?
* Can the child stay seated like this for the entire trip?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, your child needs a booster seat to ride more safely in the car. A booster seat will be more comfortable for them, as well. A properly fitting ride can keep kids quieter and less fussy on the road.

### Safety Seat “Check-ups”

The Delaware Office of Highway Safety operates three permanent child safety seat Fitting Stations at DMV locations in the State, one in each county. A Fitting Station is a year-round location where parents can get their child safety seats inspected. Appointments are encouraged, but walk-ins are welcome. Call (302) 744-2749 for an appointment in Dover, (302) 434-3234 for an appointment in Wilmington, or (302) 233-1083 for an appointment in Bridgeville.

The Office of Highway Safety also conducts free child safety seat checks. Federally certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians will check your seat for recalls and correct installation. They provide one-on-one assistance for parents, grandparents, childcare providers, etc. who need to have their seats re-installed properly. No appointment is necessary. For a list of upcoming car seat checks in your county, safety brochures, and additional information, contact the Office of Highway Safety at (302) 744-2740 or check online at www.state.de.US/Highway.

If you are low income and cannot afford a child restraint, you may borrow one from one of the State Service Centers at: Wilmington 577-3150; Newark 368-6700; Dover 739-5301; or Georgetown 856-5574. Now there is no excuse not to have a properly fitting safety seat for any child!

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| **Did you know?**  **Lower lap belts can cause possible injuries to the lower body IF it is the only belt worn. This is especially common in young children. Using both belts will secure you inside the vehicle and prevent this type of injury.** |

**BASIC TIP # 8 – AIRBAGS ARE THERE FOR YOU**

Airbags, combined with your seatbelts, are the most effective safety protection you have as a driver. They take a great deal of a crash impact. Maximize the protection from your airbags by:

* Sitting back at least 10 inches from your steering wheel
* Always wearing your seatbelts, and
* If your steering wheel tilts - set it towards your chest and not your face.

However, if your car has an airbag on the passenger side of the car, either in the door or the dash, remember:

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| Never place a child under twelve in the front seat, as it is extremely dangerous. You are allowed to do so in 2-seat vehicles but take note that it is not recommended.  Airbags are designed for passengers older than twelve.  Never place a child safety seat in the front seat. The force of the airbag will critically harm the child. Again, the only situation where this is acceptable is if it is in a 2-seat vehicle. |

**BASIC TIP # 9 – USE EXTRA SAFETY SKILLS IN BAD CONDITIONS**

“It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.” Hazardous conditions are sometimes unavoidable, even when you are doing your best to take precautions like planning your route in advance, listening to traffic reports, and scanning ahead to avoid problems. The first step towards safety in hazardous driving conditions is avoiding them completely. Here is how you can get current, up-to-date information on the roads you’ll be driving:



* To get real time weather advisories, interactive traffic maps, and posted bridge restrictions, visit http://www.deldot.gov/information/travel\_advisory/. These advisories are updated 24 hours a day and include only those incidents which have the potential to impact traffic significantly. Major incidents in other states are also reported.
* Listen to a LIVE broadcast of current traffic conditions brought to you by WTMC, DelDOT's radio station 1380 AM.
* View video of live traffic conditions in New Castle, Kent and Sussex Counties.

 DelDOT also offers MyDelDOT, a subscription service that delivers traffic and travel information directly to your desktop. You can pick and choose what information you wish to receive. Sign up for this service at the web address above.

 Call DelDOT with weather and advisory inquiries at 1-800-652-5600.

When encountering hazardous conditions, allow your other senses to kick in and add some extra precautionary measures as well:

* ***Listen*** for traffic that you cannot see when visibility is impaired.
* ***Avoid crossing*** roadways if possible, or cross with heightened caution.
* ***Avoid passing*.**
* ***Maintain visibility***. If possible, get out and wipe down mud spattered or dirty headlights and taillights as you proceed.
* ***Reroute and postpone***. Consider whether you can pull over safely for a while, reroute out of danger, or simply put the trip off for the time being.

**BASIC TIP # 10 - ADJUST YOUR SPEED TO YOUR HAZARD**

When driving under any hazardous condition, you should drop your speed automatically. Watch for the flow of traffic and road conditions, find the best lane for your comfort, and stick to it. Maintain a longer space cushion, and **ESPECIALLY** take it slow around curves, shady areas, and hills.

How slow can you go? Here are some basic rules of thumb to help you adjust speed:



* On a **wet road** – go 10 miles slower than normal.
* In the **rain** – go about 1/3 slower.
* In **snow** - cut speed in half.
* On **ice** - slow to a crawl.

### Driving on Slippery Surfaces

In wet weather, or when there are spills on the road, there is always a high chance of a vehicle losing traction, slipping, or even hydroplaning. If the road becomes slippery, slow down BUT avoid sudden and hard pressure on the brakes. Try to slow down, if possible, by just lifting your foot off the accelerator pedal. Drive with your headlights on in order to be more visible and to spot slippery substances on the road. If your steering wheel jerks to the side as you hit a puddle, you may be hydroplaning. DON’T try to steer – it could cause a greater loss of control.

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| **Did you know?**    **Hydroplaning – Usually occurs when a fast moving car hits a sheet of water on the road. A layer of water between the vehicle’s rubber tires and the road surface reduces the traction of the tires, causing the vehicle to act like a waterski.** |

Often drivers use a friendly taillight ahead as a guide. This can be a very effective way to navigate in poor conditions. Just keep in mind:

 If the driver ahead is going too fast for the conditions, it might not be worth keeping up with them.

 Always keep scanning ahead for hazards and mistakes on the part of the driver in front of you.

 Concentrate on avoiding any sudden movements - this keeps the vehicle under control and helps prevent overcorrecting.

 Do not tailgate! Watch your speed and allow as great a space cushion between vehicles as possible.

 In bad weather, with bad visibility and worsening weather conditions - especially heavy snow - cars will often be parked on the side of the road either on purpose, or possibly because of collisions. Watch for cars on the roadsides which may not have parked clear of the solid line on the right.

### BASIC TIP # 11 – AVOID A LOSS OF TRACTION AND SKIDDING

Most of us believe in the idea that we have a lot “riding on our tires.”

When our tires cannot grip the road, we experience a loss of traction, usually because of surface water lying on the road. Surface water fills in the tiny “pits” in the road surface that rubber tires use to grip the road as they roll. It only takes a small amount of surface water for this effect to occur, and it can be a deadly serious problem, resulting in loss of control. Ice on the road acts in much the same way, and often with very little warning.

#### Here’s How to Avoid a Loss of Traction or Skidding

* Make sure you have good tires with enough tread for proper traction. Rotate your tires as needed. Are your brakes in good condition?
* Be prepared for snowy and icy conditions: carry snow chains for tires when going into an area where snow may be on the roads. Don’t hesitate to get out and put the snow chains on if weather conditions warrant it. Notice and ask yourself - are road conditions changing? Drive sensibly as the road surface may change.
* Do not drive on the edge of the road or shoulder. The potential for skidding over the edge is too high. Road crews may treat a road surface, but not the shoulders, for ice.
* Consider starting in a higher gear if traction is poor and accelerate gradually. Do not change to a lower gear at too fast a speed.
* Do not accelerate suddenly or brake suddenly on wet, snowy, icy, gravelly, or uneven pavement surfaces. Watch for areas where ice collects. It is always possible that the road will be more dangerous than it looks. Ice may be under a light dusting of snow. Snow and ice can trick your eyes.
* It is better to pump your brakes, or tap them, than to “slam” down on them!
* There is a commonly held idea that it is better to put extra weight in the rear bed of a truck to keep it from skidding. This is a myth… extra weight actually results in the opposite effect! The front wheels, not the rear, require extra traction and greater steering control. If you must carry a heavy weight in any vehicle, try to distribute the weight as evenly as possible throughout, especially when driving in rain, snow or ice.

#### If you are Experiencing a Loss of Traction

* Avoid trying to turn the wheel.
* Lift your foot off the accelerator pedal.
* Lightly tap the brakes to gain control.
* Shifting to a lower gear may help to slow you down.

#### If You Are Hydroplaning

* Take your foot off the gas.
* Do not brake.

**There Are Several Types Of Skids:**

Skids generally fall into two categories - "over steering oversteering" (or fishtailing) occurs when your front wheels are taking a shorter path than your rear wheels and the rear-end breaks loose and fishtails. Often as a result of trying to accelerate out of a turn, too much power is applied for the steering input and the resulting side forces cause the rear wheels to break free. "Under steering understeering" (or plowing) occurs when you have too sharp an angle between the tires and the direction of motion, and the front wheels skid ahead as a result.

Additionally, you can skid straight-ahead such as when you lock your brakes.

#### If you hit the Skids…

* Stay calm and release pressure from off the brake or accelerator pedal.
* Pump brakes lightly but fast. Don’t pump anti-lock brakes.
* Turn the steering wheel in the direction and the rear end of the car is skidding.
* Don’t “over steer” – if you overcompensate steering you may come out of the

skid with the problem of turning or spinning around on the road.

* Keep the clutch engaged.

**BASIC TIP # 12 – SNOW AND ICE CAN BE ENTICING**

**Snow and ice are two of the most dangerous problems Mother Nature throws at drivers.** When overnight freezes are a possibility, even a little frozen moisture on the road can create a VERY dangerous situation. Even very experienced drivers can be fooled by icy and snowy road surfaces.

Keep in mind the following information about black ice: 

* Black ice is a thin, nearly invisible coating of ice on the pavement. You may not see it at all. It may just look like a damp or wet spot.
* Black ice often forms shortly before dawn but can form any time the roads are wet due to rain, mist or fog conditions, or when moisture in the air settles onto cold pavement and freezes.
* Bridges and overpasses are susceptible to icing and it is true that bridges may freeze before roadways because cold air circulates both above and beneath the bridge surface.
* When the roads are slippery, turn off your cruise control. You don’t want unnecessary power to the wheels when the roads are slippery.
* Remember that 4-wheel drive may provide better starting traction but does not help you to stop quicker.

During almost any type of storm, especially one involving ice or snow, you should drive with your headlights on. Obtain maximum visibility. You can tap your brake lights to warn any drivers to the rear of your presence, and of any hazards ahead. The same idea applies to you: watch what happens to cars ahead. Do they weave or hit their brake lights in a certain stretch of road? Be alert to these clues.

You will want to be able to see as far down the road as possible. Prevent fogging or icing your windshield and windows by using your wipers and defrosters. Once again, drive smoothly and avoid abrupt vehicle motions to prevent loss of control.

**Here is a typical scenario to watch out for:**

There appears to be no snow or ice left from a snowstorm. It is even sunny outside.

You know it snowed yesterday, but there is no snow on the road now. Or is there?

There are often unwelcome surprises left for us in shady areas on the road after snow seems to have melted away. The sun melts the snow away in the open but hidden in the shadowy spots of curves are ice and snow and/or slush, creating dangerous slippery patches.



Finally, always be prepared for the possibility of snowy or icy conditions. As urged many times in this chapter – if there is a possibility you will encounter snow, make sure you have chains or have put on snow tires. Check your heater, defroster, and wipers. Follow slower speeds, use lights to make yourself more visible during stormy daylight hours, and apply extra caution.

If you are on a longer trip, take extra precautions – watch your gas tank and keep it filled. Bring extra clothes for warmth and perhaps a blanket in case you must pull over or go for help. Listen to the radio and follow the weather. Always make sure your defroster and windshield wipers are in working order.

#### Snowmobiles

Your snowmobile is not required to be registered in Delaware, but you may need to be registered with the parks department to run on trails in state parks. Snowmobiles may not be run on public roadways. The best way to enjoy snowmobiling is to get hold of a trail map and ride on the groomed and marked trail system where landowner permission has been obtained, snowmobile laws are complied with, trails are maintained, and signs are in place. That's where you can ride without concern of breaking the law, irritating a landowner, waking up the baby, damaging forest growth and cropland or disrupting Sunday services.

There are many places where you cannot or should not operate a snowmobile:

* In a cemetery or within 200 feet of a dwelling, hospital, nursing home, convalescent home, or church
* Along, across or adjacent to railroad tracks
* Never ride on any property, unless you are on a signed snowmobile trail, without the landowner's permission.

Sledders must ride at a rate that is reasonable and prudent speed for the existing conditions, just like those driving a vehicle. Slow down when you meet other sledders, ease up when you come to a curve, bridge, or rise in the trail. If you are unable to control your sled enough to keep it to the right-hand side of the trail and stop in a safe and prudent manner - you're speeding. It is illegal to operate a snowmobile in a manner which endangers another person or property. You can be ticketed for this offense.

You must stop for game wardens, foresters, rangers, troopers, local law enforcement - anyone in uniform who asks you to halt. You also need to stop for any landowner who asks you to - it's their property! Safest bet is to come to a halt for anyone who is flagging you down on the trails and find out what it is that they want.

**BASIC TIP # 13 – FOG, THE GENTLE THREAT**

The best suggestion for dealing with fog is to avoid driving in it altogether. Surprised? People tend to underrate fog as a weather condition because it is not as dramatic as flooding, snow, hail, or other conditions. It just seems less troublesome because it is, well, foggy.

But driving through fog has proven to be extremely dangerous, even at very slow speeds. Fog is responsible for vehicle collisions, injuries and deaths, especially due to multiple car pile-ups. Like any low visibility driving condition, if you can avoid fog, it’s your best option.

**Did you know?**



**There's a “fog line” on the road? The solid white line on the right edge of the road is what you use as a guide in the fog. Do not guide yourself by the center line.**

But let’s say you cannot avoid it, and you expect to encounter it. Take precautions to maintain as much visibility as possible -

* Have your headlights and your fog lights on as well.
* Use your defroster and windshield wipers. Having these on can help deal with the water and mist collecting inside and outside on your windshield.
* If you are making a turn in fog, turn off the radio and heater and listen for other cars before making your turn.
* If you need to pull off the road, be sure to pull completely off, coming to a stop on the other side of the white line marking the edge of the road. Turn on your hazards.

Remember that fog can hide other road problems, including ice or potholes. If you are driving into a fog bank you should always reduce your speed, but do not stop suddenly; keep moving safely ahead. Foggy conditions can change faster than any other weather condition because you might be driving in and out of fog banks. Thus, some vehicles on that stretch of road are likely to travel faster than others, thinking that they are in the “clear.” Others might be hitting the brakes as they encounter new fog. Studies show that the longer a driver is in fog, the faster they drive. Avoid falling into this dangerous trap.

The big question always seems to be: High or low beams? 

Headlights should certainly be at the low beam setting. Tempted to use your high beams? Wrong. High beams are simply going to reflect a blinding glare right back at you. Fog lights come as standard equipment on many vehicles nowadays. If you are unsure if your vehicle is equipped with fog lights, make a point to check and find out as soon as possible.

**BASIC TIP # 14 - DON’T TRY TO “SHOWBOAT” THROUGH FLOODS**

Ironically, many drivers rescued from flood waters report they were trying to make it through to get home – to safety. No matter how tempting it is to “just get through,” don’t try to drive through any water with a current unless you can determine how deep it is.

**Did you know?**



**Most cars will float (and be swept away) in 18-24 inches of moving water. Trucks and SUVs are not much better off with only 6 – 12 more inches of clearance. Once cars are swept downstream they often roll to one side before submerging.**

**50% of flood related drownings are in a vehicle. (Source - National Climatic Data Center - Storm Data publications.)**

Driving in unfamiliar surroundings during a flood is another recipe for disaster: if roads become flooded, you may not be able to see the road markings. Creeks and rivers can rise rapidly while also washing away, making the water much deeper than it appears.

* If going into water, try to drive in the tracks of a car ahead of you.
* Shift into a lower gear.
* Do not overload the rear of the car. Your front wheels need to maintain traction.
* Depending on how deep the water is, your brakes may become wet, and there is a chance they won’t work. If you think your brakes may have gotten wet, you can test them. Gently tap them. If they do not seem to be working, keep your brakes pushed down for a short period of time: this will help dry them out.
* IF you feel your car being swept away, immediately unbuckle your seat belt and instruct everyone in the car to do so. You may have just a few seconds to escape if your car rolls. If you have to abandon your car, be prepared to face strong currents, cold, wind and other storm conditions.

**BASIC TIP # 15 - ROCKING OUT**

Carrying chains in your vehicle is a very smart way to avoid being stuck. Use chains before you encounter snow or mud. If you have trouble getting traction in soft soil or snow, you may have to “rock out.”

**Here is how to do it**: 

Shift into your lowest gear and make sure your front wheels are straight.



Gently step on the gas pedal and drive as far forward as possible (without spinning your tires).

Shift into reverse and do the same (Don’t spin your wheels) Repeat this back and forth until the car rocks free.



If the tires are in deep mud or snow, you can place boards or branches under the tires but never do so while the wheels are spinning.

**BASIC TIP # 16 – TORNADOS, HURRICANES AND HIGH WINDS**

Tornadoes can lift up and toss cars and large trucks around like toys. NEVER try to outrun a tornado in a car.

* If you see a funnel cloud or hear a tornado warning issued on the radio or by siren, get out of your vehicle and seek a safe structure (Like a Building) or lie down in a low area with your hands covering the back of your head and neck. If you are in the path of a tornado, you might have just minutes to decide on and execute a safety plan.
* Do not park under an underpass or take shelter under an underpass in any way if you think you are in the path of the tornado, or hurricane force winds. Time has shown that this can be the most dangerous place to be on a highway during high winds of any kind because they funnel large objects and flying debris underneath them.
* If a tornado has just passed or you are caught in a hurricane, be ready for flash floods. Get to higher ground.



**BASIC TIP # 17 – KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOUR VEHICLE STALLS**

There are many reasons a vehicle motor just conks out, stops, or stalls. Most of the time, if an engine stalls while you are moving, you will still be able to have enough speed to roll off the road. Realizing this should help you avoid one big mistake - panicking.



* Move off the roadway as quickly, but as safely as possible. The first big danger is that another vehicle may run into your stalled car.
* Turn on your emergency flashers quickly. If you have flares or other warning markers, place them to the rear of your vehicle.
* Of course, you can call for help if you have a cell phone, if not, others passing you may call on your behalf without stopping to tell you. Often, there are roadside emergency phones on highways.
* Be cautious. If you are alone on a stretch of road, stay in the car until help comes with the doors locked. When help arrives, make sure that they have a clear identification before getting out of your car or even rolling down your window.

**BASIC TIP # 18 – KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT - MECHANICAL**

**FAILURE**

**Knowing how to deal with these six common mechanical problems can help you figure out and problem solve many other types of problems.**

**Accelerator stuck?**

If your accelerator becomes stuck, you should:

* Move your gear selector to neutral to cut engine power from the wheels.
* Keep your engine on so that the brakes and steering will work.
* Apply the brakes as necessary.
* Look for a way to safely get off the road.
* Use your blinkers or emergency lights to warn other drivers.
* Get off the road safely.
* Turn off the ignition once you are safely at a stop.

#### Tire Blowout

Keep a firm grip on the wheel and steer straight ahead.

* Gradually slow down to maintain control of your car.
* Take your foot off the gas pedal slowly, but don't apply the brakes.
* Slow to a stop, off the road.
* Apply gradual pressure to the brakes when the car is almost stopped.

#### Brake Failure

If your brakes suddenly give out, immediately take your foot off the accelerator and downshift into a low gear.

* Pump the brake pedal fast and hard to build up brake fluid pressure. You will know in three to four pumps if the brakes will work. *Do not pump antilock brakes. So know whether or not you have anti-lock brakes!*
* Apply your emergency brakes but be ready to release them if the car begins to skid.
* Sound your horn and flash your lights to warn other drivers.
* Remember, you can still steer. You might choose to steer into bushes or foliage that might break your speed fairly gently. Some downhill stretches of roads have specially designed brake failure pullouts. If you are not so lucky as to have one of these handy, look for gently sloping areas you can pull off into.

#### Headlight Failure

* First, try the dimmer switch.
* If the dimmer switch does not work, try the headlight switch a few times.
* If the headlight switch does not work, put on the parking lights, emergency flashers, or turn signals.
* Pull to the side of the road as soon as it is safe to do so and leave the emergency flashers on.
* If you are in an area that is well lit, drive to the nearest service station.
* If you experience a complete power failure and it is dark outside, stop the vehicle in a well-lit area, if possible.
* If this is not possible, use road flares so that another driver does not hit your vehicle. Then summon help.

#### Power Steering Failure

If the engine dies:

* Turn the steering wheel hard. Keep both hands on the wheel, to help keep control.

Get to the side of the road AND as far from any oncoming cars as possible.

* Stop the car.
* Restart the car and proceed with caution.

#### Hood Latch Failure

If your hood latch flies up, you won’t be able to see very well.

* Slow down.
* Try to look under the hood to inspect your latch. If you can't:
* Put your head out the window and use the centerline or the lane marking as a guide.
* Pull off the road as soon as possible and use your emergency flashers.

These are not all the solutions to the dramatic problems a driver can have when facing hazardous conditions. But the fact is, the best way to navigate through hazards is to have information, remain calm, and execute an informed plan. It’s what everyone knows is valuable today…

…real

**street smarts.**



**Choose the *best* answer.**

**1.) Never place a child \_\_\_\_\_.**

1. in a booster seat in the back.
2. in the front seat where there is an active passenger airbag installed.
3. in a booster seat in the front.
4. in a properly installed restraint system.
5. All of the above.

**2.) Your car’s lights should be used \_\_\_\_.**

1. in weather conditions that decrease visibility such as rain and fog.
2. in temperature conditions that make the windows fog or collect a layer of ice.
3. in hazard situations when you have difficulty seeing your surroundings.

D ½ hour after sunset.

E. All of the above

1. **A properly working \_\_\_\_ can be heard from at least 200 feet.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A. | muffler |
| B. | brake |
| C. | radio |
| D. | horn |
| E. | stereo |

1. **If you encounter \_\_\_\_\_ in your car, DO NOT take shelter under an underpass**.

1. a blizzard
2. fog
3. a tornado
4. a hailstorm
5. icy conditions

**5.) If you run into water on the road, don’t \_\_\_\_.**

1. Drive in the tracks of the car ahead.
2. Judge how deep the water is before you enter it.
3. Accelerate at a good pace through rushing water.
4. Test your brakes by gently pushing down on them.
5. Pull over if you find out the area is flooding.

**2nd Rotating quiz**

**1:)** **Never place a \_\_\_ in the front seat where there is an active passenger airbag installed.**

A:) man

B:) child

C:) woman

D:) animal

E:) none of the above.

**2:)** **Your car's\_\_\_\_ should be used in weather conditions that decrease visibility such as rain and fog, in temperature conditions that make the windows fog or collect a layer of ice, in hazard situations when you have difficulty seeing your surroundings and ½ hour after sunset.**

A:) horn

B:) brakes

C:) roof

D:) spare tire

E:) lights

**3:)** **A properly working horn can be heard from at least \_\_\_\_\_.**

A:) 300 feet

B:) 200 yards

C:) 200 miles

D:) 200 feet

E:) 1miles

**4:)** **If you encounter a tornado while in your car, DO NOT take shelter \_\_\_\_\_.**

A:) in a bomb shelter

B:) underground

C:) under an underpass

D:) all of the above

E:) none of the above

**5:)** **If you run into \_\_\_\_ on the road, don't accelerate through rushing \_\_\_\_.**

A:) lava, magma

B:) ice, frozen river

C:) goats, herd

D:) all of the above

E:) none of the above

# UNDER THE INFLUENCE Alcohol and Drugs

**9 of 10 This Chapter gives you 6 BASIC Tips about how drugs of all kinds can affect driving and safety on roads.**

## Alcohol is the most widely used drug in our society. We use it for celebration, (Let’s have a toast!), recreation (I’m just going to kick back and have a cold one), and as medication (I think I need a drink). It’s everywhere, and it’s no wonder that so many adults – and even minors – partake. Now is the time to be understood for what it is – a drug. As a drug, alcohol affects your reaction skills in stages according to your level of consumption. Drinking and driving simply don’t mix at any level, and our state’s drivers must be aware of this fact, along with everybody else.

## Basic Facts

The State of Delaware – Office of Highway Safety (OHS) reports that…

* In 2022, over 4,500 people were arrested for DUI in Delaware
* First-time offenders accounted for 88% of all DUI arrests in 2022 in Delaware.
* DUI arrests occur most frequently on Friday (14%), Saturday (22%), and Sunday (22%)
* 25-29 years and 35-44 years account for the two highest age groups of those arrested for DUI.
* 76% of those arrested for DUI are males.
* 66% of those arrested were at or above 0.13 BAC.
* Males age 35-44 are most likely to be involved in an alcohol or drug related crash.

There is some good news. Since this type of tracking began 26 years ago, alcohol related fatalities have declined in general from a peak in 1983. This means that more people are aware and knowledgeable about drunk driving and its consequences. Make sure that you are one of them!

When a person drinks alcohol, his awareness of his surroundings decreases, which makes any driver under the influence a danger to public safety. Drinking and driving is considered to be so irresponsible that injury or death caused by a drunk driver is a criminal act, and legal liability that arises from such an act often cannot be discharged even by bankruptcy.

**BASIC TIP # 1 – LOOK OVER AND KNOW THE BAC CHARTS**

You’re probably thinking: if I stay below the limit, I’m all right.

**WRONG.**

Alcohol can begin to impair your reaction time at as low a BAC as .01%. There is no other way to look at it, alcohol is poisonous to your body, and it affects you in unhealthy ways. Small amounts can provide a stimulant effect while larger amounts sedate your mind and senses. Large enough amounts in a short time can kill you while smaller amounts over time may accelerate death.

**What Is The Limit?** 

It does not matter if you are a seasoned and careful driver; if you have too many drinks your ability to drive is diminished. Inexperienced drivers are at even greater risk. A single drink can impair your ability and 2 drinks within an hour can make you a dangerous driver, as far as the public is concerned. It does not matter what type of alcohol you consume. What matters is how much you consume, over how much time, how much you weigh, and whether you consume food or not along with it.

## Getting Technical

To see if someone is under the influence of a drug, police have to give tests. One way to measure “driver impairment” (the level of intoxication when related to a driver) is by measuring a person’s blood alcohol content (BAC). The BAC resulting from the same amount of alcohol per 210 liters of breath will differ from person to person, based on how they are built (heavy or thin, for example) and other factors. The BAC reading nails the facts down for a particular driver at a particular time and establishes the evidence which can convict someone in a court of law.

Here’s a BAC chart to help understand the effects of alcohol on the body:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **BAC** | **Stage** | **Effect** |
| .01 - .05 | Sub clinical | By ordinary observation, behavior appears normal. |
| .03 - .12 | Euphoria | Stimulant stage. Increases talkativeness, decreases judgment, attention, and control. |
| .09 - .25 | Excitement | Emotional instability, loss of judgment, memory, understanding; impaired balance, drowsiness. |
| .18 - .30 | Confusion | Dizziness, staggering, slurred speech, disorientation, mental confusion and apathy. |
| .25 - .40 | Coma | Unconsciousness. Impairment to circulation and respiration. |
| .45+ | Death | Breathing ceases. |

An inebriated person cannot be relied upon to exhibit good judgment because with every drink that person becomes less perceptive of their personal condition. As a person drinks more, they may become falsely confident in their sobriety, so you cannot trust them when they say that they are “fine.” A judgment must be made prior to drinking as to who will be responsible for driving and for how many drinks can be consumed. It is always crucial to designate a driver beforehand if drinking is foreseen.

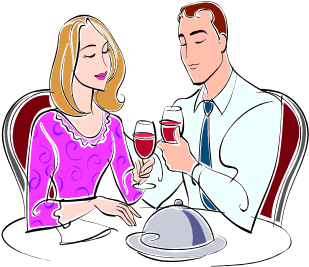
## Remember…

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **One Drink of Alcohol =** | * 1.5 ounces of hard liquor (Whiskey, Vodka, etc.) * Six ounces of table wine * Twelve ounces of beer |
| Most hard drinks are made with a "shot" or a "jigger", which is one and a half ounces. | |

## Alcohol Absorption

Unlike food alcohol is not digested, but instead absorbed. It goes directly into the blood through the stomach and its effects are quick and sudden. The speed at which alcohol can impair you is affected by time, body weight and stomach content.

1. **Time:** The body can metabolize about one ounce of alcohol per hour. This rate may be affected by other body content or activity. Intense activity may metabolize the alcohol faster and staying still can delay it. Do not try to use exercise or intense activity to “sober up” because doing so may raise your temperature or dehydrate you, which will only make you ill.
2. **Body Weight:** Body mass and blood volume is another factor regarding the quantity of alcohol that can be tolerated. All bodies are a bit different, and a direct ratio between body mass and consumed alcohol cannot be made with accuracy. However, it can be assumed that the smaller the body mass, the less alcohol it will take for the individual to become inebriated.
3. **Stomach Content:** The contents of the stomach will not prevent the absorption of alcohol; it will only delay the absorption. While some say it is a good idea to drink on a full stomach, consider the danger in this: You have a big dinner with several cocktails. You sit around for a short while after dinner, and then feeling no effect you decide to drive home. **DON'T BE SURPRISED** if the effect of all that alcohol hits you while you're driving. The delayed absorption of the alcohol ceases and now the full effects of those several ounces take effect. Conversely, if you drank on an empty stomach, the absorption rate is accelerated. You'd feel drunk even before you left the restaurant. Being overconfident from the alcohol, you may still believe you can drive home. Either way, it's a lose-lose situation with drinking and driving.



## Effect of Alcohol on the Brain

Brian and Heather go out on the town. After a few drinks, they’ll each begin to notice the effects of alcohol on the body. Muscular coordination becomes increasingly impaired as more alcohol is absorbed. Can Brian still speak clearly? Can Heather walk and see straight? Here are some of the ways drinking affects your driving vision:

* Alcohol relaxes the eye muscles and thus reduces your ability to see in a sudden increase of light, such as when headlights shine on you. It normally takes about 7 seconds for your eyes to recover from glare. At 55 mph that is almost 2 football fields. But the eyes of drinking drivers take significantly longer to adjust.
* Alcohol affects your ability to identify objects to the side when looking ahead. Your ability to see merging, passing or parked vehicles on the side of the road is reduced by drinking.
* Alcohol decreases your ability to judge how close or far away another car or object is.

Muscular coordination becomes increasingly impaired as more alcohol is absorbed. But the effect of alcohol on the mind is much more insidious. We’ve all said and done things we've regretted while upset or angry but still sober. But we all know more stories of people who “lose it” and become like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde when drinking.

Unfortunately, drugs and alcohol have the effect of putting the analytical area of the mind to sleep, and with it goes good judgment, physical control, and very often ethical viewpoints. What takes over is reactive, illogical "thinking." The word thinking is used very loosely in this context, as less and less real thought becomes involved, and more and more reacting.

Much of this “reacting” does not accurately take into consideration the real-world situations around the drinker. An alternate reality, centered around the inebriated individual, comes into play. An understanding of the actual effects of our actions is diminished. This is the reason why shocking actions can often be committed by persons under the effects of drugs and/or alcohol.

## BAC CHARTS BY WEIGHT, TIME, AND AMOUNT OF DRINKS







**\*\***It is unlawful for anyone under 21 years of age to drive with a BAC of .02 or more in Delaware.

## Steps to Take When a Driver has Had too Much to Drink

* Some myths about drinking alcohol say that taking cold showers, drinking black coffee, or exercising will sober a person up. This is not true. Only time, body weight, the number of drinks, and how much has been eaten can determine how long it takes anyone to sober up.

* Generally, it takes about an hour for the body to get rid of one drink. If a person has more than one drink an hour, one hour of sobering up time should be allowed for each extra drink before they think about driving.

* Better still, someone who has not been drinking should drive.



* For those who live in Newark, a unique non-profit program called “Delaware Designated Drivers” exists to help people get home safely on Friday and Saturday nights from 10 pm to 2 am. Volunteers staff the offices of the DDD, and two will come out to pick up a person who has called for a ride home – one to drive the impaired driver’s vehicle so that it does not have to be left behind. There is no charge for this service, which relies on donations. To call for a ride, donate, or for more information, dial (302) 633-3474 or 1-877-999-9079.

## The Designated Driver and the Hero Campaign

The national Designated Driver Program is an anti-DUI effort that works. It is a program that takes a positive approach to averting the potential disaster of drinking drivers. If even one drinking driver is kept off the road by a designated driver, the program is accomplishing something positive for everyone on the road that night. It also relieves the peer pressure to drink for those who would like to participate with others but prefer not to consume alcohol.

The HERO Campaign for Designated Drivers was created by the parents of Naval Ensign John R. Elliott. Ensign Elliott was killed in a head-on collision with a drunken driver just weeks after graduating from the Naval Academy in 2000. On July 22nd of that year, Elliott, who drove from Annapolis, Maryland through Delaware to his home state of New Jersey was struck head on by an impaired driver in Salem County. The driver had been arrested earlier in the evening on DUI charges but was released after posting bail. That driver was also killed. Bill and Muriel Elliott created the HERO campaign in John’s honor to end drunken driving by celebrating the designated driver as a HERO.

Delaware OHS officials plan to implement the HERO Campaign by distributing posters and table tents to bars and restaurants and encourage them to provide free non-alcoholic beverages for those who agree to be designated drivers, as well as distribute designated driver pledge cards at sobriety checkpoints and on college campuses. Dover Downs Hotel & Casino implemented the HERO program on their own in 2006 and hope the state’s other casino facilities will do the same.

The goal of the program is to encourage one individual to abstain 100% from consuming alcoholic beverages for an outing so that he or she can be responsible for transporting the other members of the group safely. Many licensed eating and drinking establishments participate in the program by providing complimentary nonalcoholic beverages and other incentives to the designated driver. Look for half priced tickets and other provisions made for the designated driver at regional events such as the Cape May Wine Festival, the Longwood Gardens Wine and Jazz Festival or the Philly Craft Beer Festival. If an event or establishment you are going to doesn’t have a designated driver promotion, ask for them to offer one. Plan on patronizing those places and happenings that include responsible drinking as part of their profile.

To be a designated driver for your friends, an individual:



* Must possess a valid driver license.
* Must be part of a group of two or more persons.
* Must verbally identify himself or herself as the designated driver to the server.
* Must abstain from consuming alcoholic beverages for the duration of the outing.
* Must not be an otherwise impaired driver.

DUI related deaths have seen some decline over the past ten years. Programs such as Designated Driver have contributed to that trend.

**BASIC TIP # 2 - TAKING DRUGS AND DRIVING ARE LIKE DRINKING AND DRIVING**

All drugs are toxins at some level. For example, Arsenic is a very potent drug. Minute amounts will act as a stimulant, but due to its potency, only a few grains will kill you. These days, arsenic is no longer prescribed as a medicine, but other potent drugs are.

Mood elevators, amphetamines, pain relievers, depressants, and psychotropic drugs - Prozac, Ritalin and Thorazine are a few - are frequently prescribed to people who may not think about how they affect their driving. Many drugs, even at prescribed dosages, can still cause the effect of diminished mental capacity and can affect response time.

Most of what has been said about alcohol also applies to drugs, both legally prescribed medicines and illegal drugs. The state's “drunk” driving law is also a “drug” driving law since it states in part, “(a) No person shall drive a vehicle: (1) When the person is under the influence of alcohol; (2) When the person is under the influence of any drug; (3) When the person is under the influence of a combination of alcohol and any drug;” **(DC21 4177)**

Almost any drug can affect a person's driving skill. Here are some facts:

* Most drugs taken for headaches, colds, hay fever, allergy, or to calm nerves can make a person drowsy and this can affect his or her driving.
* **NEVER** take medicines prescribed for somebody else.
* Medicines taken together can be dangerous. Drivers should ask their physician or pharmacist about how any medicines may affect their driving. Under no circumstances should you mix medications unless directed to by your physician.
* Many drugs have unexpected effects when they are taken with alcohol. Drugs and alcohol should never be used at the same time.
* Pep pills, "uppers" and diet pills can make a driver more alert for a short time. Later, however, they can cause a person to be nervous, dizzy, and not able to concentrate. They can also negatively affect your vision.
* Marijuana – Use of marijuana can cause drowsiness and an inability to judge time and space. Some users report that they tend to concentrate on only one object at a time, ignoring other objects (people, bicyclists, cars!) around them.

**Any drug which impairs your driving is illegal.**

Make sure you read the label and know the effects of any drug you use. Even if it is a common drug, read the label. Any drug that "may cause drowsiness or dizziness" is one you should not take before driving.

If an officer suspects that you are under the influence of any drug, legal or not, the officer can require that you take a blood or urine test. Persons refusing these tests will be subject to the same stringent penalties as for alcohol test refusals. Anyone convicted of possessing, selling, or manufacturing illegal drugs will be subject to a suspension or revocation of their license, along with whatever other legal actions are taken against them.

## Medications

Alcohol can enhance some of the dangerous side effects of many drugs, including those that are prescribed by your physician or purchased over the counter. It is important that you check with your physician or pharmacist before driving when taking *any* medication.

ALL medications, prescription and over the counter, are potentially dangerous. Over-the-counter medicines that you take for headaches, colds, and allergies can make you drowsy and affect your driving ability. Carefully read and follow the directions about dosage and side effects. Pay close attention to warnings about continued dosage and who should and should not take the medication. Some medicine labels clearly warn the user not to take and then operate heavy machinery. Guess what? Your car is the heaviest machinery you are likely to operate, and YOU should pay attention. This is not just a warning for workers in industrial jobs.

If you must take medicine before driving, find out its effects before you get behind the wheel. Take one on a day you aren’t driving and see how you feel for the next 8 hours. Remember even though you may feel fine, you still may not be totally free of the adverse effects that can affect your driving**. It is your responsibility to know the effects of the medications you take.**

Narcotics are so named because their effects on the mind are “more apparent” and usually a smaller amount affects the body rapidly. Narcotics include but are not limited to marijuana, LSD, amphetamines, cocaine, barbiturates, and opiates.

|  |
| --- |
| **Did You Know?**    **Synergy means that the sum reaction is greater than the simple addition of the parts. The synergy of alcohol and drugs used together can be dangerous, and even fatal, causing liver or kidney failure among other symptoms.** |

The synergistic effect of coupling drugs with alcohol can be devastating. Synergy means that the sum reaction is greater than the simple addition of the parts. The body is very adversely affected by combining drugs with alcohol. The liver and kidneys cannot get rid of the drugs fast enough, and the results are quite often lethal; not only to you, but also to passengers in your car and other drivers on the roadway.

## 

## Intoxication and the Law

As many individuals fail to restrict their drug use, the law steps in to impose restrictions upon them. Between 1982 and 1985, 493 new laws were enacted targeting drunk drivers. Here are some of the changes:

* The legal drinking age in all 50 States has been changed to 21.
* Most states will not tolerate Blood Alcohol Content levels of 0.08%, and this level constitutes intoxication in Delaware.
* Many states have adopted sobriety checkpoints for randomly checking for drunk drivers.
* Preliminary breath tests are legal in about half of the states.
* In most states, refusal to submit to alcohol testing is condemning evidence.
* In most states, the DUI driver must pay restitution for causing property injuries and/or property damages, either directly or to a fund.
* In most states, when the DUI driver kills someone, the offender is prosecuted for felony vehicular homicide - that's murder.
* If you refuse to submit to a chemical blood, breath or urine test, your license can be suspended for one or two years, depending on any previous record.
* A person arrested for operating under the influence is subject to vehicle seizure in some states and will have to pay any towing and storage fees.

If you are prosecuted for driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs (DUI), you will find yourself in a criminal court, facing fines, mandatory counseling, and possible jail time, with your license suspended or possibly revoked.

Delaware utilizes a statewide DUI reporting system. New Licensees are reviewed for prior DUI offenses in their previous states prior to license issuance. Enforcement techniques used to detect and apprehend drunk drivers include: sobriety checkpoints, blanket enforcement campaigns, standardized field sobriety testing, preliminary breath tests, and mobile videotaping.

## The Open Container Law

Many states have open container laws which prohibit possessing and drinking from an open container of alcohol in the passenger area of a vehicle while driving. One state, Mississippi, still allows drivers to consume alcohol while driving – as long as they stay below the .08% BAC level! Delaware joins 7 other states – Arkansas, Connecticut, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia – in allowing passengers in motor vehicles to consume alcoholic beverages while the vehicle is in motion. However local jurisdictions may prohibit this activity if they see fit.

**BASIC TIP # 3 - KNOW THAT YOUR RIGHT TO PRESUMED**

**INNOCENCE IS WAIVED**

## The Implied Consent Law

The DMV reminds drivers that a driver’s license or a commercial driver’s license is not a basic right guaranteed by the Constitution. It is a privilege that is issued and may be withdrawn at the discretion of the State.

Anyone arrested for driving, operating, or having actual physical control of a vehicle, an off-highway vehicle, or a moped, while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or of any drug shall be deemed to have given consent to submit to a chemical test or tests or his/her breath, blood, and/or urine for the purpose of determining the alcohol content in his or her blood. If the person refuses to submit to the test designated by the officer, reasonable steps can be taken to conduct tests without the person’s consent.

Upon refusal the arresting officer will deliver a report of refusal to the Division of Motor Vehicles who will revoke the person’s driver license and driving privilege for one to two years depending on the number of previous DUI offenses, probable cause, and/or chemical test refusal offenses.

Please remember, a test can protect you. If you are not legally intoxicated, the test will show that result.

## CDL’s and DUI

For commercial vehicle drivers, you are presumed legally drunk if your BAC is 0.04% or above. Whether you are convicted of driving while intoxicated in your commercial vehicle or on the job is not immaterial in the eyes of the state. Any DUI conviction can cause you to lose not only your commercial driver’s license, but your livelihood as well.

## Penalties for First Offenses with Elevated BAC

Your license will be revoked for:

* 12 months for BAC less than .15
* 18 months for BAC between .15 and .19
* 24 months for BAC .20 or greater or refusal to submit to a chemical test.
* Fine: $500 to $1,500
* Sentence: Imprisonment for 60 days to six months.

In addition:

* You may spend the night in jail. You may be sentenced to jail time for aggravated offenses such as aggressive driving, excessive speeding, or reckless driving.
* You will pay bail, court costs, legal fees, and administrative fees.
* You will be on probation.
* Your insurance will increase dramatically.
* If you are a driver of a commercial vehicle with a BAC of 0.04% or higher, your commercial license will be revoked for one year.

## License Reinstatement

Any person revoked for a probable cause or refused chemical action for a first-time offense may apply for reinstatement of his/her driver license and/or driving privilege by doing the following:

* Satisfactory completion in a course of instruction or program of rehabilitation as designated by an alcohol evaluation.
* Payment of all fees associated with the course, program, and evaluation.
* Serving out the period of revocation.
* You may be required to retest for vision, knowledge, and road skills prior to your reinstatement.
* Payment of a reinstatement fee.

In addition to the penalties listed above, any person convicted of a DUI committed while a person under 17 in the vehicle will also be required to perform 40 hours of community service in a program benefiting children for a first offense; or 80 hours of community service for each subsequent offense.

## Delaware’s First Offense Election

At the time of court arraignment, the driver may elect to apply for enrollment in the First Offender Program Election in lieu of standing trial. If this option is selected, you will waive some of your rights. Then you must complete and pay for an alcohol evaluation.

If you are a Delaware driver, instead of doing a 1-year license suspension you can have an ignition interlock device installed on your vehicle. You will be required to drive with this device for 4 months. You cannot get your license back until you complete the 4-month period. To find out more about this program, contact the DMV. This program is not available to anyone who is a repeat offender or has committed aggravated DUI.

**THE SECOND OFFENSE IN FIVE YEARS:**



Your license will be taken by the DMV for:

* 18 months for BAC less than .15 or refusal to submit to a chemical test.
* 24 months for BAC between .15 and .19
* 30 months for BAC .20 or greater or refusal to submit to a chemical test.

Additionally:

* You can be fined between $750 and $2500.
* You face MANDATORY imprisonment of 60 days to 18 months.
* You will be on probation.
* You will be responsible for bail, court costs, legal fees, and administration fees.
* Your insurance will increase dramatically if you can convince them to keep you on.

**THE THIRD OFFENSE WITHIN 5 YEARS OF TWO PRIOR:**

Your license will be taken by the DMV for:

* 24 months for BAC less than .15 or refusal to submit to a chemical test.
* 30 months for BAC between .15 and .19
* 36 months for BAC .20 or greater

Additionally:

* You will be guilty of a felony criminal charge if occurring within 5 years of the two prior offenses.
* You will face a MANDATORY imprisonment of 1 to 2 years.
* You will be fined between $1,500 and $5,000.
* Your insurance will increase dramatically. Practically speaking, however, you might not need insurance, because remember you will be serving a jail sentence.
* You will be ordered into a drug treatment program at the judge’s discretion.

It is a felony crime if any person is hurt or killed because you were driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. It can be tried as manslaughter or even as murder.

**Did you know?**



**The “Sobermeter”**

**or**

**“Intoxilizer” are the machines used to test blood alcohol**

**content.**

## Zero Tolerance Law

The first state to reduce the legal BAC limit for young drivers was Maine in 1983. Wisconsin and New Mexico followed within a year. These states experienced a 34 percent decline in nighttime fatal crashes among adolescents targeted by the lower BAC levels. By the end of 1990, 12 states had lowered BAC levels for youth. These 12 experienced a 16 percent decline overall in nighttime single-vehicle fatal crashes among young drivers targeted by the new laws, compared with a 1 percent rise among drivers of the same age in selected comparison states.

Overall, the State has a **ZERO TOLERANCE** attitude toward drunk drivers of any age, but the law is stricter for drivers under 21 years of age.

**If You Are Under 21**

It is against state law to purchase or be in possession of beer, wine, or hard liquor if you are under 21 years old. Therefore, if you are a minor, the law is especially hard on you when you drink and drive.

If you are under 21 years of age, as little as one drink may make it illegal for you to drive. The law says that anyone under the age of 21 years, who is convicted of driving a vehicle while consuming or after consuming alcoholic beverages:

* Will have his/her driver license revoked for a period of 2 months for the first offense.
* Or not less than 6 months nor more than 12 months for each subsequent offense.
* If the underage person does not have a driver license, the person shall be fined $200 for the first offense.
* And not less than $400 nor more than $1,000 for each subsequent offense.

That’s not all. The zero-tolerance law also applies for operating:

* + an off-highway vehicle
  + a moped
  + a motorcycle or
  + a boat

While consuming or after having consumed alcoholic beverages.

So, if your BAC is 0.02% or higher, or if you refuse to submit to a blood alcohol screening test, you will:

* Lose your license.
* Spend some time in jail.
* Be required to pay for a defense, court costs and other fees.
* Raise your vehicle insurance rates through the roof.
* Cause expense and hardship to yourself and your family
* Possibly lose or jeopardize your employment.
* Have a criminal conviction on your record. This could follow you for years as you apply for colleges or seek employment.

Finally, the last sobering thought is that over half of the young people killed in the alcohol related crashes mentioned above were not the ones who were drinking. Protect yourself and your future, and DON’T ride with anyone who has had a drink. You have way too much to lose.

|  |
| --- |
| **Did You Know?**      **Some states refer to drunk driving as DWI; still others refer to drunk driving as OUI, OWI, DUI, DWAI, OUIL or OMVI.** |

**BASIC TIP # 4 – KNOW THE PUNISHMENTS**

## If You Are Over 21

**THE FIRST OFFENSE:**

All DUI sentences are carried on the driving record for a minimum of five years. No driver license will be reinstated from a DUI offense until the driver has satisfactorily completed a course of instruction or program of rehabilitation which will be determined by a screening evaluation.

## Administrative Procedures and Penalties

The driver license will be taken by the police officer at the time of arrest and a temporary license good for 15 days will be issued. The driver will have 15 days to request an administrative hearing in writing by mail, fax (302) 739-2602, or in person at an office of the Division of Motor Vehicles. The temporary license may be extended at that time, if eligible. The license will be revoked at the end of the 15 day period if no hearing is requested.

The Motor Vehicle Administrative Hearing will be held to determine:

* Whether a police officer had PROBABLE CAUSE to believe that the driver was driving, operating, or had actual physical control of a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
* Whether by a preponderance of evidence it appears that the driver was driving, operating, or had actual physical control of a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. A chemical test of .08 BAC or greater or the presence of any drug is conclusive evidence that the driver was under the influence.
* Whether the driver REFUSED a chemical test after being informed of the revocation penalty for refusing such test.

If the driver receives an unfavorable ruling at an administrative hearing, the driver license and/or driving privilege will be revoked for:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROBABLE CAUSE CHEMICAL TEST** |  |  |  |  | **REFUSED** |
| • 3 months for 1st offense |  |  |  |  | • 12 months for 1st |
| offense  • 12 months for 2nd offense |  |  |  |  | • 18 months for 2nd |
| offense  • 18 months for 3rd offense or more or more offense |  |  |  |  | • 24 months for 3rd |

## Ignition Interlock

An ignition interlock is a hand-held breath-testing device, which is connected to the vehicle and requires the driver to take a breath test for alcohol each time the vehicle is started. The system also administers random tests while the car is in motion to prevent intoxicated drivers from fooling the test by having a friend breathe into the device for them. If they exceed the limit, the car will warn the driver to stop the car and then set off the alarm, flash its lights, honk the horn, etc., until the engine is turned off.

So, what does this device mean for Delaware drivers? Ignition Interlock is approved for use primarily because it has been found to be very effective at keeping intoxicated people off the road. If you are a first-time offender, or a subsequent offender that the court deems responsible enough to keep your commitments, an Ignition Interlock device may be the best friend you could ever have, as it could allow you to drive and maintain your job and family while serving your sentence – under mechanical supervision.

All first offense convictions with a BAC greater than .15 require the offender to have an Ignition Interlock Device installed on one vehicle registered in the name of the offender after serving 1 month of the revocation period.

**First Offense Election – Ignition Interlock Device Diversion (FOE-IDD)**

At the time of arraignment, the driver may elect to apply for enrollment in the First Offense Election – Ignition Interlock Device (FOE-IID) Diversion Program if they have never had a previous conviction for DUI. If this option is selected, enrollment will be considered a waiver of the right to a speedy trial and a waiver of the right for an administrative hearing at DMV. The driver may then apply for an Ignition Interlock Device (IID) license under the following terms:

* Proof of enrollment in a course of rehabilitation as designated by your alcohol evaluation and payment of all associated fees.
* At least one month must elapse since the day the revoked license was received by the DMV.
* A completed Ignition Interlock Device Program application.
* Proof of insurance for the vehicle on which the Ignition Interlock Device is to be installed.
* Proof of a valid Delaware registered vehicle on which the Ignition Interlock Device is to be installed.
* Your driving privilege must not be suspended, revoked, disqualified, or denied for another violation that would prohibit the issuance of an IID license.

Any person who elects the FOE – IID Program must remain on the Ignition Interlock Device license for 5 months from the date of issuance of the IID license. Prior to reinstatement the Division must have received a satisfactory program completion report. A reinstatement fee must be paid. The DMV will then authorize removal of the Ignition Interlock Device.

**Mandatory Ignition Interlock Device (IID) Program**

All second and further subsequent DUI convictions require the offender to have an Ignition Interlock Device installed on all vehicles registered in the name of the offender after serving 12 months of the revocation period. The ignition interlock device must remain on the vehicle(s) until the full period of revocation has expired. In some cases, the individual may be eligible to apply for an IID license under the following terms:

* You must have had a valid Delaware license at the time of the offense in question.
* Proof of enrollment in a course of rehabilitation as designated by your alcohol evaluation and payment of all associated fees.
* The offense in question must not have involved death or serious injury to any person.
* Your Delaware license must have been turned in to the Division of Motor Vehicles.
* A completed an Ignition Interlock Program application.
* Proof of insurance for the vehicle(s) on which the Ignition Interlock Device is to be installed.
* Proof of a valid Delaware registered vehicle(s) on which the Ignition Interlock Device is to be installed.
* Your driving privilege must not be suspended, revoked, disqualified, or denied for another violation that would prohibit the issuance of an Ignition Interlock Device (IID) license.
* You may be required to pass a vision screening, knowledge test, and road skills test prior to issuance of an IID license.

Information concerning the alcohol evaluation, course of instruction, or program of rehabilitation may be obtained by contacting the Delaware DUI Screening and Referral Program: DSARP.

Contact Information Website: www.brandywinecounseling.com/dsarp

Phone Number: 302-255-9268

**BASIC TIP # 5 – HOW TO SPOT A DRUNK ON THE ROAD**

Understandably, if drinking and driving is something you have never done, at this point you may be a little sick of hearing about it all. The problem, however, is that there are still some drivers who just don't care about themselves, their families or you! So, it is important to be able to spot a drunk driver and take evasive action. Here is what the police look for, and so can you -



**Lane Drifting:** Drunk drivers have difficulty controlling the vehicle as the effects of alcohol or drugs hamper their coordination. So, if you see a vehicle drifting from one side of a lane to the other or from one lane to another, back off and stay away from it. If you have a cell phone and can see the car's license plate, call 911 or CB Channel 9 with the vehicle description, and license plate number and the location of the suspected drunk driver. Doing something effective about it is acting in a caring and responsible manner. You are preventing potential deaths– that of DUI driver and everyone else.

**Speed and Braking Variations:** Because the drunk driver usually suspects he is not in control and because his vision and dexterity is limited, he will often slow down and speed up, over and over. If you see brake lights applied repeatedly for no apparent reason, consider that you may be looking at a drunk driver.

**Erratic Behavior:** What we view as routine driving maneuvers, the drunk driver takes as a terrific challenge. His actions are erratic, unpredictable, and unreasonable. You may see such a driver turn on his right turn signal, and then suddenly turn left. He may slow down long before an intersection and creep to the stoplight, and then take off with manic acceleration. He may drive too close to the curb, shoulder, or center divider, keeping the line as a guide. Either way, realize that you are dealing with a dangerous driver and stay away. If you can take an alternate route, do so.

**BASIC TIP # 6 – DRUNK DRIVING OCCURS OFF ROAD TOO**

## Drinking and Operating Vessels and Other forms of Transportation Drunk Bicycling (DC21 4198J)

Delaware is a state in which bicycling is a very popular, high-profile sport. Unfortunately, the popularity of cycling means that some people are also prone to break the law and indulge in their favorite pastimes together – drinking and biking. That’s why Delaware is one of the few states that has a specific statute aimed at taking on intoxicated cyclists.

While it is true that if you commit an offense of this nature, it will not be entered on your driving record, that does not mean there are no penalties. In fact, a first offense of drunk cycling will cost about the same as a first time DUI, including the possibility of over $1000 in fines and up to a month in jail!

## OHV’s - Off Highway Vehicles

The prohibitions against operating a vehicle while under the influence and carrying open containers of alcohol apply to vehicles operated off road as well. So, drivers of off-road vehicles, REMEMBER, the same penalties for driving and drinking (or using drugs) and for carrying open containers of alcohol do apply to you.

Driving a motorized scooter or motorized bicycle while under the influence is not “less important” or “less severe” than a regular DUI. A motorcycle license is an attachment to a Class D driver’s license, and the same laws and penalties apply. The idea is that unsafe driving in one place makes you untrustworthy, every place.

**Drinking and Operating Vessels (BWI)**



The state takes this type of violation very seriously and you are likely to lose your fishing or boating license as well as your driver's license for this type of violation.

Boating While Intoxicated laws mirror the state’s DUI laws:

* The operator of any watercraft must complete a blood-alcohol test when requested to do so by a law enforcement officer who has probable cause to believe that the person operated or *attempted* to operate a watercraft while under the influence.
* Open containers are legal.
* It is illegal for adults to operate any recreational vessel, aquaplane, water skis, or similar devices with a BAC of 0.08% or more, or a commercial vessel with a BAC of 0.04% or more.
* Operators or passengers may also be subject to public intoxication laws.
* BWI convictions will show on your driver's license record and be counted as a prior DUI conviction.
* It is illegal for minors to operate any recreational vessel, aquaplane, water skis, or similar device with a BAC level of .02% or more. Minors are subject to the same suspensions, fines, and penalties as those for operating a vehicle under the influence.

**At this point, we turn it back to you - the educated, informed, and aware driver. YOU have the choice. Drive wisely and responsibly now..**

**It will mean a lot more to enjoy tomorrow!**

## \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**



**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**





**Choose the *best* answer.**

1. **\_\_\_\_\_ is the most widely used drug in our society.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A. | Marijuana |
| B. | Alcohol |
| C. | Tobacco |
| D. | Heroin |
| E. | Cocaine |

1. **For drivers under the age of \_\_\_\_, the state takes a “zero tolerance” policy.**

1. 16
2. 18
3. 20
4. All of the above

**3.) The body can metabolize one \_\_\_\_ per hour.**

1. can of beer
2. ounce of alcohol
3. strong margarita
4. None of the above

**4.) To participate as a designated driver, an individual \_\_\_\_.**

1. Must have a valid drivers’ license.
2. Must not be somehow drugged or an impaired driver
3. C. Should be at least 21 years of age
4. All of the above

**5.) If a person has had more than one drink an hour, \_\_\_\_ hour(s) of sobering up should be allowed for each extra drink.**

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. ½
5. 1 ½

**Chapter 9 2nd rotating quiz**

**1:) Alcohol is the \_\_\_\_\_ used drug in our society.**

A:) least

B:) most widely

C:) most uncommon

D:) all of the above

E:) none of the above

**2:) For drivers under the age of 21, the state takes a \_\_\_\_\_ policy.**

A:) tolerance zero

B:) tolerance

C:) zero

D:) zer to

E:) zero tolerance

**3:) The body can metabolize \_\_\_ ounce of alcohol per hour.**

A:) two

B:)one

C:)three

D:)four

E:) none of the above

**4:) To participate as a\_\_\_\_, an individual must have a valid drivers license, not be somehow drugged or an impaired driver, should be at least 21 years of age and should identify themselves to the server at a bar.**

A:) drunk

B:) Alcohol Anonymous speaker

C:) driver

D:) singer

E:) designated driver

**5:) If a person has had more than one drink an hour, 1 \_\_\_ of sobering up should be allowed for each extra drink.**

A:)hour

B:)day

C:)week

D:)month

E:)year

# THE COMMONSENSE OF DRIVING

**10 of 10 This Chapter gives you 13 BASIC Tips** **about common sense in driving and driving defensively.**

**BASIC TIP # 1 - “COMMON SENSE” ALSO MEANS “COMMON COURTESY”**

Every day, millions of people commute to different places, sharing the road of our cities and suburbs. At any given time, there are likely to be hundreds of vehicles within the surrounding distance of your horn.

With this in mind, it would be advisable to practice common courtesy. This will definitely be appreciated and is a necessary ingredient for safe driving. Courteous drivers not only make driving less stressful for others, it also sets an example that comes back to benefit you. Keep the Golden Rule in mind, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Being a safe driver requires 3 basic things: knowing the law, driving skills, and common sense. Driving a vehicle on public roadway places an enormous amount of responsibility on you, and you have a duty to maintain safety for the sake of others.

**BASIC TIP # 2 – PARK RESPONSIBLY**

Let’s start at the beginning and end of every trip in your car – parking. A vehicle can be dangerous even when it is parked and unoccupied! An improperly parked vehicle can be a dangerous obstacle (it can block safety areas like hospitals or hydrants) or it may even roll down a hill and injure someone.

Here are some things to remember when you do find a place to park:

* When you park with your car pointed downhill, turn your front wheels towards the side of the road (nearest you!).
* When parking uphill, point your front wheels away from the curb and let your vehicle roll back a few inches until it “catches” on the curb. Then set the parking brake and leave the vehicle in gear for standard cars. Use the “parking” position if your vehicle is automatic.
* When you park alongside a curb, the front and back wheels must be within 18 inches of the curb.

**Stopping and Parking Violations**

Unless otherwise posted, ordered to do so by a police officer, or to avoid an accident, you must not stop or park your vehicle in any of the following places even if someone is left in the car:

* In a handicapped parking space, unless your vehicle displays the proper placard or license plate.
* At any place where official signs prohibit such action.
* Wherever curb is painted yellow, or a yellow line is placed at the edge of a roadway.
* In an intersection, on a crosswalk, or within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection.
* On a sidewalk.
* In front of a public or private road, driveway, or alley.
* Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.
* Within 20 feet of driveway entrance to any fire station or on opposite side of street within 75 feet of entrance when signs are posted.
* Within 30 feet of any flashing beacon, stop sign, or traffic signal.
* Between a safety zone or island and the adjacent curb, or within 30 feet of end of safety zone or island unless otherwise posted.
* Within 50 feet of a railroad crossing unless otherwise posted.
* Alongside or opposite any road excavation or obstruction when traffic will be impeded.
* On the roadway side of any vehicle stopped or parked at the curb.
* On any bridge or elevated structure on a highway or in a tunnel.
* At any other place where stopping, standing, or parking will obstruct the free flow of traffic.
* In the area between roadways of a divided highway, including crossovers.
* In any designated fire lane.

**BASIC TIP # 3 – ‘STOP’ MEANS *STOP***

## Stopping versus Yielding

You should treat these laws seriously. When it comes to driving, failure to yield or stop is a mistake that has immediate, painful, and expensive costs. Stop signs are *not* suggestions. The sign means exactly what it says: it should be taken literally.



Since Delaware is the First State, people are used to saying, “It’s good being first.” But this does not apply when it comes to the rules of the road. Even Delawareans must come to a complete stop at red lights and stop signs. Not only does the law require you to STOP, but other drivers depend on you to stop completely and in the right place - not rolling slowly forward towards the sign or stop lines.

To yield means “To give up (an advantage, for example) to another. To concede”

 If you have a yield sign, you must NEVER take the right-of-way and

pull in front of other drivers. Other drivers are expecting you to yield just as they

expect you to stop completely at a stop sign. It is permissible and courteous to yield to other traffic, even when there is no posted sign requiring you to do so.

Yielding is often a matter of common sense. Common sense dictates that you should not pull out in front of fast-moving traffic, you should not try to outrun a train to get across railroad tracks, and you should not intentionally block someone from merging into your lane.

**BASIC TIP # 4 – TALKING ON THE CELL PHONE AND DRIVING DON’T MIX**

Cell phones are everywhere. In an emergency, a cell phone can be an important tool for safety. The truth is an overwhelming majority of cell-phone use while driving is for casual conversation and for convenience.

As beneficial to society as cell phones are, they are actually quite dangerous. Delaware is one of the leading states in taking preventative measures to make it illegal for all drivers and places more stringent requirements for school and transit bus drivers and drivers under 18 years of age.

The goal eventually, according to non-profit organizations that record changes in cell phone laws across the country, is to create a hand-held ban in all fifty states as well as a ban on texting, recognizing that these two behaviors are the most dangerous for drivers on the road.

The problem, as will be shown below, is the adequate enforcement of the cell phone bans, because the only thing that seems to prevent the most mature and experienced driver from using their cell phone in a disallowed way seems to be the pins and needles feeling of the individual’s conscience.

## Talking of Courtesy: You and Your Cell Phone

People driving and talking on cell phones cause problems for others: they often slow down the flow of normal traffic, rear end drivers in front of them, clip bicyclists and generally are guilty of one of the leading causes of road collisions – distracted driving. Studies have found that people talking on cell phones have delayed reflexes similar to those of drunk drivers. A study at the University of North Carolina found cell phone users are twice as likely to rear-end another car as non-users. Yet another study on traffic congestion estimates that “cell phone drivers” add 20 hours to everyone’s commute per year. All that yakking diverts brain power away from the real task at hand – driving from one place to another.

In our state, those under 18 and applying for their license for the first time and driving on a learner’s permit have a one-year restriction against talking on the cell phone while operating a vehicle. A conviction for violating this law will result in a one (1) month driver license suspension for a first offense and a three (3) months suspension for each subsequent offense.

\*\*\*Drivers can be prosecuted for “inattentive driving” – which can include driving distractedly while talking on the phone’s neighbors have already moved in the direction of forbidding cell phone use while in the driver’s seat. Different localities in Pennsylvania ban it, and New Jersey and New York completely forbid it. You might as well practice turning off your phone and putting it away while on the road. It will set a good example for teen drivers as well.

Delaware does allow talking on a cell phone under certain circumstances. The Hands-Free Law permits a driver to speak on a cell phone as long as they have a device permitting hands-free operation while driving. This includes things like connections to the car’s speaker system and Bluetooth headsets. Both hands must be available to take the wheel in an emergency for this to be legal, so no holding your phone while it’s on speaker phone! Both hands must be available to take the wheel in an emergency for this to be legal. So, no holding your phone while it’s on speaker phone! Hands-free devices reduce the amount of distraction cell phones cause, but not all of it. If you get dragged into a real conversation, go ahead pull safely over if you feel you must continue. If your conversation will distract you or upset you, it is better to wait until you are off the road completely.

By the same token, you may not watch television or view a video screen while driving or operate a vehicle or bicycle while wearing earphones or a headset which covers both ears.

**BASIC TIP # 5 – LEARN TO IDENTIFY DANGEROUS AND**

A motor vehicle is large, powerful, and heavy. It can harm or kill another person very easily and it can just as easily damage property. Improper use of a vehicle is as dangerous as misusing a loaded gun. Aggressive driving can turn into what we call “road rage” and, if you think about it, aggressive drivers already have a powerful weapon in their hands - their car!

**Psychology of Aggression**

To understand aggressive driving and how to prevent it, we need to examine the root causes of the behavior, which means delving into the mental aspects. Psychology, to be exact! While the term might be intimidating to some or uninteresting to others, the study of the mind can offer great insight into why people act the way they do. We’ll be giving you a brief overview of some of the most basic concepts relating to aggression, anger, and how they affect both yourself and others on the road.

**In violent acts involving aggressive drivers, 44% of the time, the car is used as a weapon, while about 23% of the time there is the use of a conventional weapon such as a gun, knife, or club**.

**Frustration Aggression Theory**

There are many psychological theories on how humans translate environmental input into feelings and actions. The field attempts to explain all human behavior, but since this course is concentrating on aggressive actions, you won’t have to delve too deeply into the study of the human mind (unless you want to!).

This theory states that people are most likely to become aggressive when the path to a certain goal they are trying to achieve is obstructed. Furthermore, the closer they are to that goal, the more aggressive they become if their efforts are disrupted before they reach it. A simple way to picture both the origin and function of this tendency would be to consider a human from our hunter-gatherer past who has just spent a day hunting a deer. He has just killed the deer with a spear and is happy that his village will be able to eat tonight when suddenly a mountain lion leaps out of a tree and lands on top of the deer, intending to steal it! Not wanting all of his hard work to go to waste, the hunter angrily decides to fight for the deer despite the risk.

**Aggressive Driving - Driving that increases danger to other people and property.**

This includes tailgating, refusing to yield, speeding, weaving in between cars, passing on the shoulders, and making rude gestures. Traffic congestion causes people to experience stress, and some drivers react to stress by becoming more aggressive. Instead of helping, aggression makes things more aggravating to the driver and to others who have to deal with him or her. Sometimes this can be elevated to the level of “road rage” where people act in a violent or belligerent manner - similar to behavior associated with alcohol intoxication. This similarity explains why road rage is so dangerous and why laws have gotten more and more serious. Some examples of aggressive driving and road rage include:

* Cursing and yelling at other drivers.
* Making obscene gestures.
* Blocking vehicles that are trying to pass.
* Blocking vehicles that are trying to change lanes.
* Riding up on another vehicle's tail.
* Braking suddenly to try to ‘punish’ a tailgater.
* Following a driver in a menacing or stalking manner.
* Approaching another driver’s vehicle to confront them.
* Deliberately hitting another person, vehicle, or object with a vehicle and/or weapon.
* Threatening with a weapon or using a weapon while driving or immediately after pulling over.

**Road Rage is aggressive behavior in which a driver engages in violent acts.**

Although improper use of a vehicle is as dangerous as misusing a loaded gun, often road rage includes the use of a deadly weapon. About 44% of the time, the car is used as a weapon while about 23% of the time there is the use of a conventional weapon such as a gun, knife, or club.

According to the DMV, in 2023, aggressive driving was a contributing factor in 37% of Delaware's 139 fatal motor vehicle crashes. On average, aggressive driving is involved in 43% of all traffic crashes in Delaware each year.

Our state is actively combating aggressive drivers in an effort to send the message that this kind of behavior won’t be tolerated on our roads. Delaware’s “Stop Aggressive Driving Campaign,” targets aggressive drivers as part of a law enforcement and awareness initiative. In the first four weeks of the campaign this netted almost 500 citations specifically for road rage offenses.

## Road Rage Offenses Are Serious Crimes

As you can see, road rage is serious, with the possibility of injury, death and criminal consequences. Conviction of a “road rage” offense contains penalties beyond the tickets and fines of traffic offenses. Drivers can be ordered to participate in counseling courses and receive a license suspension. Depending on the seriousness of the offense, they may have their license revoked or be sentenced to jail time. Road rage can land you in jail like a common criminal.

Truck drivers who possess a commercial driver’s license (CDL) have to take ANY moving violation very seriously. They could lose their ability to earn their livelihood with a single, serious incident of road rage, at least for a period of months.

Besides the legal costs of road rage, there is another cost – you are risking lives - yours, your passengers, and others. The other driver could be violent, crazy, and have nothing to lose: no kids, no job, no hopes and no dreams. *Do you have anything to lose?* Think about it.

## Stress and Anger as Driving Impairment

Your emotional state influences the way you drive. It affects your ability to concentrate, stay alert, be courteous, and contain anger and aggressiveness. Anger and driving just do not mix! Therefore, you should not drive if you are under severe stress, tension or emotional distress. When you are on the road and another driver does something to make you angry, take a few deep breaths and do not react aggressively. Do not retaliate! Sometimes, people make mistakes (just as you do). The best thing you can do is forget about it.

Impatience is one of the prime causes leading to risk-taking, discourteous driving and disputes. Being more patient behind the wheel will go a long way to keeping you out of the reach of road rage. You can avoid situations leading to road rage by observing the following ***DONT’S*** as well as some ***DO’S:***

***DON’T*** cut off other drivers.

***DON’T*** drive slowly in the left (fast) lane.

***DON’T*** tailgate.

***DON’T*** make obscene gestures or otherwise react to the mistakes of other drivers.

***DON’T*** take up more than one parking space.

***DON’T*** let your car door hit the vehicle in the space next to you in a parking lot.

***DO*** limit the use of your horn to emergency situations.

***DO*** let other drivers pass when they want to

***DO*** obey the rules of the road.

***DO*** turn off your turn signal after a turn or lane change.

***DO*** merge into traffic at an appropriate speed.

***DO*** yield the right of way

***DO*** avoid unnecessary use of your high beam headlights.

***DO*** keep your music turned down.

***DO*** allow plenty of time for every trip you take and ***DO*** remember to be courteous.

## Dealing with Road Rage

**A.Yourself**

Keeping the occurrence of road rage in check always starts with you. No matter how calm and peaceful a person you may be, there will be instances where a certain driver just irks you. Sometimes it will be a minor annoyance you can easily let pass, other times it will be more serious. The important thing to remember is to not allow your emotions to get the better of you. Self-control is a vital part of driving at any time, and it is especially important when you interact with other drivers. Maintaining your composure when angry is only half the battle; however, the best thing to do is avoid becoming angry in the first place.

When driving, do not judge other drivers personally (at least until their actions are blatantly dangerous, at which point you should call the police instead of taking matters into your own hands). Giving others the benefit of the doubt or recognizing them as only human and therefore capable of mistakes, will help you keep yourself from overreacting in many situations. Remember: you may be the one making the mistakes one day, so keep in mind how you would like to be treated when you have those off moments! However, there will also be those times where the golden rule might not be enough.

If you find yourself getting angry, aggravated, or taking hostile action against other drivers, pull over immediately and calm down. This is the best and most immediate solution for a flaring temper. Remove yourself from the situation that is angering you and take some time to regain your self-control. Sometimes you cannot help how you feel, but you can certainly do something about the way you deal with those feelings. If you feel you might lose control, take every effort possible to keep yourself from causing a confrontation.

**B.Others**

Unfortunately, there are some individuals on the road who are simply unable to keep their tempers in check. The first and best solution to deal with these drivers is to not anger them in the first place! If you drive carefully and cautiously, you should never have to worry about fending off an enraged driver. Never tailgate, cut off other drivers, or make or return rude gestures. However, even when driving at your best, you may still gain the ire of a fellow driver.

Being confronted by an angry driver can be extremely frustrating, intimidating, or both. The most important thing to remember is to keep calm. Do not be overcome with anger or fear, as this will only exasperate the situation. Remember, road rage incidents are incited by strong emotions, and keeping yours in check means you have won half the battle.

The easiest thing to do when confronted by road rage is to keep your distance from the other driver and escape the situation. Staying out of the way means you avoid allowing the circumstances to worsen. If this is impossible, it is important to remain passive. Do not make eye contact, do not make any aggressive actions that may provoke them further, attempt to apologize or submit, and if you feel threatened in any way pull over in a place where others will be able to help if the situation turns violent. Call the police and try to defuse the situation until they arrive.

The intent of Delaware’s aggressive driving law is to identify aggressive drivers and change their high-risk driving habits by requiring their attendance in a specific training program. The ultimate goal is crash prevention. Aggressive driving is often prosecuted in terms of existing motor vehicle offenses such as failure to yield, unsafe lane change, disregard of a traffic control device, failure to stop at the command of a police officer, following too closely, passing on a shoulder, and speeding. Individuals convicted of 3 or more of these offenses as a result of continuous conduct are guilty of aggressive driving and are subject to increased penalties.

Aggressive driving offenders are required to complete a behavioral modification course within 90 days after they are convicted. Failure to attend the course will result in suspension of the individual’s driving privilege. For further information regarding aggressive driving, please contact the Suspension Section at (302) 744-2509.

Remember, the driving community is a system of individuals, all working together to make the roads work. If people ignore the rules, chaos is certain. Furthermore, the system of drivers also includes other people like passengers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Without cooperation and consideration, these people can also be placed in considerable physical danger.

## PROTECT YOURSELF IN COLLISIONS

You may not always be able to avoid a collision. Try everything you can to keep from getting hit. If nothing works, try to lessen any injuries that could result from the crash. The most important thing you can do is to use your lap and shoulder belts. Besides your safety belts, there are a couple of other things that could help prevent more serious injuries.

**A. Hit from the Rear**

If your vehicle is hit from the rear, your body will effectively be thrown backwards. Press yourself against the back of your seat and put your head against the head restraint. Be ready to apply your brakes so that you will not be pushed into another vehicle.

**B.Side**

If your vehicle is hit from the side, your body will effectively be thrown towards the side that is hit. Air bags will not help in this situation. Your lap and shoulder belts are needed to help keep you behind the wheel. Get ready to steer or brake to prevent your vehicle from hitting something else.

**C Front**

If your vehicle is about to be hit from the front, it is important to try to have a “glancing blow” rather than being struck head on. This means that if a collision is going to happen, you should try to turn the vehicle. At worse, you will hit with a glancing blow; or you might miss it. If your vehicle has an air bag, it will inflate. It also will deflate following the crash, so be ready to prevent your vehicle from hitting something else. You must use your lap and shoulder belts to keep you behind the wheel and to protect you if your vehicle has a second crash.

**BASIC TIP # 6 – DEFENSIVE DRIVING IS A LIFESTYLE**

Most people have some idea of what the term being “defensive” means in everyday speech. A defensive person seems to always have their guard up - to the point that it makes other people uncomfortable. It is not usually considered a flattering remark. Likewise, someone who is “on the defensive” can almost sound like they are ready to take offense at the drop of hat.

Defensive driving is neither of these. It’s a smart, educated way for a driver to approach sharing the road with others as a way of life. It is meant to maintain and preserve life, save lives, and make life on the road more tolerable for everyone. In fact, defensive driving is all about life – yours and others.

Being able to drive defensively means using knowledge, common sense, and courtesy to manage your choices about maneuvering your car through time and space. It means being aware, alert, and ready to exercise your best judgment at all times on the road. It means knowing how to adjust to various situations and planning for the worst the road has to offer – bad drivers, bad weather, and bad traffic.

A defensive driver will manage to avoid a crash when others would crash. To get started, let’s identify the five most common causes of collisions:



* Unsafe Speeds
* Being on the Wrong Side of the Road
* Making Bad Turns
* Breaking Right-of-Way Rules, and
* Ignoring Stop Signs.

The question is: how can you defend yourself against other people’s bad habits?

A big part of defensive driving is about developing defensive habits: positive and safe driving behavior that is second nature. If you really want to be a good driver, you will find that this Chapter can completely transform the way you drive. Defensive driving works because it takes into consideration what is happening around you - and when the bad and ugly are on the road, you can step up to the plate and deal with them all.

**Begin By Making Some Adjustments!**

**Make Seat and Mirror Adjustments**

Each person sits differently in the driver’s seat. The seat and mirrors should always be adjusted so the driver can sit comfortably and see clearly. Know where the buttons and seat levers are and make the adjustments before you start to drive.

**Use Your Head Restraint**

The head rest should really be considered a “head restraint,” adjusted so that it is as close to the back of the head as possible, and the top of the headrest should be as high as the top of your head. Surprised? A head restraint can be a vital part of saving your head from being whipped around in the impact of a crash, but only if it is adjusted properly.

**Need glasses or contact lenses?**

Wear your glasses and contact lenses if necessary while driving. With glasses and sunglasses, make sure they are comfortable and do not obstruct your vision. Find them and put them on *before* you start driving!

**BASIC TIP # 7 – RIGHT-OF-WAY RULES, AND COURTESY IS KING**

Most people hear of “rush hour” and think of crowded roadways and sullen drivers sitting in traffic on I-95 for hours. According to the Sierra Club, “The average American driver spends 443 hours per year —the equivalent of 55 eight-hour workdays—behind the wheel.Almost everybody is in a hurry these days, and too many of them are driving faster and paying less attention to the road. We all have seen drivers putting on makeup, reading the paper, talking on cell phones, eating, and basically doing everything except **PAYING ATTENTION** as they whip along the street.

Many drivers seem to have lost common courtesy. We’ve all been guilty of it at some point. The best way to drive is to treat others the same way you would like to be treated, and keep a cool head if people choose to ignore this. Just paying attention and being safe and courteous is half the battle. Next, add some more basics.

## Right of Way Rules for Pedestrians

To most, a pedestrian is an obstruction, a nuisance, a cause for frustration.

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| --- |
| **Did you know?**    **People on skateboards, scooters, skates and even skis are pedestrians? People in**  **wheelchair devices also count as pedestrians.** |

All of the above should be treated as such *and* they should follow pedestrian rules. A person on a bike follows the rules of motor traffic but is treated like a pedestrian.

* Pedestrians have the right of way when crossing at a crosswalk or corner. All traffic should yield to them. Many people do like to run across the middle of the streets - **although it is not their right of way, you still must yield to them.** In any case, be aware of all pedestrians and slowdown in high pedestrian traffic areas.
* Just because you think a pedestrian sees you – do not assume they do. Be prepared to stop in case they try to cross.
* You must stop for the blind crossing at any time. These persons will usually have a guide dog or white cane.

## Right of Way Rules for Other Vehicles

* When you are stopped at an intersection always check for approaching vehicles in all directions. Yield to cars already driving through the intersection and to the right of you.
* At a four way stop, you must stop and watch the other cars to determine the order in which they approached the intersection. You will know it is your turn by observing the other vehicles.
* When making a left turn at an intersection, you must be aware of the traffic coming at you from the opposite direction. Be sure all traffic is clear and watch for pedestrians and cyclists crossing.
* Of course, when you are pulling out of a parking spot or from the side of the road, you yield to all traffic.

**BASIC TIP # 8 – DRIVER CONDITION**

## Emotions

Bad driving attitudes are never just TAUGHT: they are caught. Kids watch and hear mom or dad yelling at drivers, muttering under their breath and cutting people off, or speeding. Some drivers get tired of being pushed around on the road, yelled at or threatened, and respond in kind. Bad driving, like a bad attitude, spreads like poison.

Emotions affect everything we do. Your responsibility as a driver is to keep yourself and those around your vehicle safe. If you are too stressed, angry, wired, or sick, do not get behind the wheel! Let someone else drive or wait to calm down. If other drivers are driving aggressively around you, do not let emotions dominate your driving skills. Take the edge off by listening to relaxing music or pulling over for a break.

## Fatigue

If you are tired, it is almost as bad as having a bad attitude on the road. You could be a very conscientious driver, but if you doze off at the wheel it really doesn’t matter. You run the risk of driving off the road, hitting something, or just not reacting properly because your response is slowed. On road trips, the long road ahead of you and the hypnotic sound of the wheels on the road only makes tired eyes want to close…even on short trips, if you are tired and nod off for just a split second you are asking for a disaster to happen.

Some startling statistics about sleeping at the wheel:

* 31% of all drivers have fallen asleep at the wheel at least once.
* 100,000 accidents each year are caused by sleeping at the wheel.
* 1,500 people die as a result of falling asleep at the wheel.
* Out of 593 long-distance truck drivers, 47.1% had fallen asleep at the wheel at least once, and 25.4% within the last year.
* 100 million drive while drowsy each year.

If you have another passenger who can drive, ask him or her to take the wheel. If you are driving alone, you must pull over and get some sleep - it is not worth the risk of your life and others on the road.

**Tips for Long Road Trips:** 

* Try to get 6 to 8 hours of sleep, minimum the night before you leave and every night on the road.
* Be careful with medication that could make you drowsy. Sleeping pills from the night before can still have an effect on your motor skills. If you know you have a sleeping disorder, you must use extra precaution.
* Break up the trip. Trying to push straight through will only create a danger on the road and make you grumpy and tired whenever you reach your destination. Plan to take time to stop and enjoy the trip.
* Stay off the road late at night. Your body wants to sleep, and other late-night drivers are suffering from the same fatigue and may not be alert. There are also drunks, hazards, and other dangers on the road. If you must drive at night, stop for a bit to stretch, and get some sugar or caffeine.
* Watching the road for too long can make your eyes go into an unfocused trance. Make sure to keep your eyes looking in different directions to stay alert.
* Stop and get some gum or lollypops to keep your mouth moving. Another way to keep moving is to put on some music and pretend you are in a karaoke bar!
* If you feel like you are starting to get tired, take in extra oxygen. Roll your windows down and take breaths of cool, fresh air.

## Can you say, “It’s My Fault?”

This is one of the hardest phrases for a driver to use (for men, the 2nd most difficult is, “Can you give me directions?”). But being able to take the blame is the only way to avoid falsely blaming others and igniting a potentially dangerous confrontation in which one or more parties lose control.

Drivers must take responsibility for their actions and think about those around them. After a collision happens, there is no way to take it back. Keep calm and be sure the police are called.

Try not to argue over who is to blame. Silence can be very powerful and sometimes will prevent another person from acting out. If it’s a collision caused by road rage, remember that road rage behavior is quite unpredictable and should not be taken lightly. It is punishable by criminal law in Delaware and can result in license suspension and jail time.

**BASIC TIP # 9 – BE ABLE TO ADJUST TO THE DRIVING**

**ENVIRONMENT**

## Nighttime Driving vs. Daytime Driving

Daytime and Nighttime driving each have their own risks. While visibility should be better during the day, that can be mitigated by foul weather. Even in good weather, sun glare can greatly hinder your ability to see hazards approaching, and this can easily lead to crashes. Using sun visors, wearing sunglasses, and avoiding looking directly at bright lights will help you on your drive.

Traffic will usually be heavier during the day, but even on the open road, a long stretch of empty highway ahead with broken lines falling away under your eyes for miles can be hypnotizing and daze inducing. At night, you have less visibility, the possibility of more drunk and reckless drivers on the roads, and on open stretches of highway, more of a chance of encountering wildlife and hazards. Nighttime vision can be variable from person to person, and bad weather at night can be the worst combination of elements. Day or night, you must be alert at the wheel.

Planning your route in advance, taking into account all the conditions you will be encountering, and being prepared to alter the route if conditions change is the safe, flexible, and ultimately successful approach to driving.

## Weather

Weather changes year-around, no matter where you live. When it rains, drive with your low beam headlights on, to make sure you can see and be seen. Weather conditions like mist or fog can create glare which reflects your headlights back at you. Switch to your low beams if you are not already using them and keep driving with caution. Never use your parking (or running) lights alone!

If weather conditions are really poor like in heavy rain, snow, or fog, you need to make sure that you allow more space between you and other vehicles. According to traffic authorities, “…you need at least one second for each 10 feet of vehicle length at speeds below 40 mph. At higher speeds, you must add one second for safety.”However, in poor weather you may take longer to react, and your vehicle will take longer to respond! Slow down, stay at a safe speed and distance, and apply your brakes slowly. When the roads are slippery and you are going too fast, braking suddenly will most likely result in skidding over water and sliding on ice. Even a thin sheet of water on the road can cause your car to lose its grip and hydroplane. If conditions become worse *while* you are on the road, you should consider pulling over until things improve.

## More tips for driving in bad weather.

* Maintain a safe distance from the car in front of you and drive at a slower speed.

* To slow down, apply the brakes *lightly.* Remember it is easy to hydroplane or skid in poor conditions.

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**“Conditions” Of the Road**

You should always be aware of the road conditions on the route you are traveling or will be traveling as you drive. Some of the most dangerous road conditions mean you have to slow down and look sharp.

**Here are four things to check out during every drive:**

**Soft shoulders:** This refers to the sides of the road where the pavement stops. It can be grass, dirt, or gravel. Each of these affect’s control of a vehicle in a different way. Sometimes (but not always) there will be signs letting you know there is a soft shoulder. Be prepared!

**Drop-offs:** You would expect mountain roads to have steep sides off the road, but drop-offs can show up unexpectedly in many places besides mountains – in fact, anywhere there is construction or road erosion, and in the vicinity of wild places such as beaches, river gorges and canyons. Watch for signs, and don’t ignore them. If you know there is a drop-off, it is better not to pull off the road at all. If you must pull off, do so only after checking the terrain where you intend to pull off. Use your parking brake and point your tires away from the drop off. Be careful of falling on loose gravel or eroded earth when exiting your vehicle.

**Worn pavement:** Some roads have so many bumps and holes, it seems like you are driving off-road. Slow down on this type of road. Large bumps could even cause your vehicle to shift gears or damage your vehicle’s suspension system. It is easy to lose control, especially if you are driving at high speeds.

**Seasonal hazards:** Spring snow melts, summer forest fires, mudslides and heavy winter rains are just a few of the hazards that can pop up at certain times but not others. Be prepared for the road conditions you’ll be encountering because of the time of year.

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| **Did you know?**  **Roads are slickest in the first rainfall after a dry period, when old oil is loosened on the road.** |

## Intersections - A Driving Environment All Their Own

An intersection is any place where one line of traffic meets another, including cross streets, side streets, alleys, and freeway entrances. The following illustration shows an intersection that has lanes for crossing and turning.



Defensive driving at this intersection, or any other for that matter, requires drivers to:

* Pay attention to traffic in both directions.
* Always be aware of the traffic to the left of your vehicle first.
* Double-check both directions in case you did not see a car the first time.
* Be smart and alert - people regularly run red lights.
* A clear view is important. Be sure you can see into and through the intersection - this helps avoid surprises. Being able to see others often means being able to be seen.
* At intersections without **STOP** or **YIELD** signs, slow down and be ready to stop. Yield to vehicles that are already in the intersection. Also, yield to the car that arrives first OR to the car on your right if it reaches the intersection when you do.
* At “T” intersections without **STOP** or **YIELD** signs, yield to vehicles on the through road. They have the right of way.
* When there are stop signs at all corners, stop first, then follow the above rules.
* When you turn left, give the right of way to all vehicles approaching you that are close enough to be dangerous. Turn only when it is safe. Switch on your turn signal at least 100 feet before reaching the intersection.
* Intersection rules apply at parking lot entrances and exits adjoining roadways as well.

## Driving Distractions

Driving is not an easy thing to do and should be considered a risky activity. Each year more than 40,000 people are killed in motor vehicle crashes and over 3 million are injured. There are many distractions, both on the road and in the car, which affect our driving. However, we can minimize most of them.

As we have discussed elsewhere, don’t drive and talk on the phone, fiddle with the radio, drive with your knee while unwrapping a sandwich, plug up your ears with headphones, keep tabs on a movie or worry about spilling hot coffee on your lap. Keep both hands on the wheel and worry about living life to the fullest when you get *out* of the car.

If you have passengers, get one of them to help you with navigation. If you must look away from the road to a distraction either inside or outside the car, check the situation ahead first and then take short looks. When you take your eyes off the road while traveling 55 mph for 3 to 4 seconds, your vehicle travels the length of 3-4 football fields.

## The Distracted Driver

Driving instructors estimate that a driver makes 200 decisions for every mile of driving. If you are doing anything else while driving, you are adding to the number of events your brain must process. If you are doing any of the following while driving, you may be doing more things than you can manage safely:

* Eating, drinking, or smoking.
* Shaving, putting on make-up or other personal grooming tasks.
* Engaging in intense, complicated emotional conversations on a cell phone or with passengers.
* Reading a road map, newspaper or taking notes.
* Focusing attention on children or pets.
* Retrieving unsecured cargo or objects.
* Driving an unfamiliar vehicle without first adjusting the mirrors and seat, and locating the lights, turn signals and windshield wipers.
* Changing the radio, CD or cassette.

**Unexpected Pedestrians.** Always be aware of pedestrians, whether you are near marked crossings or not. Some pedestrians can just dart out into the streets, so be very careful - especially when you are entering areas like:

* shopping mall parking lots
* construction areas
* popular and/or populated areas
* any place where children gather, like schools and parks.

**Halloween Driving Tips**: Right after daylight savings time kicks in the streets are darker sooner, Halloween comes around and children will take to the streets for Trick or Treating. During this time:

Pay close attention to the road and activity on both sides.



Enter and exit driveways slowly and carefully.

If you are driving kids trick-or-treating, have them enter and exit the vehicle from the curb side.

When stopping, do not block the road or regular vehicular traffic.



Be a road model: drive safely next Halloween!

**Animals.** You should slow down *cautiously* when in areas marked with animal crossing signs of any kind. Maintain a good space cushion. Animals running across the road tend to startle drivers. People swerve and do all kinds of unexpected things when it comes to avoiding a collision with an animal. If you spot an animal on the road slow down and avoid a collision by all means but be aware of other drivers around, you and especially behind you as well.

Delaware has certain provisions that deal with animal drawn vehicles or animals being ridden on the road**. (DC21 4104)** “Every person riding an animal or driving any animal-drawn vehicle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle…except those provisions of this chapter which by their very nature can have no application.”

When passing an animal being ridden or driven along, going the same direction, drivers need to use reasonable caution to avoid startling or hitting it.

**BASIC TIP # 10 – LEARN AS MUCH AS YOU CAN ABOUT WHY COLLISIONS HAPPEN**

We are going to look at a laundry list of why collisions happen to better understand how to AVOID them. Collisions can happen at any place and time, but are often due to:

**1.Emotional Reasons** affect a person’s judgment because they are not focused on driving well.

**2.Physical Reasons** can include medical issues and driver reactions to medication/intoxication.

**3.Vehicle Damage** **and Malfunctions**.

**4.Environmental Reasons** like weather**;** it is up to the driver to make the proper adjustments. Intersections create an “environment” of risk that must be negotiated with awareness.

**5.Bad Driving Habits** such as not paying attention, speeding, and driving recklessly.

**6.Other Drivers** are not paying attention and/or driving recklessly.

**7.On Freeways** there are several reasons for crashes and pile ups: poor merging, lane changing, sloppy passing and exiting, and not keeping a reasonable space cushion at all times.

|  |
| --- |
| **Did you know?**    **Collisions are defined in official reports by the types of risks or players involved: Head-on, Rear-end, Single car, Multi Car, and Pedestrian are all types of collisions.** |

**BASIC TIP # 11 – PLAN TO AVOID A COLLISION**

## Scan Ahead

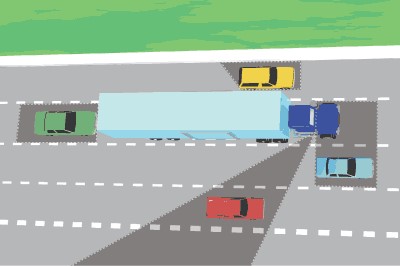
When driving, you should look down the road 10 to 15 seconds ahead of your vehicle. A driver needs to look that far ahead to see hazards early. Making abrupt or jerky moves to avoid obstacles is a danger to yourself and others, and you may cause collisions with other drivers. At highway speeds, 10 to 15 seconds is about a quarter of a mile. Keep your eyes moving and scanning. If you stare ahead at one point for a long time, you are likely to get “tunnel vision” and lose alertness.

The practice of staring mindlessly into the road ahead and driving on auto pilot is very dangerous. It can make you complacent, and you will not be as aware of your surroundings. Scan actively with your eyes and look near and far. You should take in the whole scene and be aware of what may come from all sides.

## Choose the Best Lane

It is important to choose your lane. Drive in the lane with the smoothest flow of traffic. If there are three or more lanes, the middle lane is usually best for steady flow. The left lane is for passing. If you need to drive more slowly or to turn off the road, use the right lane. On a two-lane road, pick the right lane for driving and use the left for passing.

**Stay Out of Other Driver’s Blind Spots.**



**Shaded areas represent a driver's and a trucker's blind spots, called the "NO**

**ZONE"**

**Know your car’s blind spot.**

If necessary, check your mirrors and look over your shoulder while parked, as a friend walks from behind your car and all the way up to your rear view mirror.

## Follow the Speed Limit and Move with Traffic

How can you know how fast traffic is actually moving? If you are speeding past slow moving cars, chances are you will have to come to a sudden stop sometime very soon. You are getting ahead of the flow of traffic. Be very careful while passing cars, especially if it is a two-lane road. On the other end, if you are going too slowly, you are disrupting the flow of traffic. It is best to move with the flow of traffic.

Cars that carry heavy loads, large vehicles, and trucks all need additional distance to stop. This is because the increased weight makes it harder to stop. Keep this in mind when following these types of vehicles or when they are behind you. If you are driving with extra weight on board, consider increasing your safety cushion and do the same when large vehicles ahead of you block your view ahead.

These are times when you may have to go slower than the suggested limit. You can get a ticket if you endanger others by going too fast for the specific conditions –

* In High Pedestrian Areas
* In Congestion
* As You Approach (and inside) Bridges and Tunnels
* Approaching Toll booths
* Anywhere there Are Children Around
* In Freeway Interchanges, Entrances and Exits
* On wet, icy or slippery streets
* At the first sign of brake lights

## On Freeways…

Enter the freeway at or near the speed of traffic with a gap of at least 4 seconds.



Maintain a safety cushion between you and other vehicles.

Know that you are exiting ahead of time and change lanes one at a time until you are in the proper lane to make your exit.

 Be cautious during lane changes or passing. Signal other drivers and observe proper lane use. Slow down slightly as someone passes you so they have a chance to merge back into your lane if necessary.

## On City Streets and Regular Roads…

 Treat intersections and crosswalks as areas of special concern. As discussed earlier, there is the potential for many things to happen at intersections at any given time. Yield to others when in doubt.

 Use the three second system and keep that space cushion around you at all times if possible.

**NEVER execute a pass while in or driving through an intersection.**

 Pedestrians are a priority. Usually, the motorist is found at fault in collisions involving a pedestrian, so drive defensively, for your benefit as well as theirs.

 Watch while driving in lanes next to parked cars. People open up car doors into traffic all the time, causing cars to swerve suddenly, and posing a hazard for bicyclists as well. Be alert.

## Drifting Drivers

If an oncoming vehicle seems to be drifting into your lane, slow down, pull to the right and flash your hazards. Sound your horn.

**On Curves**

Slow before entering and stay towards the right side of your lane.

## Respect Weather Conditions on the Road

Slow down right when it starts to rain or when the roads are wet. Your tires have to adjust and will react differently than they do on dry roads. Time tested “rules of thumb” for adjusting speed:

 Go 5-10 miles slower on wet roads.

 Divide your miles per hour (mph) in half when there is heavy snow.

 Ice is the most dangerous. Slow down to a crawl and do not make sudden moves or adjustments.

When following a motorcycle, take extra care on wet or icy roads, metal surfaces, bridge gratings, railroad tracks, and gravel since motorcycles tend to fall in such road conditions.

**BASIC TIP # 12 – DRIVE DEFENSIVELY, EVEN DURING A COLLISION!**

**Collisions do happen!** You generally have three avoidance choices if you see that you may be headed for a vehicular crash:

* **SPEED UP -** It is possible that you might see a way out of a collision by accelerating your vehicle quickly forward. This can be risky.
* **STOP -** Also possibly risky, as it might be impossible to calculate at any given moment what the total effects of an abrupt stop might be. Even though you may avoid one impact, you may cause others to rear end you and/or other cars on the road.
* **EVADE –** This could be the best choice. Defensive drivers always leave themselves an "out" or escape route in case of an emergency. Ideally, you should always have an alternative path of travel to avoid a collision should conditions change rapidly.

**Here are some more defensive driving tips for avoiding collisions:**

 Don’t drive in a cluster of other vehicles if you can avoid it. If you must drive within a cluster, select a lane position which allows the greatest maneuverability.

Maintain the largest cushion of space around your entire vehicle that is possible.



Steer a middle course between multiple oncoming hazards. If one potential hazard is more dangerous than the other, give the most room to the worst danger.

**BASIC TIP # 13 – DEFENSIVE DRIVING IS SORT OF LIKE…THE GREAT PHILOSOPHIES OF THE EAST**

Really! Think about it: The basic assumptions of defensive drivers are that -

 (1) Other drivers live in a world of illusion (Maya). They are not necessarily alert while driving, aware of the presence of others, or even aware of *their own* state of mind as they navigate life’s roads…

 (2) Time and space must be used properly and managed efficiently while driving. (In China, “Feng Shui” is the well-known practice of managing time and space to achieve a harmonious life.)

 (3) What goes around comes around (Karma). Defensive drivers know that eventually their courtesies will come back to them somewhere down the road. And in the meantime, they are not creating any trouble by causing problems for other drivers.

 (4) Defensive driving requires the cultivation of good habits, disciplined choices, and correct actions, so that these things come to feel natural and automatic. That makes defensive driving a very Zen-like attitude!



****

**The Roads Are Crowded, So Why Sweat It?**

Delaware’s location along one of the nation’s most vital north-south Interstate corridors and growing industries brings millions of travelers to the state’s roads every year. Whether it is 5 pm in downtown Wilmington or heading to the beach in summertime, traffic congestion is a fact of life and being stuck in the occasional jam should not be a surprise. So why do we stress out as if an unforeseeable disaster occurred? Certain preventative measures and awareness can reduce the stress associated with traffic jams.

* Leave enough time so that unexpected traffic will not make you rush.
* Do things that will make your car more comfortable.
* Be aware that traffic is something that is out of your control.
* Assume that when another driver makes a mistake, it is not personal.
* Even if other drivers are being rude and aggressive, maintain your politeness and courtesy.
* Take a couple of deep breaths and remain calm.
* Treat other drivers as if you are all in an elevator inside a building. Everyone is up to different things and on different schedules, but everyone remains courteous.

Exercising common sense and common courtesy as you drive will make you not only a safe driver for the benefit of others; it will help keep you safe from others. That is a win-win!



**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**



**Choose the *best* answer.**

**1.) Which choice below is not considered a pedestrian?**

1. A man in a wheelchair on the sidewalk.
2. A girl on a skateboard in the road.
3. A mom on a scooter in the parking lot.
4. A blind man and his guide dog.
5. None of the above.

**2.) The following is not a road rage offense:**

1. Making obscene gestures
2. Blocking a vehicle that is trying to pass.
3. Breaking suddenly to “punish” a tailgater.
4. Driving with a BAC of .08%.
5. Using a vehicle to intimidate another driver.

**3.) 44% of road rage cases involve the car being used as a \_\_\_\_\_.**

1. weapon
2. signal
3. warning sign
4. cell phone
5. stunt

**4.) To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ means “to give up (an advantage, for example) to another.”**

1. resist
2. withhold
3. refuse
4. yield

E. contend

**5.) When parking**

1. downhill: point your front tires towards the roadside and roll forward to hit the curb.
2. uphill: point your tires towards the middle of the road and roll back to hit the curb.
3. anytime: your tires shouldn’t be more than 18 inches from the curb.
4. All of the above
5. None of the above

**Chapter 10 2nd rotating questions.**

**1:) A man in a wheelchair on the sidewalk, a girl on a skateboard on the road, a mom on a scooter in the parking lot, a blind man, and his guide dog. Which are considered pedestrian?**

A:) none are considered pedestrians.

B:) A girl on a skateboard on the road is the only pedestrian.

C:) A mom on a scooter in the parking lot is the only pedestrian.

D:) A blind man and his guide dog is the only pedestrian.

E:) all are considered pedestrians.

**2:) Making obscene gestures, blocking a vehicle that is trying to pass, breaking suddenly to "punish" a tailgater, driving with a BAC of .08%, using a vehicle to intimidate another driver. Which is not considered a road rage offense?**

A:) Making obscene gestures.

B:) Blocking a vehicle that is trying to pass.

C:) Breaking suddenly to "punish" a tailgater.

D:) Driving with a BAC of .08%.

E:) Using a vehicle to intimidate another driver.

**3:) \_\_\_\_ of road rage cases involve the car being used as a weapon.**

A:) 44%

B:)54%

C:)64%

D:)74%

E:)84%

**4:) To \_\_\_\_ means "to give up (an advantage, for example) to another."**

A:) resist

B:) withhold

C:) refuse

D:) yield

E:) contend

**5:) When parking \_\_\_\_**

A:) downhill: point your front tires towards the roadside and roll forward to hit the curb.

B:) uphill: point your tires towards the middle of the road and roll back to hit the curb.

C:) anytime: your tires shouldn't be more than 18 inches from the curb.

D:) All of the above

E:) None of the above

REVIEW

**11 of 11 This Chapter provides you with a review of all of the concepts you have learned up until this point.**

# XI

**REVIEW**

At this point, this course has covered the dangers of city driving, the importance of reading signs and signal markings. The course has covered intersections, the significance of having a license, the demands of open highway driving, and making passes correctly. You now know the reason behind the speed laws, and why cars are equipped with safety equipment. Also highlighted were the danger of alcohol and drugs.

Notes for Further Study

1.The NSC and NHTSA publish information every year about general safety for drivers and pedestrians. Please visit this website: https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/pedestriansafety

2.Read your local news publication or broadcast for reminders of the importance of safe driving techniques.

3.Subscribe to political non-profit organizations headquartered in Washington D.C. to learn how you can help lobby for driving laws that reduce deaths caused by alcohol or improper seat restraints.

4.For help with long-term violations of driving laws, you may want to consult an attorney or counselor to help you avoid repeat offenses.

**Takeaways from this course**

***1)If you choose to drive in the city, you should be prepared to pay close attention to pedestrians and practice good driving habits.***

***2)When driving you should always pay close attention to road signs, which have various meanings which greatly affect you and other drivers on the road***

***3)Familiarize yourself with the various types of intersections so that you know how to respond to a new intersection well in advance.***

***4)Having a license is a privilege and not a right and be prepared to know the consequences that follow for taking risks that could jeopardize your license.***

***5)Know the common patterns for hazards along highways because highways often lend themselves to making drivers lose concentration.***

***6)Always use good judgment when attempting to pass another car along the road, and never forget to follow the tips such as the “space cushion” .s***

***7)Adopt a default way of driving that is safe, within the speed limits and practice safely maneuvering your vehicle at all times, especially but not exclusively backing up.***

***8)Every component of your vehicle has a purpose which was specifically engineered to help you in times of peril and natural disaster.***

***9)Become informed and be able to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable amounts of alcohol in the human body for operating a vehicle on the road –as if you yourself could stop yourself along the road and enforce the DUI laws.***

***10)Don’t ever become a distracted driver and drive in such a way that you (and all other drivers) agree to drive safely and courteously.***

Driving remains one of the most dangerous activities that you perform on a daily basis. You interact with people from all walks of life, some seeking leisure while others frantically commuting to and from work and home.

Now that you have spent some time looking on the main concepts of defensive driving and highway safety, you probably have a good idea of what it takes to become a safer, more responsible driver in a world of uncertainty and hazard.

This is not to say that all accidents are preventable. By successfully completing this course and passing the following final exam, you will have substantially decreased the chances of being involved in a traffic accident.

Please take a moment to study the previous chapters and commit to memory the main principles and the course’s “Tips.” In the end, success is not measured by your ability to answer all of the questions correctly—which is very much important, nevertheless. It is imperative that you absorb and apply these lessons every day that you are on the road.

**This applies to not only Peter Parallel and Sally Swift, but YOU, the driver.**

**Please proceed to the Final Exam.**

❖ **FINAL EXAM**

**1.) In the Special Problems with City Driving section, we suggest \_\_\_\_\_\_\_!**

1. Don’t Drive on the Shoulder
2. Roads Can Drop Off Abruptly
3. Watch for Landslides and Landfills
4. No U-Turns on 1 Way Streets
5. Watch For Signs Indicating Toll Roads

**2.) A two-way left turn lane\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

1. May not be used for passing.
2. Can never be used for U-turns.
3. Is set aside for the use of vehicles turning left or right.
4. Both C and B are correct.
5. Can be used to make passing easier.

**3.) Drivers must obey signals from school crossing guards\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

1. during school hours.
2. If they go to that school.
3. At all times
4. If it isn’t a school holiday.
5. After and before school starts.

4**.) Which choice below is not considered a pedestrian?**

1. A man in a wheelchair on the sidewalk.
2. A girl on a skateboard in the road.
3. A mom on a scooter in the parking lot.
4. A blind man and his guide dog.
5. None of the above

**5.) 44% of road rage cases involve the car being used as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

1. weapon
2. signal
3. warning sign
4. cell phone
5. stunt

**6.) The purpose of traffic signs are\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

A. to serve as traffic control.

B. to communicate warnings.

C. to express traffic regulations

D.All of the above.

E. to plan the driver’s route

**7.) Accidents in work zones are common and caused by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

A.orange and day glow green vests worn by road construction workers.

B.flagpersons who must direct traffic by hand.

C.delays in rerouting traffic

D.children waiting by the side of the road for their bus.

E.Inattentive drivers and those who drive through aggressively

**8.) The following is not a road rage offense:**

1. Making obscene gestures
2. Blocking a vehicle that is trying to pass.
3. Breaking suddenly to “punish” a tailgater.
4. Driving with a BAC of .08%
5. Using a vehicle to intimidate another driver.

**9.) If the lights are flashing red on a school bus, drivers must:**

1. Pass the bus safely and reduce speed.
2. Stop and wait until the lights stop flashing.
3. Stop briefly then proceed with extreme caution.
4. Pull over immediately.

**10.) A circle sign with letters RR alerts the driver of**

1. Approaching railroad crossing
2. Rough road conditions
3. Road construction
4. None of the above

**11.) You may not make a U turn\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

1. On a one-way street
2. In front of a fire station
3. When vehicles may hit you
4. All of the above
5. None of the above

**12.) A designated place where you can stop to let other vehicles pass you is called \_\_\_\_.**

1. white
2. black
3. yellow
4. green
5. red

**13.) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are called Uncontrolled Blind Intersections.**

A. Intersections that don’t have a sign signal.

B. Intersections where you cannot see for 500 feet in either direction.

C. Intersections where you cannot see for 100 feet either direction.

D. A and B are correct

E. A and C are correct

**14.) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ may also use their right hand to signal a right turn.**

1. drivers
2. truckers
3. bicyclist
4. pedestrians
5. school bus drivers

**15.) Freeway drivers should always be familiar with \_\_\_\_\_\_.**

1. Alternative routes
2. Exits
3. Side Streets
4. All of the above
5. None of the above

**16.) The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lane on the freeway is used for passing.**

1. Far left.
2. Far right
3. center
4. carpool
5. exit

**17.) No one, other than those totally or partially\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, can carry or use a white cane (with or without a red tip).**

1. deaf
2. handicapped
3. blind
4. injured
5. rehabilitating

**18.) If the DMV learns that you do not have insurance:**

1. You can still drive in a nearby state.
2. Your drivers license and registration will be suspended.
3. You will get a letter requesting that you get it soon.
4. You will not be able to attend driving school.
5. Your insurance rates will be higher later

**19.) When a police officer signals for you to pull over:**

1. You must slow down while driving home.
2. Correct any poor driving problem you were exhibiting.
3. You must direct your car to the side of the road and stop at the first place.
4. You should immediately call 911 if you have a cell phone.
5. None of the above

**20.) You should not pass another vehicle if the following conditions are presented:**

1. There is a long line of cars ahead.
2. The sight distance ahead is limited.
3. A driver ahead making a left.
4. You are approaching a curve.
5. All of the above.

**21.) A properly working \_\_\_\_\_\_ can be heard from at least 200 feet.**

1. Muffler
2. Stereo
3. Radio
4. Horn
5. brake

**22.) You might receive a ticket under speed laws for driving too\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

1. slowly
2. fast
3. variably
4. Both A and B are correct
5. None of the above

**23.) The couple that went out on the town in chapter 9 were\_\_\_\_\_.**

1. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
2. Bonnie and Clyde
3. Brian and Heather
4. Jack and Jill
5. Dick and Jane

**24.) For drivers under the age of \_\_\_\_\_, the state takes a zero-tolerance policy.**

1. 14
2. 16
3. 18
4. 20
5. 21

**25.) If you run into water on the road, DON’T\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

1. Drive in the tracks of the car ahead.
2. Try to judge how deep floodwater is before you enter it.
3. Try to accelerate as far as you can through the surrounding rushing water.
4. Test your breaks by gently pushing down on them.
5. Pull over if you find out the area is flooding.

**26.) Which of the following is true regarding an individual's rights and responsibilities during a?**

A) An individual is not required to provide proof of identity if they are not in violation of any laws.

B) A law enforcement officer is allowed to detain a driver indefinitely during a traffic stop without providing a reason.

C) During a traffic stop, an individual has the right to remain silent but must comply with requests for identification.

D) Complaints against law enforcement officers can only be filed in person at the police station.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)