

Distracted and Inattentive Driving

Inattentive driving is a significant factor in many vehicle accidents. Fully attentive drivers typically do not rear-end the vehicle in front of them, drive through a stop sign or drift into another lane of traffic. **Stay 100% focused on your driving.**

Driver inattention generally falls into four major categories:



Daydreaming	Eyes Away from the Forward Roadway	Performing Non-Driving Tasks	Drowsy Driving
When daydreaming, your eyes may be “seeing” a hazard, but your mind is not processing and responding to it.	Not looking in the direction you are heading is dangerous. Glances away from the roadway ahead should be limited.	Dialing, texting, eating, reading, reaching for an object - these are all non-driving tasks that create visual, manual, and cognitive distractions.	Drivers are less attentive when drowsy. Driving while drowsy increases crash risk by six times. ¹

Situational Awareness

Situational awareness (SA) is the process of scanning the roadway, identifying potential hazards and responding to them. When practicing SA a driver does not have time to daydream. When you find yourself daydreaming put your mind back into SA mode. Be thinking:

“That truck is going to merge, I better move to the left lane when the car to my left has passed”

The Multi-Tasking Fallacy

Only 2% of the population is good at multitasking. Multitasking while driving is extremely dangerous. A study by the University of Utah found that people who think they are great at multitasking are the least likely to be good at it and persons who talk on the cell phone the most while driving are the least capable of multitasking.²



Checking mirrors is important, but do not move your eyes off the forward roadway for more than 1.5 seconds at a time, preferably less.³

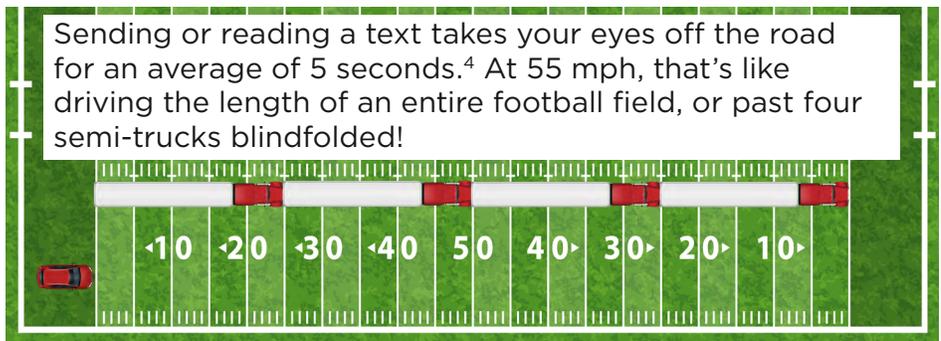
¹ The 100-Car Naturalistic Driving Study, Phase II - Results of the 100-Car Field Experiment. DOT HS 810 593. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2006).

² Who Multi-Tasks and Why? Multi-Tasking Ability, Perceived Multi-Tasking Ability, Impulsivity, and Sensation Seeking, David M. Sanbonmatsu, David L. Strayer, Nathan Medeiros-Ward, Jason M. Watson University of Utah, January 23, 2013.

³ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2013). Visual-Manual NHTSA Driver Distraction Guidelines for In-Vehicle Electronic Devices (Federal Register Vol.78, No. 81). Washington, D.C.: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Distracted driving is more than cell phone use! Performing any non-driving task results in unneeded visual, manual and cognitive distractions. As a driver it is your responsibility to drive attentively, without distractions

Many tasks have multiple forms of distraction.		Dialing/texting	Hands free	GPS/Navigation	Reading/Writing	Reaching for object	Eating/ Drinking	Infotainment System	Daydreaming
	Visual distraction: Tasks that require the driver to look away from the road to visually obtain information	X	?	X	X	X	X	X	
	Manual distraction: Tasks that require the driver to take a hand off the steering wheel to manipulate a device or object.	X	?	X	X	X	X	X	
	Cognitive distraction: Tasks that require the driver to avert their mental attention away from driving tasks.	X	X	X	X	X	?	X	X
Multiple forms = increased crash risk!									



Cell Phone Best Practices

- Take care of calls and texts before departing.
- Turn your notifications and ringer off.
- Set your phone to go directly to voicemail.
- Set your instant messaging to respond that you are driving and will text them back later.
- Place your phone in a storage compartment; out-of-sight, out-of-mind.



Cognitive Distractions

What you “see” involves your mind processing the visual information your eyes send it. If your mind is focused on something else, like a cell phone conversation you are having, it does not process the visual information as efficiently and you will identify and react to hazards more slowly.

Multi-tasking is not worth it. One task — driving.

⁴ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/distracted-driving

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