

10 Ways To Reduce Your Crash Risk

Transportation safety is everyone's responsibility. The tasks of driving, walking, biking or riding a motorcycle are complicated and involve numerous decisions. These are the **top 10 things** you can do to **reduce your risk of being in a crash**, and if you are in a crash, **reduce your risk of being seriously hurt or killed**.



VISION ZERO
CENTRAL FLORIDA
Counting down to zero traffic deaths

1 Slow down, leave space.

Driving too fast is one of the biggest contributors to serious traffic crashes.

If you drive at an appropriate speed:



Other road users are less likely to misjudge your speed



You need less stopping distance and time to react if another road user makes a mistake



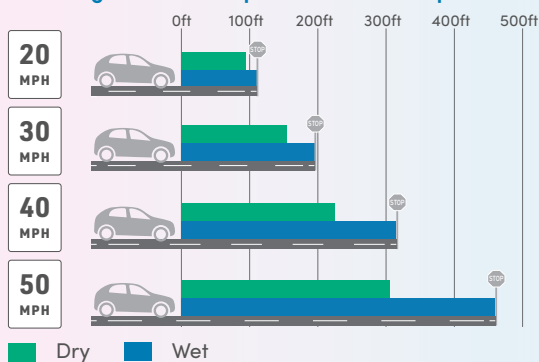
If there is a crash, it will be less severe

2 Call a ride if impaired or buzzed.

>35% deadly crashes in the region involve driving under the influence of **drugs or alcohol**

Just one drink can reduce your reaction time enough to turn a near-miss into a fatal crash.

How Long It Takes an Impaired Driver to Stop



3 See and be seen at night.

When bicycling at night, use headlights, taillights, and rear reflectors. When walking at night, drivers may not be able to see you, especially from far away. Consider wearing reflective clothing or using a flashlight. Vehicles often move faster than they appear, so always look twice before crossing a street and only cross in well-lit locations.

4 Protect yourself and others.



Wear your seatbelt



Make sure any passengers are wearing their seatbelts



Wear a helmet while riding a bike or motorcycle

5 Know the law.

Ignorance of the law is not a defense.

Did you know that you must...



Yield to first responders to let them pass safely?



Give cyclists at least 3 feet of clearance?



Yield to pedestrians at marked **and** unmarked crosswalks?

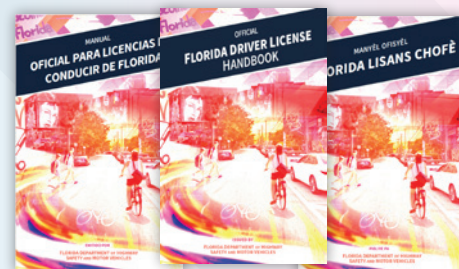


Stop for school buses?

Unmarked crosswalks are present at **all** intersections, unless expressly prohibited through a physical barrier.

The Florida Driver License Handbook

is updated each year and is a great reference for existing and changed laws.

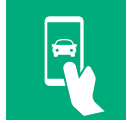


<https://www.flhsmv.gov/resources/handbooks-manuals/>

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Focus on the road.

Common sources of distractions include:



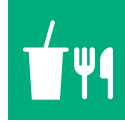
Cellphones



Children



Pets



Food & Drink

Put your phone on do-not-disturb mode while driving.

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Maintain your vehicle.

Improperly inflated tires, worn brakes and cracked windshields can affect your ability to stop and to see. Having routine maintenance performed can also reduce the likelihood of a mechanical failure that could leave you stuck on the side of the road and exposed to hazardous conditions.



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Dont offend. Don't engage.

Approximately **10% of fatal crashes include aggressive driving.**

Aggressive driving has a **legal** definition of committing two or more of these violations simultaneously or in succession:

- Speeding
- Not yielding right-of-way
- Improper passing
- Unsafe lane change
- Tailgating
- Violating traffic controls

When aggressive driving escalates to road rage, you might see a driver throwing objects at other vehicles, screaming or using angry gestures, or purposefully trying to force another vehicle off the road, ramming into another vehicle or sideswiping. **If you see these aggressive behaviors, don't engage.** If possible, take down their license plate number and call law enforcement.

Sometimes we make mistakes and inadvertently cut someone off when we realize our turn is coming up. While a wave or other kind gesture doesn't mean you don't need to pay attention, it can go a long way to reduce aggressive behavior in others.



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Travel defensively. This includes:

Scan the road and adapt to surroundings, like slowing down when you see congestion ahead.



When at a red light, pause before going when the light turns green to minimize your risk of a crash with a red-light runner.



Know your vehicle's stopping distance and be aware of reaction distance.



Walk defensively. Drivers can be unsure of a pedestrian's intentions. If crossing a street, try to make eye contact with drivers and make a "stop" gesture indicating your intent to cross. Thank drivers with a friendly wave after they yield.



Use the two-second rule for following distances. Count how long it takes to reach the same spot as the vehicle ahead of you. If you reach the spot before counting to two, you are following too closely. Slow down and check your following distance again.



Anticipate the movement of other drivers and road users and take evasive action, like changing lanes or passing safely, to avoid a potential crash.



Cycle with the flow. The crash risk for cyclists is 5 times higher going against traffic than going with traffic because drivers aren't looking for fast moving travelers from the opposite direction.



Know that you can't beat a train. If the gate arms are coming down, do not attempt to maneuver around it as trains can take upwards of a mile to stop.

8

Make a travel plan.

Whatever mode you might be using, plan out your route before you leave and make sure you account for potential travel delays, and if going for a long trip, plan out your breaks.

