

Teenage driving



QUICK SUMMARY OF FACTS, TIPS

- Common factors in a teenage auto accident include: driving late at night, two-lane roads, loud music, and no seat belts.
- A teen driver is about 35% more likely to have a fatal crash when carrying one passenger than when driving alone, and *three times* more likely when carrying three or more passengers.
- Beginner freeways and intermediate highways do not exist. Teenagers are, literally, inexperienced drivers on an advanced course.
- Even though teens make up only 6.9% of licensed drivers, they account for 15% of the fatalities.
- Car crashes are the leading cause of death for teenagers, who are four times as likely to die in a car accident than all other age groups combined.

Here's how to help put the odds in your teen's favor.

1 Set limits on when and where your teen can drive. Nighttime driving poses a higher risk for teen drivers – especially Friday and Saturday nights. Limit their nighttime driving. Set a geographic area in which they're allowed to drive and ensure they ask permission if they need to go outside of the area.

Washington and Oregon laws will help you with that. Teens who hold an intermediate license cannot, for the first six

months of their license, operate a motor vehicle that carries any passengers under age 20 who are not members of the holder's immediate family. For the remaining time, the holder cannot operate a motor vehicle that carries more than three passengers who are under age 20 who are not members of the holder's immediate family. Additionally, the holder of an intermediate license cannot operate a motor vehicle between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. in Washington and midnight and 5 a.m. in Oregon except when the holder is accompanied by a parent, guardian, or a licensed driver who is at least age 25.

2 Limit the number of passengers in the car.

The likelihood of an accident increases with the number of distractions. Other passengers are the biggest distraction your teen can face.

3 Insist on seat belt use. Teens tend to use seat belts less often than older drivers and passengers – only 38% use seat belts every time they get in a car. Stress the importance of seat belt use and how it saves lives.

4 Insist your teen follow all traffic laws.

Instill good habits early.

5 Supervise your teen's driving. Ride with your teen as often as possible to ensure he or she is as skilled as possible.

6 Set an example. Teens are much more likely to follow the rules of the road if they see their parents doing so.

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