



# 10 DEADLY TEEN DRIVER MISTAKES

... AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

## 1. RISK TAKING

Know that it can happen to you. Car crashes are the leading cause of injury and death for people ages 15 to 20. And it's not just about you: Crashes affect pedestrians, passengers, and other drivers, as well as their families. You don't want to do something you'll regret for the rest of your life.

## 2. UN-BUCKLED

Use a safety belt and insist that all your passengers do so as well. About two-thirds of teens killed in vehicle crashes were not wearing safety belts. Wearing a seat belt reduces your chances of being hurt or killed in a crash by 45 percent.

## 3. SPEED

Stick to the speed limit. One-third of teen fatalities involve speeding. Obeying the speed limit reduces the severity of a crash you can't avoid.

## 4. ROWDY RIDERS

Don't load up your car with friends. Adding one teen passenger to a vehicle increases a 16-or 17-year-old driver's crash risk by about 50 percent. With two or more teen passengers, the crash risk increases fivefold.

## 5. CELL PHONES

Focus on driving. Save the phone calls, text messaging, and other gadgets for after the driving is done. Talking on a cell phone while driving can double reaction time.



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## 6. CD PLAYER

Turn the music off while learning to drive. Research shows that adjusting the radio is the most common distraction for drivers between the ages of 16 and 20. Driving and channel-surfing don't mix.

## 7. LATE NIGHT CRUISING

Don't drive late at night. Teen crash rates at night (9 p.m. to 6 a.m.) are twice as high as daytime rates. Obey parental curfews.

## 8. DUI

Stay sober. Of 16- and 17-year-old drivers killed in crashes, one in six would have been considered legally intoxicated by adult standards.

## 9. PEER PRESSURE

Make good choices and don't be afraid to "speak up." Before you get in a car with a friend, ask: Is this a person you trust? Is he in the right frame of mind to drive safely? Are you prepared to speak up if he drives dangerously?

## 10. OVERCONFIDENCE

Inexperience and overconfidence can lead to crashes when new drivers encounter unfamiliar or unexpected situations. Parents should supervise and monitor their teen drivers—even after they get their license.

For more information contact your local AAA club or visit [AAA.com/teens](http://AAA.com/teens)