



VEHICULAR SAFETY

Every licensed driver had to pass their driver's test, but maybe it's been a while and you've forgotten some things! This section includes tips about road, car, and car seat safety and traffic calming measures to help you reach your destination safely and keep everyone on the road around you safe as well.

Driving Safety

The most important thing to remember about driving is that the road is a shared space. Those are your neighbors driving alongside you, so it's important to be aware of their safety as much as looking out for your own! Here are a few reminders about safe behavior on the road:

- Obey all posted speed limits and road signs.
- Always wear your seatbelt.
- Always use your turn signals, even when merging onto the highway.
- Keep your eyes moving—check mirrors every 6-8 seconds, watch out for speed limits changes or any obstacles on the road, and always check your blind spots before merging. An attentive driver is a safe driver!
- Come to a complete stop at all stop signs and pause before continuing. The same way you would if you were crossing a road on foot, check that the way is clear before you go.
- Expect other drivers to make mistakes and be prepared to respond.
- Never text or talk on the phone while driving. If you must make or answer a call, use a handsfree system and don't get distracted.
- Never drive while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Yield to all emergency vehicles with active lights—they have the right of way. This is part of Tennessee's "Move Over" law, which also requires you to change lanes when passing emergency vehicles. If you can't move over, slow down to ensure the safety of emergency personnel.
- During inclement weather, be careful with your breaks. A lot of us might want to break hard, but breaking slowly and gradually is the safest choice.



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A lot of these aren't just tips—they're laws. You can read a list of the top 10 traffic laws in Tennessee [here](#). The TN Department of Safety & Homeland Security has a list of road safety tips you can read [here](#). Please review safety tips and traffic laws regularly, because it's easy to forget the details.

Car Safety

Though we think of them as commonplace now, it wasn't so long ago that cars were a futuristic new invention. It's important to be familiar with your car—how it handles, its service history, and how it's running. You should take your car in for regular service and stay abreast of any manufacturer recalls that might be issued.

Watch for any service lights that come on in your dashboard. If you don't know what a particular light means, check your driver's manual for an explanation.

Keep an eye on your gas gauge, and have a plan for what happens if you do run out. It's unsafe to store extra gasoline in your car for long periods of time because of how flammable it is, but be sure to have someone you can call.

Car Seat Safety

Tennessee was the first state to enact a law requiring the use of safety seats for all child passengers. Children under one should be in rear-facing car seats, children one to three should be in front-facing car seats, and children four to eight should be secured using a booster seat system. Any child older than eight should be secured with a seat belt.

While the above is a general overview, the law has more specific height and weight requirements than what's listed. To review the law in full to make sure you're securing your child correctly, please follow [this link](#).



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Here are some additional tips for driving safely with a child passenger:

- The back seat is the best—for children of all ages.
- Check your car manual for appropriate places for child safety seats.
- Be wary of toys in the car. Soft, plush toys are best for car rides because they won't injure your child in the event of an accident.
- Wear your seat belt to set a good example for your child and keep yourself safe.
- Never leave your child unattended in the car for any amount of time or any reason.

Traffic Calming

Speed bumps and other traffic calming measures can be helpful, but they can cause problems too! Here are some pros and cons to consider:

Pros

- Reduce traffic speed
- Reduce traffic volume
- Make pedestrians and bikers safer

Cons

- Bad for your car's shocks
- Cause poor street drainage
- Hard for emergency vehicles to navigate

If you would like to request traffic calming measures in your neighborhood, please call (423)229-9487.