Which is the most dangerous kind of distracted driving? See what it is and how to avoid it.



In 2020, there were 3,142 deaths caused by distracted driving. When drivers get behind the wheel, they often bring other distractions from their busy lives with them. Things like text conversations, phone calls, work emails, music, children in the back seat, eating or drinking, and more, can quickly turn an everyday drive into a dangerous accident. With all these distractions, you may be wondering, “Which is the most dangerous kind of distracted driving?” Read on to find out.

What exactly is distracted driving and what type is the most dangerous?

Simply put, distracted driving is any activity or object that takes your attention off the road. To dive deeper, distracted driving can be broken into three categories: cognitive, visual, and manual. Cognitive distractions include anything that takes your mind away from the road like talking to someone or daydreaming. Visual distractions are things that take your eyes off the road like looking at a building or billboard. Manual distractions are actions that take your hands off the wheel.

Studies show the most dangerous form of distracted driving is texting or calling behind the wheel. Cell phones impair all three types of distracted driving simultaneously, which makes them a triple threat to your safety and others. No matter if you’re a driver, passenger, or parent, you have a responsibility to stop distracted driving and to do your part. See how.

How drivers can stop distracted driving.

- **Never multitask.** Whether you're putting on makeup, eating food, or answering your phone, your driving skills become impaired the second you start multitasking. Take the time to finish things before getting behind the wheel, like choosing music or responding to an email first. And if something demands your immediate attention, pull over to address the issue.
- **Keep your phone away.** Notifications can pull your attention away from the road and tempt you to grab your phone. There are apps to help avoid cell phone use on the road. Even just putting your phone on silent or out of sight can make all the difference.
- **Set rules for your car.** Even if your friends or family are in your car, make it known your priority is on driving. Don't be afraid to speak up if someone is making it difficult to concentrate. It's important to be as safe as possible on the way to your destination. Once you're safely there, you can focus on the fun.

How passengers can help stop distracted driving.

- **Reduce the distractions.** Keep the driver's focus on the road by helping when you can. Become the navigation person, the texter, or the DJ for the ride so they can avoid multitasking. Also, don't become a distraction yourself. Allow the driver to pay attention to their job.
- **Express your concerns.** If your driver continues to be distracted or is multitasking when driving, let them know you're uncomfortable. It's the driver's job to get everyone to the destination safely … don't let them forget that.

How parents can help stop distracted driving.

- **Understand and teach the rules.** Make sure you understand the laws of your state to be the best teacher for your kids. Then, reiterate these rules and their importance to your kids. It's not only the job of a driving class to teach your child the rules of the road – it's helpful when you reinforce them, too.
- **Put expectations in place.** Before your child starts driving, fill out Frankenmuth Insurance's Safe Driving Agreement to start the talk about safe driving. Also, whether you are enforcing your own family's driving rules or following the laws, make sure it's understood there are consequences when these rules are broken. It's important to set safety expectations before your teens begin driving.
- **Be the best example.** Set a good model for driving yourself. Your child looks to you to learn how to drive, so enforce the rules and habits you want them to follow in your own car. Don't use your phone or become distracted by it when driving.

Now that you know the most dangerous kind of distracted driving, take steps to stop it behind the wheel, in the passenger seat, and with your family. Even with these tips in mind, accidents can still happen. That's why it's important to get the right coverage for your vehicle. Talk to a local, independent agent today.