

Older Drivers



There are tens of millions of licensed drivers 65 years old and over in the United States.

Most older adults are experienced drivers who know how to handle different road and traffic conditions.

However, as we grow older, changes in health can affect driving ability. It is important to recognize these signs.

Changes in vision, hearing, and mobility issues like turning your head, using hands and feet, and abilities to think, reason, or remember can all interfere with safe driving.

Each year thousands of older adults must go to emergency departments or are hospitalized as a result of motor vehicle crashes.

health.ny.gov/OlderDriverSafety

trafficsafety.ny.gov

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Stay Independent, Stay Strong

Driving Safety Tips

- Take a driver safety course. Many local agencies and national organizations offer classes for a small fee.
- Plan your route before driving. Map out a course that makes you feel most comfortable.
- CarFit technicians can help adjust your vehicle to better “fit” your body. This also improves your safety. Find a CarFit event at www.car-fit.org/find-an-event
- Avoid distractions while driving, such as talking to passengers, using your cellphone, or eating.
- Avoid stressful driving situations. Travel during the daytime when the light is brightest. Stay off the roads during rush hour and when the weather is poor.



Important Checklists for Older Drivers

Your vision.

- Schedule routine eye exams, especially if you have certain medical conditions like diabetes or cataracts.
- Wear your glasses, if needed, for driving and make sure they fit properly.

Your hearing.

- Ask your providers about regular hearing tests. Hearing is an important part of safe driving so you can identify and quickly respond to car maintenance issues and important traffic noises like screeching brakes, sirens, and horns.
- If you use a hearing aid, always wear it while driving.

Your medications.

- Talk with your healthcare providers about medications that may make you drowsy. Some medications can make you drowsy, dizzy, distracted, confused, or affect hearing.
- Tell your healthcare providers if you are having health symptoms. Changing the time of day when you take your medication may improve driver safety.

Never stop taking medications without talking with your healthcare providers.