

How Well Does Your Teen Really Drive?

You have a new driver in your household—congratulations! Here are a few suggestions to help your teen with this new responsibility.

1. Be aware of overconfidence

Teens often feel confident about driving and likely don't think they need to be supervised in the car anymore. Your state has granted them a license, but you know your new driver may need more experience before tackling some complicated situations.

2. Your role as a driving coach

Try to spend at least 30 minutes each week practicing these driving lessons with your new driver. Teens' crash risk drops dramatically in the first year of driving as they gain experience, and you are the best person to help your teen get that experience in a safe environment.

3. Drive frequently traveled routes

Have your teen drive you on some frequently traveled routes. Take notes on what you see. Ask your teen to identify the most complicated driving tasks. See whether you agree or if you notice other problem areas.

Then switch roles and you get behind the wheel. This is a good way for teens to see roadway conditions or driving issues they might not have noticed when they were driving.

4. Review

When you get back home, take a few minutes to review what you both experienced. See if there are any frequently traveled routes that have risks and require more practice with your teen. Are there alternatives? You now also have a feeling for your teen's driving skills and what may need work. Remember, each time you drive with your teen is a teachable experience.