

When Teens Shouldn't Drive

Teens need to learn how to recognize when it is not safe for them to drive. Driving while impaired could be dangerous for them as well as other drivers and pedestrians.

1. When teens shouldn't drive

Some of the situations when teens shouldn't drive include:

- If they are tired and really need sleep.
- If they are feeling emotional. Anger, frustration, worry, joy or sadness can distract them from safe driving.
- If they are taking medicines that can impair driving. Remind your teen to read labels on prescription and over-the-counter drugs for warnings.
- If they are under the influence. Remind your teen never to drink and drive or take illegal drugs. These substances affect judgment, reaction time and coordination.
- If they have forgotten their prescription glasses or contacts. Not being able to see clearly can endanger them and others.

2. Driving requires focus

Driving safely requires many senses and mental processes—sight, hearing, thought, concentration and more.

Anything that limits or impairs these functions makes it more dangerous to drive. Teens should avoid getting behind the wheel if they are not in top form.

3. Spotting dangerous driving

As you drive with your teen, try to spot drivers who should not be behind the wheel. Are they speeding or tailgating? Are they passing on the shoulder or making frequent and sudden lane changes? Are they weaving through traffic or disregarding traffic signals?

If you identify an aggressive or other unsafe driver, make sure your teen puts plenty of space between your car and theirs.