

In 2008, 5,500 senior adults were killed in motor-vehicle crashes.

Drive Safely



A driver's license to most people is a source of pride and independence. It allows them the freedom to have their own schedule.

As we age, our bodies age along with us, limiting our abilities. Many drivers don't realize that their driving skills are getting worse or they don't want to admit it. What makes older drivers high risk is that they are more likely to have medical or biological conditions that impact driving.



Around 90% of the driving cues we rely on are visual. Vision declines progressively starting at age 50.

Make The Right Decision

- Pedestrians **ALWAYS** have the right-of-way. Watch for them or other cars before changing lanes, backing up, or making a turn, especially in parking lots.
- Turn slowly. Activate your turn signal in advance. (**Turn it off after the turn.**) If left turns are difficult, try rerouting your drive to include several right turns instead.
- Use your mirrors when changing lanes. Check all blind spots. Use your turn signal.
- Begin braking as soon as you see the stop sign. Come to a complete stop. Do not pull out unless there are no cars coming and the car in front of you has gone.

86% of traffic fatalities happen on side roads and byways.

Only 14% happen on major highways.

On The Road

- Only drive in well-known areas. Avoid busy roads and rush-hour traffic. Take side roads instead of highways. Drive in daylight or on well-lit streets and avoid driving in bad weather (**fog, rain, snow, glare, smoke, etc.**)
- Focus on driving instead of other thoughts, scenery, or conversations.
- Keep extra space between your car and others.

Unsafe Driver

Every driver, especially seniors, should evaluate their own driving to decide if they have the ability to drive safely, then adjust for any changes in memory, vision, hearing, balance, strength, flexibility, reflexes, and mental clarity.

Physical changes:

- Strokes
- Memory loss
- Hearing problems
- Anything that limits physical activity

Vision changes:

- Need more light
- Headlight/sunlight glare
- Slowed reaction time
- Reduced peripheral vision
- Inability to distinguish colors
- Dulled vision or difficulty focusing

Slower reflexes due to muscles, nerves, and joints moving more slowly or stiffening due to arthritis or inactivity can create:

- inability to see clearly in mirrors, can't turn head.
- inability to get a good grip on the steering wheel.

Medications such as over-the-counter drugs, antihistamines, and sedatives (**pain killers**) can affect driving skills. Multiple medications can cause multiple problems.

**G
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YOUR
VISION
EXAMINED NOW**

Before You Go

- Exercise and stay active.
- Get regular medical and eye check-ups.
- Wear your glasses and keep them clean. Wear sunglasses or dark-tinted glasses during the day, **but never at night.**
- Keep the windshield clean, inside and out.
- Leave early to allow for extra time.
- Ask a friend or family member to ride along.