TEXAS ROAD TIPS

WHAT IS THE "MOVE OVER/SLOW DOWN" LAW?

WHICH CHILD SAFETY SEAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR MY KID?

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'VE BEEN IN A CRASH?

CAN I BE TICKETED FOR PASSING A SCHOOL BUS?

See TxDOT PSAs on inner panel

BE SAFE. DRIVE SMART. TxDOT

2022 Edition | #EndTheStreakTX

Texas Department of Transportation

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Slow down or pay up.
BE SAFE.
DRIVE SMART.
TxDOT
#EndTheStreakTX
STATE TROOPER

Pedestrians don't come with airbags.
BE SAFE. DRIVE SMART. TxDOT

NO CLOWNING AROUND
Focus on driving. Distractions are no laughing matter.
Save a Life

NOT YOUR DREAM CAR
Feeling drowsy? Park and rest, or rest in peace.
Save a Life

Don't drive under the influence of your phone.
TALK / TEXT CRASH
TxDOT

I'VE GOT A BEEF WITH SPEEDERS
BE SAFE. DRIVE SMART. TxDOT

GIVE TRUCKS SPACE
BE SAFE. DRIVE SMART. TxDOT

Santa is Coming to Town.
Please Don't Hit Him.
Don't Drink & Drive.
Save a Life
Texas Department of Transportation

DON'T BE A SPEED DEMON
Slow down, or you could go down in flames.
Save a Life

DEAD MAN TALKING
Hang up and drive. End the conversation.
Save a Life

Choose your ride.
Drink. Drive. Go to Jail.
TAXI
POLICE
DRUNK DRIVING
OVER THE LIMIT. UNDER ARREST.
Save a Life
Texas Department of Transportation

STOP FOR PEOPLE IN CROSSWALKS.
BE SAFE. DRIVE SMART. TxDOT
#EndTheStreakTX

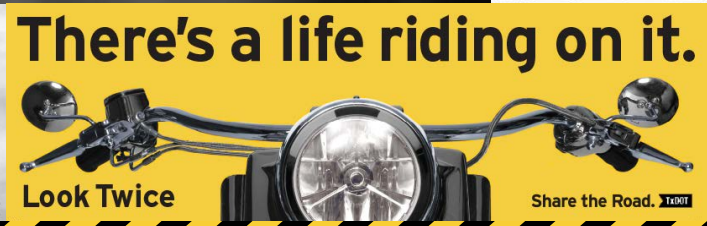
WE ALL WANT TO GET HOME SAFE.
BE SAFE. DRIVE SMART. TxDOT #EndTheStreakTX

Click It or Ticket, Texas.
PRESS
Fines up to $200 #EndTheStreakTX TxDOT

YOUR DESIGNATED DRIVER
If you drink and drive, we'll give you a ride. To jail.
Save a Life

SECURE YOUR FUTURE
Good fortune is no accident. Buckle up.
Save a Life

We Ticket Drivers and Passengers.
Click It or Ticket
Save a Life


There's a life riding on it.
Look Twice
Share the Road. TxDOT

Laws change. What you thought you knew about driving on Texas roads and highways may not be so. That's where the Texas Road Tips Handbook can be a lifesaver. It's compact. It's easy to use. It tells you what you need to know about driving, biking, and walking in Texas. Review it now, and keep it in your glove box for future reference.

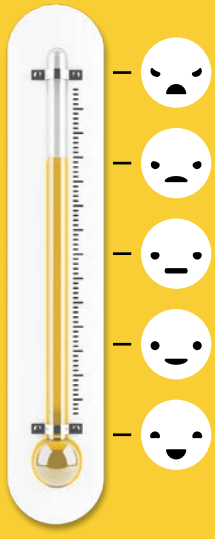
Aggressive Driving 2
Collisions 4
Distracted Driving 6
Driving While Intoxicated 8
Highway Driving 10
Motorcycles and Bicycles 12
Pedestrians and School Zones 14
Safety Seats and Seat Belts 16
Underage Drinking 18
Violations and Cautions 20
Work Zones and Road Signs 22
After a Crash 24

Aggressive Driving and Road Rage

If you've ever been passed on the wrong side, tailgated, cut off, or hemmed in by another vehicle, then you've been the victim of an aggressive driver. Aggressive driving generally involves one or more traffic violations. Drivers can be fined up to $200 for each moving violation associated with aggressive driving and may spend time in jail.

When a traffic incident escalates into a more serious situation, that's road rage. If road rage results in violence, it is a criminal offense.

Avoid Becoming an Aggressive Driver



- Keep your emotions in check. Don't take your frustrations out on other drivers.
- Traffic congestion is a problem at some point during the day almost everywhere. Plan ahead and allow time for delays.
- Focus on your own driving. Yelling, pounding on the steering wheel, and honking your horn won't get you where you want to go any faster.

How to Avoid Danger

First, be a cautious and considerate driver. Avoid creating a situation that may provoke another motorist.

- Don't tailgate or flash your lights at another motorist.
- If you're in the left lane and someone wants to pass, move over and let the driver by.
- Use your horn sparingly.

Second, if you encounter an angry driver, don't make matters worse by triggering a confrontation.

- Avoid eye contact.
- Steer clear and give angry drivers plenty of room.
- Don't make inappropriate hand or facial gestures.

If none of this works and you're concerned for your safety, pull off the road to a safe location and call 9-1-1.

What to Do After a Crash

First, check for injuries. If people are hurt, tend to them. Otherwise, move your vehicle out of the roadway to a safer place where you can exchange names, addresses, phone numbers, vehicle identification numbers, license plate numbers, insurance information, and driver license information. Note the location of the crash and get the names, addresses, and phone numbers of any witnesses. If the vehicles cannot be moved, protect the scene by setting up flares or raising your hood. Take pictures with your phone if it's safe to do so.

Common Causes of Crashes

Most crashes in Texas are caused by speeding, driver inattention, failure to yield, driving under the influence of alcohol, following too closely, and running red lights and stop signs. So what's the best way to avoid a collision?

- Slow down and drive to conditions.
- Avoid distractions and put your phone away.
- Maintain a safe following distance.
- Look both ways before you enter an intersection.
- Signal every turn and lane change.
- Stop at red lights and stop signs.
- Never drive after drinking alcohol or taking other drugs.

When to Call Police — Always call the police when:

- An injury or fatality is involved.
- The vehicles cannot be moved.
- You suspect one of the drivers is intoxicated.
- One of the drivers has no insurance.
- One of the drivers leaves the scene.

Auto Insurance

Texas law requires drivers to have basic liability coverage. If you don't have auto insurance, you can be fined up to $350—or more if you've been ticketed before for no insurance. Be ready to show your proof-of-insurance card if an officer asks you for it, and inform your insurance company of a collision right away.

Here's the Law

If you're in a collision and no one is hurt, it is not necessary to wait for the police before moving your vehicle. If you can drive the vehicle, the law requires you to move it out of the flow of traffic.

If there is damage to the vehicle, stop and exchange information. If someone is hurt, render aid and notify law enforcement. If you hit an unattended vehicle, find the driver or write your name and address on a note that explains what happened. If the vehicle you're driving doesn't belong to you, you must also include its owner's name and address.

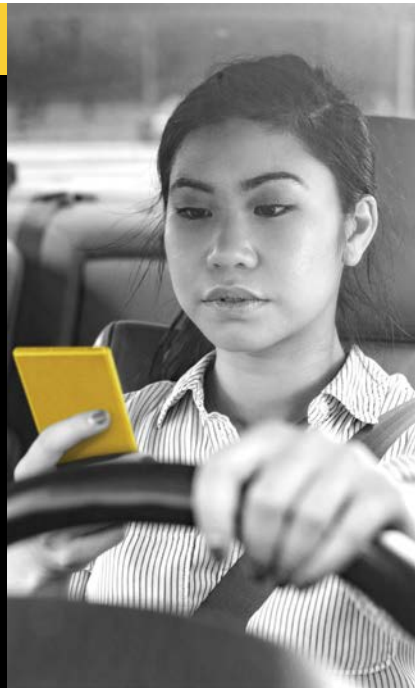
One in five crashes involves distracted driving.

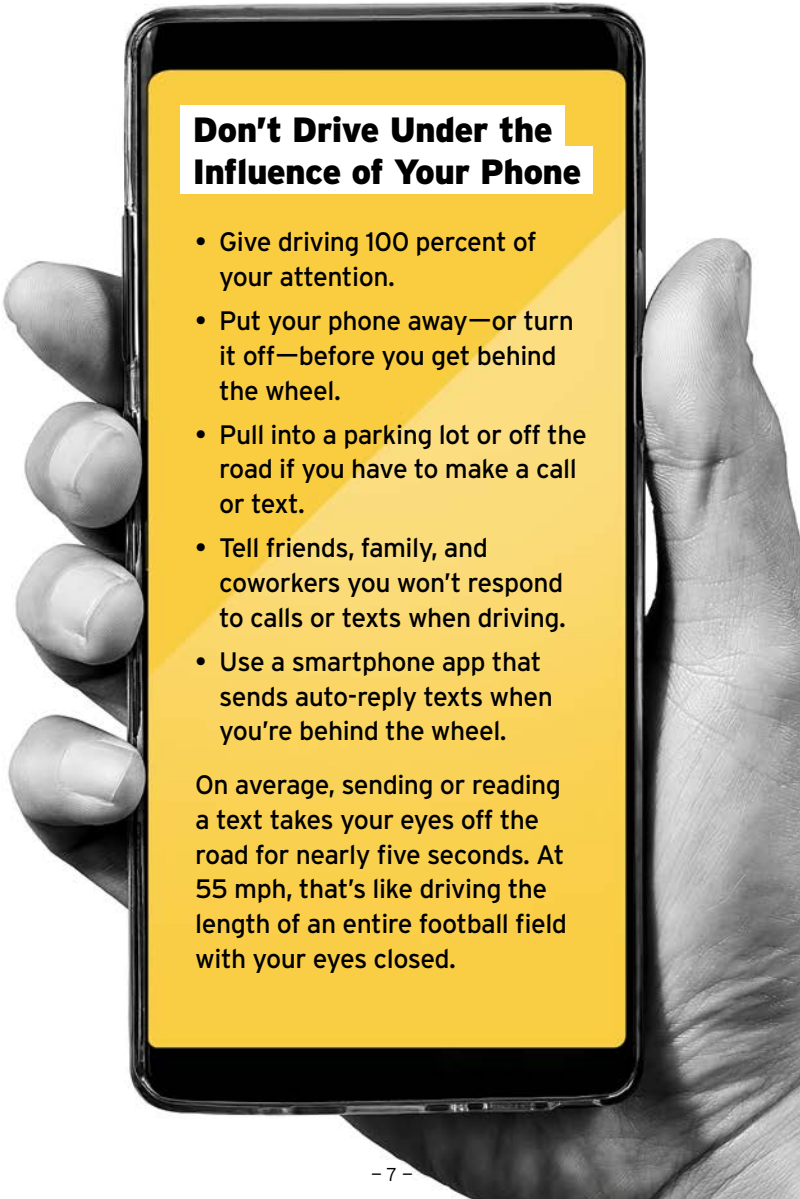
What is Distracted Driving?
Distracted driving is any activity that takes your attention away from driving. Distractions can include anything from texting and talking on a cell phone to eating and drinking, putting on makeup, shaving, reading, programming a navigation system, watching a video, and even adjusting the radio.

Here's the Law

Texting and driving is illegal in Texas. Using an electronic device to read, write, or send a message while driving is prohibited except in the case of an emergency or when the vehicle is stopped. A first offense is punishable by a fine of up to $99; any subsequent offense carries a fine of up to $200. Some cities have distracted driving ordinances that are more restrictive.

Texas law bans all cell phone use, including hands-free, while driving for those under 18 except in the case of emergencies.





Don't Drive Under the Influence of Your Phone

- Give driving 100 percent of your attention.
- Put your phone away—or turn it off—before you get behind the wheel.
- Pull into a parking lot or off the road if you have to make a call or text.
- Tell friends, family, and coworkers you won't respond to calls or texts when driving.
- Use a smartphone app that sends auto-reply texts when you're behind the wheel.

On average, sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for nearly five seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

About every 20 minutes in Texas, someone is hurt or killed in a crash involving alcohol.

How Much Is Too Much?

Impairment begins with the first drink. Your gender, body weight, the number of drinks you've consumed, and the amount of food you've eaten affect your body's ability to handle alcohol. Women, younger people, and smaller people become impaired with smaller amounts of alcohol.

How to Stay Out of Jail

Designate a driver, call a ride to pick you up, or spend the night where you are. Bottom line: Do not get behind the wheel if you've been drinking.

Here's the Law

In Texas a person is legally intoxicated and may be arrested and charged with DWI with a .08 BAC (blood or breath alcohol concentration). However, a person is also intoxicated if impaired due to alcohol or other drugs regardless of BAC. Whether you're the driver or the passenger, you can be fined up to $500 for having an open alcohol container in a vehicle.

Two or three beers in one hour can make some people legally intoxicated.

WHO'S DRIVING TONIGHT?

IF YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING, IT'S NOT YOU.

What Happens If You're Stopped

If you're stopped, be ready to show your driver license, proof of insurance, and registration. If you refuse a law enforcement officer's request to take a blood or breath test to measure how much alcohol is in your system your driver license will be automatically suspended for 180 days. Punishment for DWI varies depending on the number of convictions.

FIRST OFFENSE	SECOND OFFENSE	THIRD OFFENSE
Up to a $2,000 fine	Up to a $4,000 fine	A $10,000 fine
Up to 180 days in jail upon conviction (mandatory 3 days in jail)	1 month to a year in jail upon conviction	2 to 10 years in prison
Loss of driver license up to a year	Loss of driver license up to 2 years	Loss of driver license up to 2 years

These fines do not include a state fine of $3,000, $4,500, or $6,000 assessed upon sentencing to prison or jail time.

DWI offenders may be required by the court to install and maintain an ignition interlock device that prevents their vehicle from being operated if they've been drinking.

DWI with a Child Passenger

You can be charged with child endangerment for driving while intoxicated if you're carrying passengers younger than 15 years old. DWI with a child passenger is punishable with:

- Up to a $10,000 fine
- Up to 2 years in a state jail
- Loss of driver license for 180 days

Keep Right

Watch for signs on Texas multi-lane highways that read "Left Lane For Passing Only." These signs let you know that the left lane on a divided highway is not a "fast" lane. It is a passing lane. After you pass someone, move back into the right lane once you've safely cleared the vehicle. Impeding the flow of traffic by continuing to drive in the left lane is punishable by a fine of up to $200.

How Fast Is Too Fast?

Many interstate and state highways in Texas have a maximum speed of 75 mph. Speed limits on state and interstate highways can be set lower than the maximum, and drivers should always be alert for changes in posted speed limits. Observing speed limits means more than driving faster or slower than the posted speed: It means driving to conditions. When it's raining or foggy, when ice is on the road, when traffic is heavy, or when road construction is ahead, adjust your speed accordingly.

When the vehicle in front of you passes a fixed object, you should be able to count at least three seconds before you pass the same object. Increase your following distance in bad weather.

Move Over or Slow Down Law

When you come upon an emergency vehicle, TxDOT vehicle, tow truck, or utility vehicle with activated overhead lights stopped on the side of the road, state law requires that you move over a lane or reduce your speed to 20 mph below the posted speed limit. Failure to comply could cost you a fine of up to $2,000.

Sharing the Road with Trucks

Driving on roadways with trucks requires special attention. Be aware of a truck's large blind spots: along each side, up to 20 feet in front of the tractor, and up to 200 feet behind the trailer.

- Maintain a safe following distance from trucks. If you can't see the driver in the truck's side mirror, the driver can't see you or your vehicle.
- When passing a truck, wait until you can see both truck headlights in your rearview mirror to move back into your lane. Sometimes the driver will flash the truck's lights to let you know it's OK to move over.
- Pass a truck only when it's legal and safe.

Be careful about pulling in front of a moving truck. Trucks can weigh as much as 80,000 pounds and can take twice as long to stop as a passenger car. If you move in front and brake suddenly, the truck may not have enough time to stop safely.

On average, a motorcyclist is killed on Texas roads every day.

Here's the Law

All riders under the age of 21 are required to wear a helmet when operating a motorcycle. Riders 21 and over may ride without a helmet only if they have completed a safety course or are covered by an applicable insurance plan.

Drivers, Look Twice

- Look twice for motorcycles, especially at intersections.
- Always assume motorcycles are closer than they appear to be, and avoid turning in front of an oncoming motorcycle.
- Use your turn signals and check your blind spot before changing lanes.
- Don't follow a motorcycle too closely.
- Give motorcyclists a full lane.

Riders, Use Your Head

Motorcyclists don't have the protection of seat belts, airbags, door beams, and other cushioning that cars and trucks have.

- Wear a helmet and other protective gear.
- Turn on your headlights and ride defensively.
- Avoid the center of the lane where debris and oil build up.
- Ride at a safe speed, and never ride if you've been drinking.
- Take a course to learn or reinforce safe riding techniques.

LOOK TWICE for MOTORCYCLES

Share the Road

Bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities on the road as drivers. Motorists and cyclists should obey all traffic laws, from stopping for red lights and stop signs to paying attention to lane markers.

Tips for Cyclists

- Wear a properly fitting helmet to reduce the chances of head injury and death. In some places, local ordinances require it.
- Always check brakes and tires before riding.

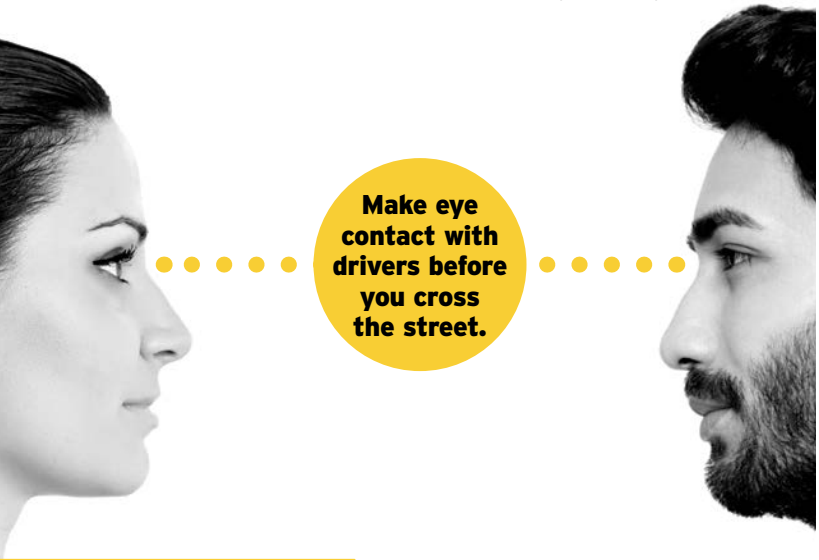
Make it easier for drivers to see you. Wear light colors or reflective clothing whenever you ride a bicycle.

Here's the Law

- Ride near the curb, traveling in the same direction as traffic.
- Have a light on the front and a red reflector or red light on the back of your bike while riding at night.
- Use proper signals when you want to stop or turn. For a left turn, stretch your left arm to the left; for a right turn, stretch your right arm to the right. For a stop, hold your left arm downward.

Pedestrian Tips

- Cross the street only at intersections and crosswalks. Look left, right, then left again before crossing.
- Use the sidewalk. If there isn't one, walk on the left side of the road, facing oncoming traffic.
- Wear reflective materials or use a flashlight at night.



Here's the Law

- Pedestrians and drivers are required to follow all traffic signs and signals.
- An approaching driver must stop and yield the right of way to a pedestrian, bicyclist, or other vulnerable road user in a crosswalk. Seriously injuring someone who is lawfully in a crosswalk is a state jail felony.

There are more than 12,000 schools in Texas.

Safety Tips for Children

Teach your children to respect the school bus driver and follow these safety rules:

- Stand far back when waiting for the bus.
- Sit still on the bus so the driver can concentrate on the road.
- Look both ways when crossing the street after getting off the bus, and wait for the driver to signal it's safe to cross the street.

Tips for Motorists

- Obey school zone speed limits and put away your phone.
- Keep an eye on children gathered at bus stops.
- Watch for children who might dart across the street or between vehicles.

Here's the Law

Drivers must stop when a school bus is stopped and operating a visual signal—either flashing red lights or a stop sign—regardless of which direction the driver is headed. Drivers may proceed once the bus has moved, the flashing lights stop flashing, or the bus driver signals it's okay to pass. Approaching drivers do not have to stop if the roadway is separated by a physical barrier. Violations can lead to a fine of up to $1,250 for a first offense.

Drivers are banned from texting and using hand-held electronic devices while driving in active school zones.

Buckle Up

Seat belts save lives. Wearing a seat belt helps keep you from being ejected in a crash and reduces the risk of dying in a crash by 45 percent for people in the front seat of passenger cars. For those in pickup trucks, seat belts reduce the risk of dying by 60 percent.

- Lap belts should fit snugly across the hips, not over the stomach.
- Shoulder belts go over the shoulder and across the center of the chest.
- Never tuck a shoulder belt under your arm or behind your back.

Here's the Law

Whether you're the driver or a passenger in the front or back seat, every adult and every child in the vehicle must be properly restrained. Children younger than 8 years old must be in a child safety seat or booster seat unless they're taller than 4 feet 9 inches. Fines range from $25 to $250 plus court costs.

**BUCKLE UP.
ALL RIDERS.
DAY AND NIGHT.**

Buckle Your Child in the Proper Safety Seat for His or Her Height, Weight, and Age

Rear-Facing

Infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing seat as long as possible, until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their seat manufacturer. Secure the chest clip even with your baby's armpits, and fasten harness straps snugly against your baby's body.

Forward-Facing: 2 Years and Older

Use a forward-facing seat for as long as the safety seat manufacturer recommends it. Fasten harness straps snugly against your child's body, secure the chest clip even with your child's armpits, and latch the tether strap to the corresponding anchor if your vehicle has one.

Booster

Children who have outgrown a forward-facing seat should use a belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle's seat belt fits properly, typically when they are taller than 4 feet 9 inches and 8 to 12 years old.

Children under the age of 13 are always safest in the back seat.

Visit SaveMeWithaSeat.org for more information about child safety seats and to find a free safety seat check in your area.

Here's the Law

MINORS IN POSSESSION (MIP)

If you're under 21, it means no alcohol—no attempt to buy it, none in your possession, none if you're driving.

Here's what happens the first time you're found in possession of alcohol. Any amount of beer, wine, or liquor can trigger the penalties:

- Up to a $500 fine
- 30-day driver license suspension
- 8 to 12 hours of community service and mandatory alcohol-awareness classes

A second or third offense can lead to suspension of your driver license for 60 to 180 days. If you're 17 or older, you also can be fined as much as $2,000 or go to jail for up to 180 days for a third offense.

Providing Alcohol to Minors

Furnishing or selling alcohol to someone under 21 can lead to a $4,000 fine and up to a year in jail. A parent, legal guardian, or spouse can provide alcohol to their child or spouse as long as they are present when the minor possesses or consumes it.

For Parents

Be a good example: Don't drink and drive. Remind your children to call you if they're ever in an uncomfortable situation. Teach them never to get in a car with someone who's been drinking.

Here's the Law

UNDERAGE DRINKING AND DRIVING

If you're under 21, it is illegal for you to drive with any detectable amount of alcohol in your system. Here's what happens the first time you're stopped for drinking and driving:

- Up to a $500 fine
- 60-day driver license suspension
- 20 to 40 hours of community service and mandatory alcohol-awareness classes

If you're 17 or over, here's what happens if you're stopped for drinking and driving with a blood or breath alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or greater:

- Up to a $2,000 fine
- Up to 180 days in jail upon conviction (mandatory 3 days in jail)
- Loss of driver license for up to a year

Get caught drinking and driving a second or third time, and the penalties increase.

Drowsy Driving

Traveling long distances or late at night can put drivers at risk of falling asleep behind the wheel. If your eyes close or go out of focus, you can't stop yawning, your thoughts wander, or you're drifting between lanes, wake up: You're a "drowsy driver."

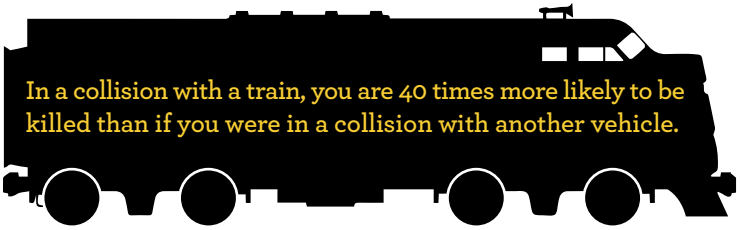
Here are some tips for staying alert on the road:

◀ Get plenty of rest before trips.

Stop to get out of your vehicle and stretch your legs every two hours. Rest for 15 to 20 minutes during each stop. ▶

◀ Avoid driving between midnight and 6 a.m.

Don't drink and drive—even small amounts of alcohol can impair your judgment and your reaction time. ▶



Railroad Crossings

Texas law requires motorists to yield the right of way to trains. It is also against the law to cross tracks if a train is visible or to drive around gates that have been lowered at a railroad crossing. If the gates are down and no train is coming, the road is closed.

- Reduce speed when approaching crossings, look both ways, and listen for the sound of a train.
- If red lights are flashing or if crossing arms have been lowered, stop.
- Never stop on tracks. A train going 50 mph needs at least a mile and a half to stop.
- Be sure all tracks are clear before crossing. There may be more than one set.

Turn Around, Don't Drown

Flash flooding is the number one cause of weather-related deaths in Texas. As little as six inches of water can float some vehicles. Avoid flooded roads, streets, and low areas.

- Never try to walk, swim, or drive through swift water.
- If your vehicle stalls in deep water, leave it and move to higher ground if you can do so safely.
- Obey warning signs. Do not drive around barriers blocking a low-water crossing. Penalties can include a fine of up to $2,000 and/or up to 180 days in jail.

At any given time, there are as many as 3,000 active work zones in Texas.

Caution: Road Work Ahead

The leading causes of work zone crashes are failure to control speed and driver inattention. Be extra cautious and keep the following tips in mind when driving through work zones:

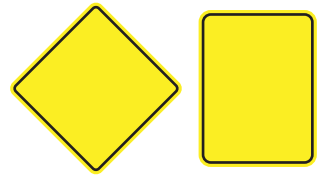
Here's the Law

State law requires you to obey all signs in work zones. Fines for moving violations in road construction or maintenance work zones marked with signs double when workers are present and can be as much as $2,000.

- Slow down and always follow posted work zone speed limits.
- Pay attention, as workers and heavy equipment may be only a few feet from passing vehicles.
- Don't tailgate.
- Stay alert, minimize distractions, and put the phone away.
- Obey road crew flaggers.
- Expect the unexpected. Delays from highway construction can be frustrating, but it only takes a few extra minutes to slow down for a work zone.

Road Signs

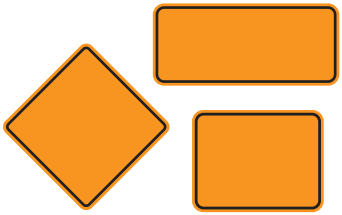
Travel along any Texas street or highway and you will see all sorts of road signs. In addition to the posted message, every sign's color and shape tells you something about what's ahead.



WARNING SIGNS

Unexpected conditions and changes

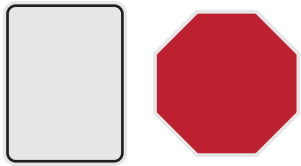
Yellow; usually diamonds, rectangles, or circles



WORK ZONE SIGNS

Road work

Orange; diamonds or rectangles



REGULATORY SIGNS

Traffic laws

Red, black, and white or black and white; usually triangles, octagons, or vertical rectangles

SIGNS THAT GUIDE

Routes, destinations, or other points of interest

Green, blue, or brown; usually horizontal rectangles

SCHOOL ZONE SIGNS

Alert that adults and children may be crossing road

Yellow or green; usually pentagons or rectangles

Refer to this form if you're in a collision, and exchange this information with other drivers. Be sure to get witness information, too.

_____
Date and time of crash

_____
Location of crash (address or cross streets, county)

Driver Information

Get this information for all drivers involved. If the driver doesn't own the vehicle, get the owner's information.

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____
Phone numbers

_____
Driver license number, state

_____
License plate number, state

_____
Vehicle identification number (VIN)

_____
Vehicle make, model, year

_____
Insurance policy number

_____
Insurance company name

_____
Insurance company address

_____
Insurance company phone number

Witness Information

Get this information for all witnesses involved, including passengers.

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____
Phone numbers

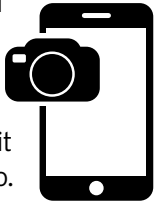
_____
Name

_____
Address

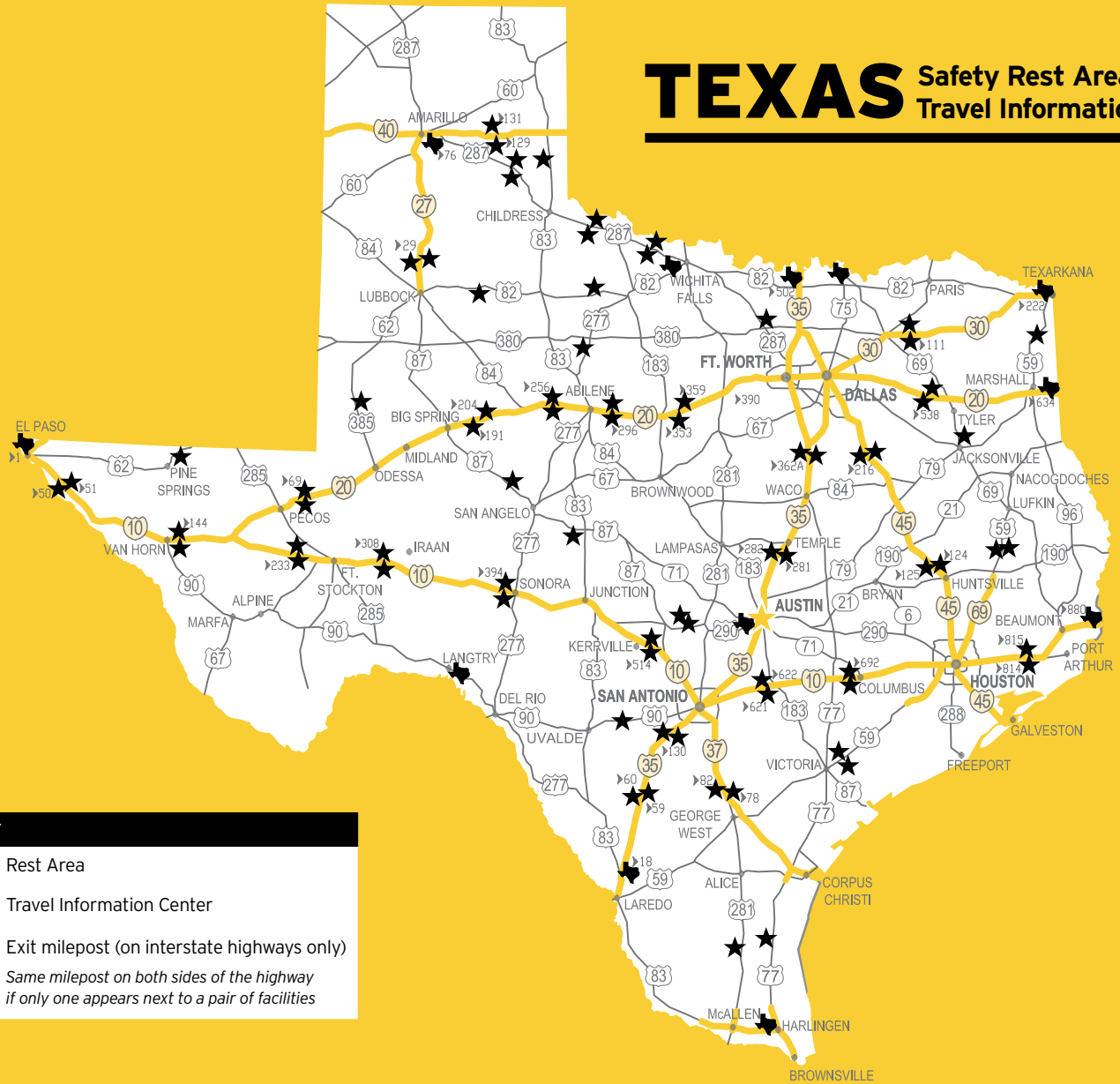
_____
Phone numbers

Description of Crash

Write a brief description of what happened while the details are still fresh in your mind. Take pictures with your phone if it is safe to do so.



TEXAS Safety Rest Areas and Travel Information Centers



KEY

★ Rest Area

Travel Information Center

144 Exit milepost (on interstate highways only)

Same milepost on both sides of the highway if only one appears next to a pair of facilities

Give Yourself a Break

With 80,000 miles of roadways, you'll need a break if you find yourself driving across Texas. Take advantage of the state's 76 Safety Rest Areas and 12 Travel Information Centers.

TxDOT has updated many of the Safety Rest Areas to include local, historical, or regional themes and provide a safe experience for Texas travelers. At many stops you can get current information on highway conditions, learn about local attractions, and find picnic tables, play areas, and other accommodations. Travel Information Centers are staffed by professional travel counselors and most feature free Wi-Fi.

To locate a Safety Rest Area or Travel Information Center, visit txdot.gov.

See map on inner panel

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS AND LINKS

9-1-1

EMERGENCY: 9-1-1
Call to report life-threatening situations such as a roadside emergency, highway crash, or suspected intoxicated driver. Be ready to give your phone number and location.

1-800-525-5555
or *DPS (*377)
on a mobile phone

Texas Department Of Public Safety Stranded Motorist Hotline
Call for non-emergency roadside assistance; answered 24 hours a day by a live operator.

1-800-252-8255

Safe Riders
dshs.texas.gov/saferiders
Find helpful information about child safety seats.

1-800-452-9292

Texas Travel Information Center (TxDOT)
Get travel information, professional trip-planning assistance, and highway condition information from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. Automated road condition information is available 24 hours a day.

DriveTexas.org
Get up-to-date information about highway conditions, including road closures and construction activity.