



2024 SAFETY TIPS THE 'FATAL 5'

The 'Fatal 5' is a term used to identify the top five fatal causes of motor vehicle deaths. Every year tens of thousands of deaths occur in the U.S., and the fatal five are involved in nearly all of them. We have the capability of preventing these causal factors. The following tips will discuss these factors and offer mitigation strategies to help avoid encountering the Fatal Five.



ALCOHOL: Your life and the lives of others are at risk every time a driver gets behind the wheel after drinking. Every day, about 37 people in the U.S. die in drunk-driving crashes – that's one person every 39 minutes and accounted for 13,384 deaths in 2021. Here are a few tips to help keep you safe:

- Plan! Before drinking, use a designated driver, call an Uber or Lyft, taxi or friend, or stay where you are until safe and sober to drive. You have options - Use them!
- Know your limits and don't exceed them. Drink responsibly and keep hydrated.
- If hosting a party with alcohol, offer non-alcoholic drinks and food; make sure guests leave with a sober driver.
- If you see a drunk driver, safely pull over and call law enforcement.



SPEED: Speeding endangers everyone on the road. Speeding has been involved in approximately one-third of all motor vehicle fatalities. In 2021, speeding killed 12,330 people. People speed for many different reasons but running late and traffic issues top the list. Remember, speed limits are established for our safety.

- Speeding consequences: Greater potential for loss of vehicle control; Reduced effectiveness of occupant protection equipment; Increased stopping distance; Increase in crash severity; Increased fuel consumption/cost.
- Mitigate speeding by: Adhering to posted speed limits; Planning properly; Calling ahead to alert others if running late; Being a courteous driver; Avoiding encounters with aggressive drivers.

FATIGUE / CARELESSNESS: Fatigued driving includes driving while drowsy, sleepy, or tired. It is unsafe to operate a vehicle while fatigued. Fatigue driving leads to over 100,000 police reported crashes each year. In 2021, fatigue driving resulted in over 684 deaths. Fatigue impairs driving performance, judgment, and reaction time much the same way as alcohol. The most effective way to mitigate fatigue while driving is to:

- Obtain sufficient sleep prior to driving.
- Take adequate rest breaks during long distance driving.
- Avoid eating large meals prior to driving.

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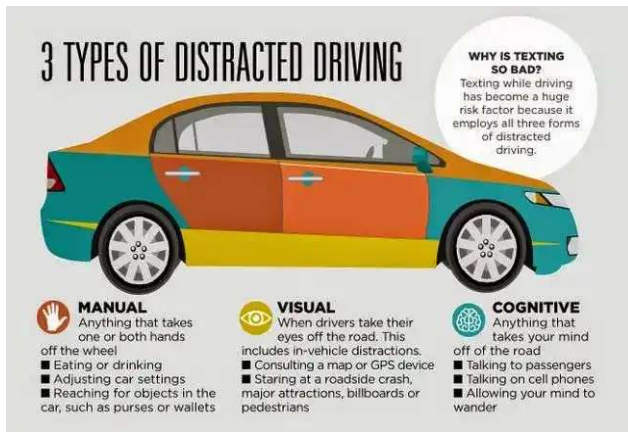
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- Adhere to command policy; Use TRiPS risk assessments when driving long distances.
- Avoid driving during normal sleep times. Alertness declines between 0000-0400, and 1300-1600.

SEATBELTS: Seatbelts save lives. In 2021, 26,325 vehicle occupants were killed. Approximately 50% of those were not buckled. One of the safest choices drivers and passengers can make is to buckle up. The national use rate was at 91.9% in 2023. Buckling up helps keep you safe and secure inside your vehicle, whereas not buckling up can result in being ejected from the vehicle in a crash, which is almost always deadly. Seat belts are the best defense against impaired, aggressive, and distracted drivers. Buckle up – every trip, all the time, and ensure all occupants remain buckled for trip duration.



DISTRACTIONS: April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from safe driving, including talking or texting on your phone, talking to passengers, or adjusting the stereo or navigation system. Distracted driving is dangerous, claiming over 3,522 lives in 2021.



Adjusting the stereo or navigation system. Distracted driving is dangerous, claiming over 3,522 lives in 2021. Avoid driving distractions by adhering to the following:

- Turn off cell phone or place it where it's inaccessible while driving; Appoint a designated "texter"; Don't drive when emotional; Avoid eating, drinking, applying make-up, or changing CD's while driving; Self-assess driving habits and correct distractions; Keep both hands on the wheel; Know and follow all state traffic laws.

Note: Reading a text for just three seconds while driving 65 MPH is equivalent to driving the length of a football field – blind!

MISHAP EVENTS: Over the last few years, MARFORCOM units have lost 27 personnel to the below **Fatal 5** factors. Honor our fallen Marines and Sailors by driving safe, buckling up, and setting the right example.

- **Speed:** Involved in the loss of **8:** 2-SSgt, 1-Cpl, 4-LCpls; 1-PFC
- **Alcohol:** Involved in the loss of **4:** 2-Cpls, 1-PVT; 1-MASN
- **Fatigue:** Involved in the loss of **3:** 1-Sgt, 1-Cpl, 1-LCpl
- **Seatbelts:** Involved in the loss of **7:** 1-Cpls, 2-LCpls; 3-PFCs; 1-MA
- **Distraction:** Involved in the loss of **2:** 2-LCpls

Note: Some events involved Marines who were not at-fault or the causal factors are unknown. You can control these fatal factors!



RESOURCES:

- <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving>
- <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/seat-belts>
- <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/some-medicines-and-driving-dont-mix>

Manage the Risk



Protect the Force