

## Defensive Driving – TMS Training: NFED 3867508

### About This Course

#### Overview/Description:

This course will provide simple defensive driving techniques to reduce your chances of being involved in a motor vehicle accident. The content in this course is designed to comply with the intent of the applicable regulatory requirements – define defensive driving, recognize accident prevention methods, identify the importance of seat belts, describe the facts concerning the impact of drinking and driving, and identify vehicle safety measures on the job.

This course was developed with subject matter support provided by EnSafe Inc., a global professional services company focusing on engineering, environment, health and safety, and information technology.

\*Slide photos may be edited

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#### Objectives

##### Defensive Driving

- Define a defensive driver
- Cite accident prevention methods
- Identify the importance of your vehicle's safety equipment
- Recall the facts concerning the impact of drinking and driving
- Identify vehicle safety measures on the job

**Course was originally designed for online viewing through TMS.**

**Hard Copy Facility Revision for use by Volunteers: 2016-02-19**

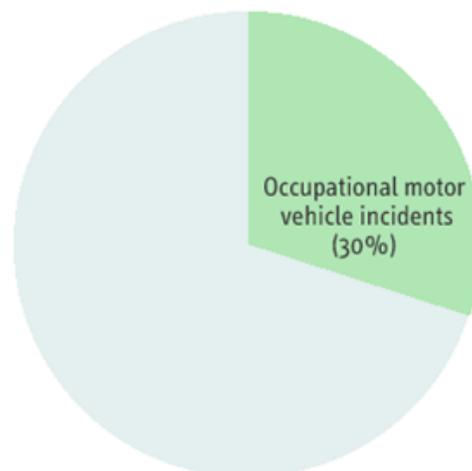
**Canandaigua VA Medical Center  
Voluntary Services, R. Deck**

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According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, each year, over 2,000 deaths result from occupational motor vehicle incidents, and more than 30% of vehicle-related occupational injuries.

These deaths include drivers and passengers in highway crashes, farm equipment accidents, and industrial vehicle incidents, as well as pedestrian fatalities. Most occupational fatalities occur on public highways where there are seat belt requirements and traffic laws.

**This course will provide simple defensive driving techniques to reduce your chances of being involved in a motor vehicle accident.**



*Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to*

- Cite accident prevention techniques
- Identify the importance of your vehicle's safety equipment
- List the facts concerning the impact of drinking and driving, and
- Identify vehicle safety measures on the job

## What is a *Defensive Driver*?

A **defensive driver** is someone who recognizes hazards, understands the defense, and acts in time to avoid motor vehicle accidents.

**Hazards** that may cause accidents include

- Heavy traffic and dangerous road situations
- Poor vehicle operating condition
- Bad weather conditions
- Poor lighting conditions, and
- The driver's physical state

**Road rage** is when an angry or impatient driver or passenger uses aggressive behavior behind the wheel of a vehicle, which can injure or kill another person.

## AVOID ROAD RAGE

**Reckless driving** is risk-taking behavior behind the wheel of a vehicle. This includes speeding, tailgating, weaving through traffic, flashing lights, and ignoring traffic laws, sign, and signals.

**To avoid road rage**

- Steer clear of aggressive drivers
- Be courteous to other drivers, and
- Focus on the road

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**The key to avoiding accidents is to look ahead and anticipate potential problems.**

If you see a potential head-on crash coming your way, slow down and avoid the crash by pulling off the road to the right. Be alert to drivers around you.

### To avoid hitting the driver in front of you

- Watch out for hazards
- Maintain a minimum of a four-second distance behind other vehicles
- Match your speed to road conditions, and
- Look for brake or turn signals

### To avoid being hit from behind

- Be alert to tailgaters
- Avoid sudden stops
- Signal your intentions in advance, and
- Allow distance in front of you when stopped



Stay at least four seconds behind the driver in front of you.

**To figure distance**, start counting one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, one-thousand-three, one-thousand-four, when the car in front passes a utility pole. If you reach the utility pole before one-thousand-four, you are following too closely.

For added safety, add more time in bad weather.

If you want to pass in a passing zone marked by broken yellow lines, check to see if any traffic is coming toward you. Then look to see if anyone behind you is moving out to pass.

Do not pass unless you can see far enough ahead.

If you are being passed, slow down if the other vehicle needs extra room to pass you safely.

The heavy traffic of rush hour and crowded roads is hazardous. Be alert to other drivers. Be ready to react quickly and be prepared for

- Sudden stops
- Disabled cars
- Cars moving in and out of lanes
- Cars crossing lanes to get to an exit
- Cars passing from any side
- Potholes and debris on the floor, and construction

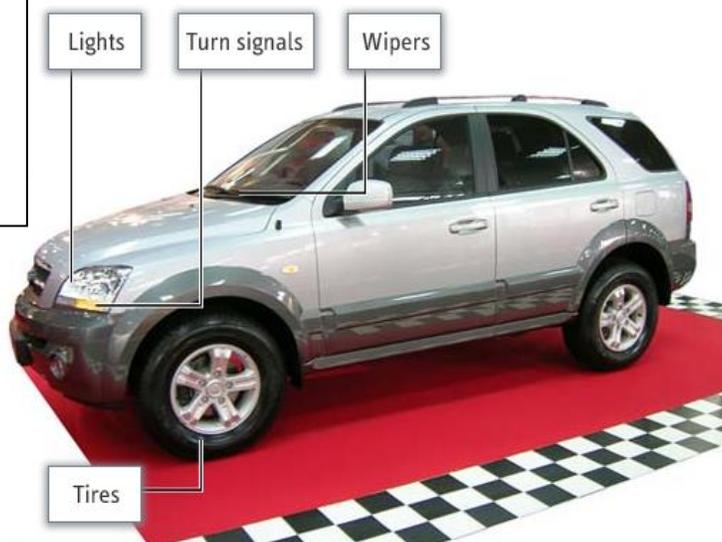


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Your vehicle's operating condition is important to your personal safety. Properly maintain your vehicle and keep it in good condition at all times.

A safe car has

- Working lights and turn signals
- A working horn
- Effective windshield wiper blades and plenty of windshield washer fluid, and tires with tread and correct air pressure.



Follow your owner's manual for maintenance concerning

- Regularly scheduled tune-ups
- Oil changes
- Belts and wires
- Coolant and antifreeze levels
- Brakes
- Shocks, and
- exhaust

If your car begins to skid, take your foot off the gas and turn the wheel in the direction you want the front of the car to go. Do not apply your brakes

When driving in the rain, use caution by driving slowly. Avoid puddles that can hide potholes and cause your brakes to fail. You can prevent hydroplaning by taking your foot off the gas and slowing down gradually.

Cruise control should **not** be used in these conditions

**Talking or texting on a cell phone while driving is dangerous and has resulted in numerous accidents.**

- Do not make or receive calls until you have stopped the car.
- Remember, driving requires your full attention to the road.
- Refrain from "texting."

Texting is illegal in some states, and many companies and federal agencies prohibit using a phone and text messaging while driving on company or official business. Federal employees who violate this prohibition may be subject to disciplinary action determined by their employing agency.

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**Maintain your visibility** by using windshield wipers, lights, and the defroster. You should replace your wiper blades when they become worn. Be sure to wash your wiper blades when you wash your car.

**If you have to drive in snow**, first clear off your entire car. Make sure that you have plenty of winterized windshield washer fluid in the reservoir before starting your trip.

**Drive slowly** and allow for a longer distance for stopping. Prepare for stops and turns well in advance. You should stay at least **six seconds** behind the vehicle in front of you.

**Watch for icy patches**, especially on bridges and shady spots. For better traction, use winter-rated tires.

You should also keep **winter emergency supplies** in your car (shovel, sand, and blankets).



### **Driving with too much or too little light adds extra hazards.**

Increase your visibility and safety at night by making sure your headlights are clean and working properly and your windshield is clean inside and out.

Turn on your headlights at the first hint of darkness and half an hour before sunset.

If you have your high beams on, remember to switch to low beams when a car is in front of or coming towards you.

You should also stretch the distance between you and the car in front. Use extreme care on unlit curves.

Pull completely off the road if you experience any car trouble and use your flashers, signs, or flares should your car become disabled.

Increase visibility and safety during the day by:

- Wearing sunglasses
- Using your visors, and
- Driving slowly

\*Using your windshield washer when driving into direct sunlight can cause momentary loss of visibility.



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### Summary

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A defensive driver is someone who recognizes hazards, understands the defense, and acts in time to avoid motor vehicle accidents. The key to avoiding an accident is to look ahead and anticipate potential problems. You should clear any snow off the vehicle, focus on the road, watch out for hazards, brake, use turn signals, and apply the 4 second rule.

It is important for your safety to maintain your vehicle and keep it in good condition. This includes checking tires, oil, wind shield wipers, and having it serviced regularly.

Bad weather conditions such as rain might cause a car to skid, and speed should be adjusted. You should maintain visibility by using your windshield wipers and when it's snowing, clear off your car first. Refrain from using a cell phone when driving this may be illegal and very dangerous. Driving in too much or too little light also presents a hazard. Turn on your headlights at dusk to maintain visibility; use the high beams when the road ahead is clear and the low beams when other cars are around. During the day, the sun's glare might blind you. Use sunglasses to protect your eyes and increase visibility.

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*Motor vehicle accidents are the #1 cause of all accidental deaths of adults, teenagers, and children.*

On and off the job, statistics show that motor vehicle accidents

- Cause almost 2 million disabling injuries a year
- Kill someone every 11 minutes, and
- Injure someone every 18 seconds

Using your seat belt reduces your chances of being killed or seriously injured in a motor vehicle accident.

Seat belts are required in many states, and many companies require the use of seat belts for their employees' safety and their own liability.

Seat belts play an important role in job safety. Since 1983, seat belts have saved over 20,000 lives and prevented over 400,000 injuries.



Most vehicle accidents happen close to home. Make sure everyone in your vehicle is wearing a seat belt correctly whenever the vehicle is in motion. Wearing a seat belt helps you stay in your seat. Your seat belt

- keeps you firmly behind the wheel if you have to swerve, brake or accelerate suddenly
- stops you from crashing into the dashboard, steering wheel, or another person, and
- keeps you protected inside the car

*Seat belts also allow strong bones to take the shock of a crash instead of delicate organs and give you a better chance of remaining conscious following an accident.*

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**Airbags and automatic restraints** are part of the safety systems on most vehicles. Airbags inflate automatically in a head on collision, creating a cushion between the people in the car and the steering wheel or dashboard.

**Wearing a seat belt** will help you stay in a safe position and receive the full safety benefits of an airbag. Seat belts restrain your body in order to slow down to allow the airbags to deploy fully. Airbags deploy at a rate of roughly 200 miles per hour. If you were to hit the airbag before it is fully deployed, the airbag may cause serious injury or even death.

Front airbags offer protection only in a head-on crash, but some new cars are equipped with side impact airbags for further protection.

## Summary

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Wearing your seat belt reduces your chances of serious injury, or even being killed, if you're involved in a motor vehicle accident. Since 1983, seat belts have saved over 20,000 lives and prevented over 400,000 injuries. Your seat belt keeps you firmly behind the wheel if you have to swerve, brake, or accelerate suddenly. It also stops you from crashing into the dashboard, steering wheel, or another person. A seat belt keeps you protected inside the car; it allows strong bones to take the shock of a crash instead of delicate organs, and gives you a better chance of remaining conscious following an accident. Wearing a seat belt will also help you stay in a safe position and receive the full safety benefits of an airbag.

*Every year, thousands of people are killed or injured by impaired or unfit drivers.*

For instance, it is good a good idea to **take a break from driving every few hours** to avoid driver fatigue.

When you drink alcohol or take drugs, including cold remedies and prescriptions, your reactions are slower, your vision may become blurred, your ability to determine distance is reduced, and your judgment is greatly impaired.



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### Drinking too much alcohol and driving is illegal.

Do not drive if you've been drinking alcohol or have taken illegal or certain prescription drugs. Only time will sober you up.

Wait at least 1 hour before driving after each drink. Designate one non-drinking driver per carload, or call a cab if no one in your group should be driving.

Even if you have just had one drink before driving, you could pose a risk to pedestrians, other drivers, and yourself. Every year, drunk drivers kill 25,000 people, and injure over 500,000 people, seriously disable thousands of others, and cause 50% of all highway deaths.



Each year, driving under the influence of alcohol costs the United States approximately \$24 billion, in addition to absenteeism and reduced productivity at work. Violators of drinking and driving laws face serious legal, financial, medical, and emotional consequences.

Potential consequences include

- medical expenses
- motor vehicle damage
- property damage
- increased insurance premiums, and
- cancelled insurance policies

Other potential consequences of driving under the influence include

- criminal fines
- lost wages or job loss
- legal fees
- suspension or loss of driver's license
- arrest and jail sentence
- mandatory community service
- serious injury to yourself or others, and
- emotional trauma or pain.

One drink is equal to

One 1.5 oz.  
shot of liquor



=

One 5 oz.  
glass of wine



=

One 12 oz.  
can of beer



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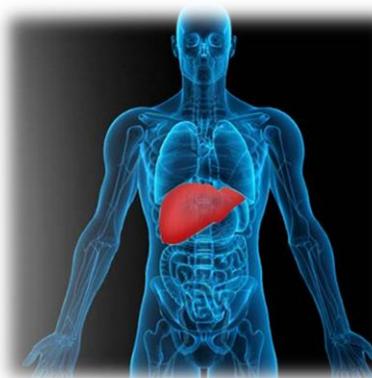
The level of intoxication is determined by the blood alcohol concentration, which is the amount of alcohol in your blood. A blood, breath, or urine test measures blood alcohol concentration.



### **Just one drink can raise your blood alcohol concentration.**

When alcohol reaches the liver of an average adult, it is broken down at the rate of one ounce per hour. Alcohol continues to have an effect on you until the liver breaks down all of the alcohol in your body.

Blood alcohol concentration can be affected by body weight, the type and amount of alcohol you drink, how quickly you drink, your gender, and the amount of food in your stomach.



When alcohol reaches your brain, it causes poor judgment, slowed reflexes, impaired concentration, and impaired vision.

Besides making sure friends do not drive after drinking, you can help eliminate driving under the influence by

- Volunteering to help in a safe-rides program
- Offering to be a designated driver, and
- Calling a cab for an intoxicated friend



***To help keep you safe, the legal system routinely enforces***

- Sobriety checkpoints
- Increased severity of punishment
- Immediate license suspension
- Mandatory jail sentence
- Per se laws, and
- A minimum legal drinking age of 21 years



## Summary

**When you drink alcohol or take drugs, including prescription medication, your reactions slow and your vision can become blurred. Your ability to determine distance is also reduced, and your judgment is greatly impaired. Drinking too much alcohol and driving is illegal. Your blood alcohol concentration, which is the amount of alcohol in your blood, determines your level of intoxication. Blood alcohol concentration is measured by blood, breath, or urine tests.**

## Defensive Driving – TMS Training: NFED 3867508

***Defensive driving on the job is required every time you get behind the wheel.***

Motor vehicle accidents are the largest single cause of accidental death both on and off the job, and are a major cause of serious injuries.

***Motor vehicle safety awareness will help protect your life, your health, and your paycheck.***

Many companies require the use of seat belts, and **seat belts** play an important role in job safety.

Your employer wants you to **follow common sense vehicle safety rules** when you operate or riding a motor vehicle, including specialized trucks in material handling equipment.

**It is important to not overload vehicles** with goods or people. Every vehicle is rated for maximum load capacity.

If you overload a vehicle with more people or weight than it can handle safely, you greatly increase the risk of an accident even if you are traveling a short distance on a job site.

If you drive or ride in a vehicle on company time, wear a safety belt when in a moving vehicle and participate in driver safety awareness training.

Motor vehicle accidents can happen anywhere, in any type of vehicle. Someone dies in a motor vehicle accident every 11 minutes. Each year motor vehicle crashes cause about 2,100 occupational deaths. Motor vehicle accidents caused 91,000 lost workday injuries every year.

**If** your vehicle is overloaded

- You may not be able to stop as quickly as needed
- The driver's rear and side vision may be blocked, and
- Tires may overheat and blow out.

Licensed commercial drivers should make detailed inspections of their vehicles before, during, and after each trip.

But whether or not you have a commercial license, you sure you follow your employer's an inspection rules carefully and adhere to the maintenance schedule and the owner's manual.

If you take a company vehicle on the road, be sure to carry a jack, flares, flashlight, and first aid kit.



## Defensive Driving – TMS Training: NFED 3867508

### Vehicle safety on the job means driving and riding safely.

Remember to

- Practice defensive driving
- Obey traffic laws, signs, and signals
- Wear your safety belt in a moving vehicle, and
- Follow company policy and state and federal motor vehicle regulations.

### You should also remember to

- Be a safe and courteous passenger
- Be an alert driver, and
- Never drink, take drugs, and drive

## Summary

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If you drive or ride in the vehicle on company time, wear safety belt when in a moving vehicle and participate in driver safety awareness training. It is important not to overload vehicles with goods or people. Follow your employer's inspection rules carefully and adhere to the maintenance schedule and the owner's manual. If you take a company vehicle on the road, be sure to carry a jack, flares, flashlight, and first aid kit.