



Get Around *Safe and Sound*

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www.FloridaGrandDriver.com
or
www.GrandDriver.info

Project Partners:

Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

Florida Department of Transportation

Florida Department of Elder Affairs

American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Department of Health and Human Service/U.S.
Administration on Aging

AARP Driver Safety Program

American Automobile Association

American Occupational Therapy Association

ADED: The Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialist



**Florida
GrandDriver**

What You Should Know
About Aging and Driving

Get Around *Safe and Sound*

Learn More.

www.FloridaGrandDriver.com
or
www.GrandDriver.info

How Aging Affects Driving

Driving is a complex, fast-paced activity. A typical driver makes 20 decisions per mile, with less than half a second to act to avoid a collision.

Age can affect a driver's ability to sense, decide and act. Knowing the early signs of driving difficulty will allow older drivers to take actions that will make them safer drivers longer.

It may not be obvious to an older adult or concerned friend or family member that a driver's physical capacity has changed. Some of the signs that an older driver needs assistance:

- Neglects to buckle up
- Has difficulty working the pedals
- Has difficulty merging on freeways, or turning onto busy streets
- Has trouble seeing other vehicles, cyclists or pedestrians, especially at night
- Ignores or "misses" stop signs and other traffic signals
- Reacts slowly to sirens and flashing lights of emergency vehicles
- Weaves, straddles lanes, drifts into other lanes or changes lanes without signaling
- Gets lost or disoriented easily, even in familiar places

In addition, two or more traffic tickets, warnings, collisions or "near-misses" in the past two years may signal a problem.

More Older Drivers

- Today, there are more than 18.9 million licensed drivers in the U.S. who are 70 or older.
- By 2020, it is estimated there will be more than 30 million licensed drivers age 70-plus.
- As the number of older drivers increases, new mind sets and behaviors are necessary to prevent a corresponding increase in traffic accidents and fatalities.



Florida GrandDriver is an education and awareness program of the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FDHSMV) and is based on a program developed by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). The goal of the program is to educate the public about the effects of age on driving ability and to encourage drivers to make appropriate choices as we age - choices that maximize personal safety and the safety of our communities.

Using interactive community outreach activities combined with Web-based communication support, the Florida GrandDriver program is designed to help prepare drivers to "Get Around Safe and Sound" in their later years. The program aims to educate drivers, and their family, friends and caregivers about the challenges many people face trying to stay connected to communities as they age. Florida GrandDriver provides information about various steps drivers may take to maintain independence as long as possible as well as actions to stay mobile in their communities. For more information visit www.FloridaGrandDriver.com or www.GrandDriver.info

Get Around Safe & Sound...As Long as Possible

Know The Fundamentals

Basic rules for safe driving apply to any age group:

- Always wear corrective lenses as required.
- Be rested. Don't drive when you are physically exhausted or sleep deprived.
- Don't wear sunglasses in dim or dark conditions.
- Don't drink and drive.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist how your medications affect driving.
- Always, always wear a safety belt.

Avoid Risky Drive Times

Minimize or prevent high-stress situations by avoiding difficult traffic situations. Older drivers may continue to drive safely for many years by adjusting their habits:

- Drive during daylight.
- Drive in good weather.
- Avoid rush-hour traffic.
- Limit fast-paced highway driving.



Find A Safe Way

Consider driving with a friend or map out and practice the safest ways to routine destinations: grocery stores, churches, doctors' offices, shopping centers, etc. Look for:

- Well-lit streets
- Left turns at controlled intersections with left turn arrows
- Clear signs and well-marked lanes
- Easy parking

Go Back To School

A driving course just for older adults can update drivers on traffic laws and suggest useful ways to adapt driving habits to accommodate aging. Some courses even qualify older drivers for a reduction in auto insurance costs. Courses may be offered locally, or through national organizations such as:

- AAA Mature Operators Program
- AARP Driver Safety Program
- National Safety Council

Drive A Safe Car

Look beyond the conventional safety features on a car. Like all drivers, older drivers should be sure their car offers a comfortable fit, maximum visibility and minimal physical strain. Consider these features:

- Height-adjustable seats
- Tilt/telescoping steering wheel
- Height-adjustable safety belt anchors
- Good visibility
- Legible instruments
- Large, glare-proof mirrors
- Push-button controls
- Power windows and door locks
- Power steering
- Equipment such as pedal extenders and hand controls (for drivers with special needs)

Get Physical

Strength, flexibility and overall wellness contribute to the ability of an older driver to remain a safe driver.

Drivers should:

- Receive regular medical and eye exams to identify physical conditions that may affect driving.
- Consult with a doctor about exercising to maintain the flexibility and strength needed for safe driving.

Plan Ahead

Retiring from driving doesn't mean retiring from life. Plan ahead and learn about the options for getting around when driving isn't an option:

- Public transportation such as bus and trolley services
- Senior shuttles
- Relocate to a walkable community.
- Community driving services
- Friends and family
- Taxi services

How To Help An Older Driver

It's not easy to think about aging, much less to talk about it. Bringing up the subject of safe driving may be awkward, but if you can talk now, you and your family can have a plan for the coming years. Here are some tips for making conversation easier:

- Recognize that an older driver is not necessarily an unsafe driver. Decisions will be made based on the specific needs of the person and the situation.
- Acknowledge that giving up (or even limiting) driving is a big deal – symbolically and practically – for most older drivers.
- Emphasize that safety is most important.
- Review specific transportation needs and develop a way to accommodate them.
- Agree together on a plan of action. It may begin with avoiding risky driving situations, seeking education, rehabilitation or adaptive equipment and eventually lead to giving up the keys.

Resources

Many national, state and local organizations have information and programs to help older Americans "Get Around Safe and Sound." Many organizations and Web sites offer facts about aging and driving, resources for families, and services for older Americans who aren't driving.

Know Your Resources

AAMVA: American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators

www.GrandDriver.info

FDHSMV: Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

www.FloridaGrandDriver.com

Helps seniors, as well as friends, family and caregivers, learn about the effects of aging on driving. It provides tips for assessing driving skills, information on ways to keep driving safely as long as possible and suggestions for children and caregivers.

AAA: American Automobile Association

www.aaapublicaffairs.com The "On the Road/Mature Drivers" section provides information on the effect of medications on driving, vision and driving, how to fine-tune driving skills and senior friendly vehicles. More information on "Straight Talk for Mature Drivers" is available by sending a stamped self-addressed envelope to AAA Driver Improvement, 1515 North Westshore Blvd., Tampa, FL 33603. The AAA Mature Operator course is offered online at www.aaa.com. For additional information contact Yoli Buss (813) 289-5831.

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

www.seniordrivers.org Provides information, videos and quizzes to help older drivers stay safely behind the wheel for as many years as possible.

AARP Driver Safety Program

www.aarp.org/drive or 1-888-227-7669 The nation's first and largest classroom driver refresher course.

ADED: The Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists

www.aded.net or 1-800-290-2344 Find fact sheets and a driver rehabilitation specialist directory. A driver rehabilitation specialist can provide a comprehensive evaluation and make recommendations regarding driving.

NHTSA: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

www.nhtsa.dot.gov Offers in-depth information about aging and driving through its "Driving Safely While Aging Gracefully," research reports, Traffic Safety Fact Sheets and other materials. Printed brochures are also available.

Department of Health and Human Services/U.S. Administration on Aging

www.aoa.gov Helps older people retain their dignity and independence and remain in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

www.eldercare.gov or 1-800-677-1116 Offers information and resources for older adults in their communities. Provides access to more than 4,800 state and local information and referral service providers, identified for every ZIP code in the country.