

Safe Driving Tips for Seniors

How long ago did you get your driver's license? Do you remember it as a day you gained a newfound sense of independence? Being able to hop in a car and drive where you need to go is something to cherish at any age.

Staying on the road as long as you can is a goal many people have. One way to do so is to practice safe driving habits. With increased age comes increased risk of health conditions that can affect driving such as vision and hearing problems, and more.

Stay Safe Behind the Wheel as You Age

Since it's not uncommon for adults to think that they've mastered the art of driving, you may think you don't have anything else to learn to stay safe on the road. Never stop learning. Keep in mind these tips for safe driving for seniors.

Tip #1: Make sure your doctor clears you to drive.

When was the last time you had a health check-up? Schedule an appointment with your doctor and consider getting up-to-date hearing and vision tests. Vision and hearing can change as you get older. For some, it's more difficult to see at night while driving, especially in the rain. For others, it's more difficult to hear emergency sirens approaching. Talk to your doctor about any physical or mental limitations you feel you have.

Tip #2: Come to terms with any driving limitations.

Maybe you have zero limitations when it comes to safe driving for seniors. Or maybe driving makes you more anxious or overwhelmed than it used to. Whatever the circumstance, it's important to come to the realization that driving might not be what it used to be. Aging changes things, but it only means you should be more mindful about safe driving for seniors. Making a few changes to your driving habits is worth it.

Tip #3: Understand any side effects of your medications.

Do you take prescription medications? Make sure to read the label to see if they can impair your driving. Some medications cause drowsiness, lightheadedness, or other side effects that make it dangerous for yourself and others on the road. This is another topic to discuss with your doctor.

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Tip #4: Take a Mature Driving Course with friend.

Does your local DMV offer a Mature Driving Course? Many do. Check your DMV's website, then encourage a couple of friends and sign up. It's a great opportunity to brush up on your driving education, and it may cover topics related to safe driving for seniors. With a few friends as classmates, you might really enjoy it!

Tip #5: Stay off the roads during inclement weather.

For some, driving during rainstorms, snowstorms, or other inclement weather causes severe anxiety. No matter your age, it's not safe to be on the roads during this time. Sometimes, it's inevitable. But if you can avoid it, like if you know in advance a storm is coming and you can adjust your plans, do so. Since aging affects driving ability, it's a double negative when combined with dangerous weather.

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