

# Road Safety

*It's everyone's responsibility*





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# Speeding

## Know the dangers—get home safely

Speeding, either exceeding the posted speed limit or driving too fast for conditions, is a factor in approximately one third of all fatal crashes in Nova Scotia.

**Remember:** Speed limits are set to ensure the safety of drivers, passengers and pedestrians. Don't speed!

### REDUCED SPEED SAVES LIVES!

Research shows that the risk of injury from a crash doubles with a 5 km/h increase in travel speed. For example, at 65 km/h in a 60 km/h zone, injury from a crash is twice as likely to occur. In a recent survey, eight in ten Nova Scotia drivers admitted to driving between 1 to 15 km/h over the speed limit in the month before the survey.

## Estimated crash impact speeds, where the crash is likely to result in death or serious injury

Speed at impact	Road user	Crash type
30 km/h+	Vehicle occupant	Side impact crash with fixed roadside objects (such as poles and trees)
40 km/h+	Pedestrian, cyclist, motorcyclist	Impact with other vehicles
50 km/h+	Vehicle occupant	Side impact crash with another vehicle
70 km/h+	Vehicle occupant	Head-on crash with a similar vehicle

Source: Arrive Alive

## Vehicle speed and stopping distances

30 km/h



31.2 metres  
102.3 feet

Speed

Distance required to stop

50 km/h



63.4 metres / 208.1 feet

60 km/h



83.0 metres / 272.3 feet



# Impairment & Fatigue

## Know your limits

Alcohol impairment is one of the greatest contributing factors in motor vehicle fatalities and serious injuries worldwide. In 2009, 26% of all fatal collisions in Nova Scotia involved alcohol.

Drugs, including alcohol, reduce your ability to divide your attention among tasks, making it unsafe to operate a motor vehicle. And remember, alcohol is alcohol. One 12-ounce glass of beer has as much alcohol as a 1.5-ounce shot of whiskey or a 5-ounce glass of wine.

Nova Scotia has more than 50 trained Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) to determine if there is impairment due to drugs and alcohol. These experts can also identify the category of drugs in your body. Remember: You can be charged for impaired driving if your ability to safely operate a motor vehicle is impaired by drugs other than alcohol.

### ENFORCEMENT

Nova Scotia has an Integrated Impaired Driving Enforcement Unit that is dedicated to patrolling the province and targeting impaired drivers at checkpoints.

### THE COST OF CONVICTION

The financial cost for a person charged and convicted of impaired driving after trial is about \$32,000, including legal fees, fines, license reinstatement, the alcohol interlock program, and insurance.

## Fatigued driving

Research shows that people are not good at recognizing or acting on the signs of fatigue. Recognizing your fatigue can be difficult, but learning the warning signs is an important way to minimize your risk on the road.

### What are the warning signs of fatigue?

- Frequent yawning
- Drowsiness
- Sore or tired eyes
- Boredom
- Feeling irritable and restless
- Slow reactions
- Loss of concentration
- Failing to check your driving mirrors (e.g., side and rearview)
- Drifting from your lane
- Inconsistent speed
- Erratic braking
- Missing an exit or turns
- Hallucinations
- Nodding off

The following strategies will **not** reduce fatigued driving:

- Drinking coffee
- Taking caffeine pills
- Opening windows or turning on air conditioner or fan
- Talking to passengers
- Stopping to eat, exercise, or relax, without napping
- Turning up the radio or music

### What can I do to reduce fatigued driving?

- Don't schedule driving trips before your usual wake-up time or after your usual bed time
- Get a good night's sleep before driving
- Plan ahead
- Take regular breaks when driving for long periods
- If possible, drive during daylight hours
- If you are on any medication with drowsiness as a side-effect, try to postpone your trip or use an alternate transportation, e.g., have a friend drive you, take a taxi, bus or train

A photograph of a baby sitting in a car seat, secured with a seatbelt. The baby is looking to the right. The car seat is dark-colored with a grey mesh backrest. A person's arm in a red and black striped shirt is visible on the right side of the frame.

# Seatbelts & Car Seats

## Know how to protect you and your passengers

Car crashes can happen anytime. In 2009, 71 people were killed in car crashes in Nova Scotia; twenty-two per cent were not using a seatbelt or child restraint.

A properly fitted car seat, booster seat, or seatbelt can save your life and reduce injuries. And by law, every person in your vehicle must use one of these occupant restraints.

### Infants

Infants must use a car seat that faces the back of the vehicle until they are at least one year old and weigh 10 kg (22 lbs). Some rear-facing seats can be used until your child weighs 16 kg (35 lb).

### Children

Children must use a booster seat until they reach 145 cm (4'9"). A booster seat positions the adult seatbelt so that it fits older children safely.

## SEATBELT INFORMATION

For more information about car seats, booster seats, and seatbelts for youth, visit [www.childsafetylink.ca](http://www.childsafetylink.ca)

## Seatbelt safety tips

Regardless of how safely you drive, sudden stops and collisions do happen. You cannot control the behaviour of other drivers. Here are some seatbelt safety tips to remember:

- Seatbelts must be in good working condition.
- A seatbelt won't protect you if it is not worn properly. Take a few seconds to position the lap portion of your seatbelt snug to your body and low on the hips. Never wear the shoulder strap under your arm. It could damage your ribs.
- A seatbelt keeps the driver behind the wheel and in control during a collision. It also helps keep your head and body from hitting the inside of the vehicle.
- A seatbelt keeps you inside the vehicle during a collision, preventing you from being thrown through a windshield or door.
- Even if your vehicle is equipped with air bags, always wear your seatbelt. If you don't, you may not be in the right position to benefit from the protection air bags provide. Remember, air bags do not protect you in a roll-over or if your vehicle is hit from the side.

Source: [www.saferoads.com](http://www.saferoads.com)

### TIP

*Slow down, save money! Every ten kilometres you drive above the speed limit increases your fuel consumption by ten percent.*

### TIP

*Underinflated tires are dangerous for everyone on the road and your car doesn't run as efficiently as it could. Check your tire pressure every month.*



# Driver Distraction

## Know your distractions

Distracted driving can occur any time your attention is taken away from the task of driving. Common distractions include cell phones, food, the radio, GPS units, passengers, texting, children, personal grooming, or emotional distress.

Next time you feel you have to make that call, change that radio station, or put a DVD on for the kids, consider that a car going 100 km/h travels about 90 feet in one second. A tragedy can happen when you take your eyes off the road for even a second. **Just drive.**

## There are 4 types of distraction

### 1. visual

Visual distractions take your eyes off the road.

### 2. auditory

Auditory distractions take your focus off the sounds of the road (such as horns or sirens).

### 3. cognitive

Cognitive distractions take your mind off the road.

### 4. manual

Manual distractions take your hands off the steering wheel.

*Common distractions usually involve more than one type. For example, changing a CD requires you to take a hand off the wheel to select a CD and take your eyes off the road to change the CD.*

## Driver distraction digits

- 45** The number of feet your car covers in one second at 50 km/h.
- 4** Drivers on cell phones (hand-held or hands-free) are **four** times more likely to crash.
- 300** Number of items that a fighter pilot needs to keep track of in a regular, non-combat mission.
- 3000** Number of items the average driver needs to keep track of during rush hour, including signs, traffic lights, other vehicles, passengers and pedestrians, plus road and weather conditions.
- 3** One study showed that nearly 80% of crashes and 65% of near-crashes involve some form of driver inattention within **three** seconds before the crash.
- 50%** Percentage of Canadian drivers who admit to eating while at the wheel.
- 8** Driver distraction is estimated to be a contributing factor in **eight** out of every 10 crashes reported to police.
- 68%** Percentage of Nova Scotians who consider distracted drivers a serious road safety problem.

## Tips

- Avoid intense, complicated or emotional conversations when driving
- Pull over to care for children
- Adjust your seat, climate controls and other devices before pulling out
- Ask your passengers to help navigate or adjust controls on GPS units
- If you must make a call, pull over in a safe place
- Stop to eat or drink

Source: Insurance Bureau of Canada

For more information on road safety visit [www.gov.ns.ca/tran](http://www.gov.ns.ca/tran)