

## Distracted Driving

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has found that distraction was present in **68%** of crashes that involved injury or property damage. Nowadays, the number of distractions while driving are plentiful, and many, many people drive most every day. Therefore, let's take a moment for a refresher on avoiding distracted driving.

### Types of Distraction

There are three types of distraction: visual, manual, and cognitive. In other words, we need to keep our eyes on the road, our hands on the wheel, and our mind focused on driving.

### Steps to Avoid Distracted Driving

- Prior to getting behind the wheel:
  - Get enough sleep; be well-rested
  - Adjust mirrors, seats, and air features
  - Plan and familiarize yourself with the travel route
  - Check weather conditions; you may need to plan for more driving time
  - Pre-program directions into any navigation system
  - Finish coffee/tea/eating before driving
  - Turn OFF cell phone; if phone call is necessary, pull to the side of the road or parking lot
  
- While operating a vehicle:
  - Avoid using hands-free devices – conversations can still lead to a cognitive distraction
  - Do not program navigation or radio while driving
  - Do not reach for items
  - Pull off the road if drowsy
  - Keep in mind the impact of inclement weather – maintain greater distance behind the car in front of you
  - Be aware of pedestrians, cyclists, and other motorists that may require you to react quickly



Take your time and stay focused on driving; keep yourself, your passengers and those around you safe on the road.