



Driving Tactics: Defensive Driving Skills

Teacher's
Guide



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Introduction

This Teacher's Guide provides information to help you get the most out of *Driving Tactics: Defensive Driving Skills*. The contents in this guide will allow you to prepare your students before using the program and present follow-up activities to reinforce the program's key learning points.

This program, part of a three-part series, introduces young people to defensive driving skills and tips, and the circumstances in which they should be used.

Learning Objectives

After viewing the program, students will be able to:

- Define and explain the importance of defensive driving.
- Identify situations in which a driver should use defensive driving skills and describe relevant techniques.
- Explore the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol and other chemical substances.
- Explain safety measures to be taken when sharing the road with a drunk driver.

Educational Standards

National Standards

This program correlates with the National Health Education Standards: Achieving Health Literacy from the Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards. The content has been aligned with the following educational standards and benchmarks from this organization.

- Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting and decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Distinguish between safe and risky or harmful behaviors in relationships.
- Analyze the short-term and long-term consequences of safe, risky and harmful behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ways to avoid and reduce threatening situations.

This represents the work of the Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards. Copies of National Health Education Standards: Achieving Health Literacy can be obtained through the American School Health Association, Association for the Advancement of Health Education or the American Cancer Society." Reprinted with permission.

Technology Standards

The activities in this Teacher's Guide were created in compliance with the following National Education Technology Standards from the National Education Technology Standards Project.

- Technology productivity tools: Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.

The National Education Technology Standards *reprinted with permission from the International Society for Technology Education.*

Program Overview

Driving Tactics: Defensive Driving Skills covers what defensive driving entails and how drivers can remain defensive in various on-the-road situations. Whether drivers are faced with erratic behavior or a collision, this program will provide them with the skills and savvy for handling the situation safely. *Defensive Driving Skills* also illustrates the dangers of drinking and driving, and offers simple alternatives to driving while intoxicated.

Main Topics

Topic 1: Give Yourself Space

This section underscores the importance of maintaining a safe distance from cars in order to avoid collisions. It discusses the “three-second rule,” and lists the situations in which it is necessary to increase space between cars.

Topic 2: Preventing Collisions

This segment emphasizes the dangers of tailgating and how drivers must learn to remain calm when tailgaters become aggressive.

Topic 3: Evasive Maneuvers

Students learn how to evade a collision with an erratic or negligent driver. They learn that the key is to remain safe and focused, and that they should never respond to that driver in kind.

Topic 4: Collisions

This segment explains what a driver must do when a collision occurs. It’s most important to stay calm and to keep the emphasis away from blame upon the arrival of police.

Topic 5: Drinking and Driving

In this segment, students grasp the obvious and great hazard of driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs. Students are also provided with easy ways to get home safely if they have had too much to drink.

Fast Facts

- Defensive driving means being aware of everything happening around you.
- It takes longer to brake when driving at high speeds.
- A car needs an additional two to three times stopping distance on wet pavement.
- Different driving environments present different sets of dangers.
- Traffic accidents are the leading cause of death for people under 25.
- More than half of traffic accidents are alcohol-related.
- Blood alcohol content of more than one-tenth of one percent is considered legally drunk in most states; eight-hundredths of one percent in other states.
- Driving drunk comes with severe penalties.

- Prescription drugs and over the counter medicines such as cough medicines and pain relievers may make a driver legally impaired.
- Almost all car crashes are caused by driver error.

Vocabulary Terms

blood alcohol content (BAC): Measure of the amount of alcohol in a person's blood. Generally, the more alcohol a person drinks, the higher his or her BAC.

congestion: An excessive amount of traffic on a roadway.

debris: The remains of something that has been removed or destroyed.

defroster: A heating device that is designed to remove frost or prevent its formation.

designated driver: The member of a party who agrees to remain sober in order to drive himself/herself and others home safely.

erratic: Having no fixed or regular course; wandering.

evasion: The act of physically escaping from a pursuer or an unpleasant situation by some special maneuver.

overcompensate: Make excessive corrections for fear of making an error.

revoke: To take back (as a license or a grant of parole or probation) as a result of misconduct.

rural: Of, relating to, or characteristic of the country.

sluggish: Displaying little movement or activity; slow; inactive.

straddling: To be on both sides of; to extend over or across.

tailgater: Someone who drives so closely behind another vehicle that he/she cannot stop or swerve with ease in an emergency.

treacherous: Marked by unforeseen hazards; dangerous or deceptive.

Pre-Program Discussion Questions

1. What do you think it means to drive defensively?
2. What happens when someone drives after drinking alcohol?
3. How should a driver respond to drivers who are driving aggressively or, worse, harassing them on the roadway?
4. You probably see drivers keeping some space between their cars and the cars ahead of them. Why do they do this?
5. What do you think are the leading causes of car collisions?

Post-Program Discussion Questions

1. How can a driver make sure he or she is a safe distance from cars ahead? Why is it important to keep a safe distance between cars?
2. Why are tailgaters among the most dangerous types of drivers? What should a driver do if being tailgated?
3. What is an “evasive maneuver”? Describe how and when a driver should use such a maneuver. Give specific examples.
4. List the things a driver must do in the case of a collision. Why is it important to take these steps? What happens if these steps are not followed?
5. What roadway environments can be hazardous to drivers? For each environment identified, describe how to navigate it defensively.

Group Activities

Night of Defensive Driving

Students organize and host a special defensive driving event with a series of activities including:

- A panel of driver education instructors
- Films
- Tables for driving-related organizations
- Discussion groups
- Insurance representatives
- Live demos

The event can be open to students only, or to the entire community.

Guiding Others

Students write a concise pocket driving manual for teens that highlights defensive driving skills and tips. Students then distribute this to all local high schools or students in driver education courses.

Defensive Driving Knowledge Survey

Students create a series of surveys for their peers about their knowledge and practice of defensive driving skills. The surveys can be tailored for the following groups:

- Non-drivers
- Drivers with learner’s permits
- Recently licensed drivers
- Drivers who have been driving for over a year

Students then tally and publicize the results.

Individual Student Projects

Pursuit of Skills

Create a defensive driving skills version of the game Jeopardy® by writing question cards of various levels of difficulty. When the cards are complete, students can select three classmates to compete for the highest score by answering the questions correctly.

Virtual Test

Design an interactive DVD that tests viewer knowledge and practice of defensive driving skills.

Teaching a Lesson

Write a lesson plan on drinking and driving and present the lesson to other students. When the lesson is done, check students' level of understanding by presenting three to five assessment questions.

Internet Activities

The All Inclusive Teen Driver Web Site

Review several web sites dedicated to teen drivers. Determine whether they give teens all the information they would need to be defensive drivers, and whether the information is presented in a way that will keep teens interested. Create a comprehensive prototype of a teen driver Web site, improving on those reviewed.

Some Web resources include:

www.teendriving.com
www.drivehomesafe.com
www.roadreadyteens.org

Drinking and Driving

Research the dangers associated with drinking and driving. Write brief profiles of either your state's laws regarding drinking and driving, or laws in all states. Create a national law that could put an end to drinking and driving.

Some Web resources include:

www.madd.org
www.yaerd.org
www.cdc.gov
www.3dmonth.org

Road Rage Research

Students can define, research, categorize, and compare and contrast the types of road rage drivers exhibit. They can graph the range of car accidents related to road rage over the last decade. Students compile their findings to write a study with strategies for reducing road rage.

Some Web resources include:

www.theallineed.com
www.doityourself.com
www.thirdage.com

Assessment Questions

Q: Driving defensively means _____.

- a) anticipating trouble on the road before it happens
- b) watching out for other drivers
- c) being aware of extreme dangers that can put all drivers in danger
- d) all of the above

A: d)

Feedback: Driving defensively involves being hyper-alert and prepared for potential hazards on the road, either environmental or human. It means being aware of everything happening around you and knowing the actions to take should a dangerous situation suddenly materialize.

Q: What is the best way for drivers to ensure safe distance from cars directly ahead of them?

A: The “three-second” rule is the best way to determine a safe distance between a driver and other vehicles. By noting when a car ahead of you passes a landmark such as a bridge or a sign, then being sure you can count “one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three” before passing the same landmark, you can maintain a good distance and always stop safely.

Feedback: In order to avoid collisions on the road, a driver needs space to maneuver and time to react. To do this, drivers should not closely follow vehicles ahead of them. The “three-second” formula allows drivers to basically calculate and maintain that safe distance.

Q: A driver finding someone passing in his or her lane as he or she comes over a hill on a two-lane road should _____.

- a) slow down
- b) pull as far to the right as possible in his or her lane
- c) pull off the road
- d) all of the above

A: d)

Feedback: This situation requires quick thinking and a high level of alertness and mental preparedness because a collision can easily occur. The goal is to physically stay out of harm’s way.

Q: _____ make driving on roads in rural areas potentially hazardous.

A: Unregulated intersections, entries, and exits

Feedback: Rural roads, in general, pose a range of hazards because they can be poorly maintained, lack proper road signs, lack a center median; may have livestock or wildlife; present decreased visibility because of sharp turns and steep hills.

Q: Aggressive drivers sometimes _____.

- a) tailgate
- b) lean on the horn
- c) cut off other drivers
- d) all of the above

A: d)

Feedback: Aggressive drivers act out in potentially dangerous ways. The best thing to do is not to react and not engage in similar actions. Follow the rules of the road. Don’t contest the “right of way” or try to race another car during a merge. Be respectful of other motorists. Report a threatening driver to local authorities, if possible.

Q: What *shouldn't* a driver do if involved in a collision?

- a) Leave the scene
- b) Get the car out of the traffic lane, if possible
- c) Exchange important information, such as names, addresses, and vehicle registrations
- d) Contact 911

A: a)

Feedback: Failure to stop at the scene of a crash is against the law. You could be charged with “hit and run”—a felony.

Q: The legal definition of drunk driving derives from measuring _____.

A: the percentage of alcohol in a driver’s blood stream.

Feedback: Blood alcohol content of more than one-tenth of one percent is considered legally drunk in most states; eight-hundredths of one percent in other states. Reaching a 0.1 level depends on the amount of alcohol consumed over a certain period of time, whether the driver has eaten before or while drinking, whether drinks are carbonated, body weight, and gender. The faster one drinks, the higher the blood alcohol level rises.

Q: In rainy weather, a driver should _____.

- a) turn on the windshield defroster
- b) turn on headlights
- c) use center lanes, where possible
- d) all of the above

A: d)

Feedback: Rainy weather poses potential driving trouble. To be ready, drivers use a defroster and turn on headlights to improve visibility. A car needs two to three times more stopping distance on wet pavement, so a driver should allow extra following distance between cars. A driver uses center lanes and avoids outside lanes where water collects at the curb or on the shoulder.

Q: When is speeding up a useful evasive measure?

A: When speeding up may help avoid a crash.

Feedback: In an emergency situation, it is legal to speed in order to avoid a crash. For example, speeding up at an intersection may prevent a driver from getting hit from the side.

Q: In city driving, a driver must be prepared to _____.

A: brake at any time

Feedback: City driving presents traffic congestion with stop and go traffic.

Additional Resources

WEB SITES

Drive For Life

www.safedrivingtest.com

Drive Home Safe

www.drivehomesafe.com



National Safety Council

www.nsc.org

Teen New Drivers' Website

www.teendriving.com

Road Ready Teens

www.roadreadyteens.org

Teens Health

www.kidshealth.org

ORGANIZATIONS

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

www.aaafoundation.org

American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association

www.adtsea.iup.edu

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety

www.iihs.org

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

www.nhtsa.dot.gov

BOOKS

**110 Car and Driving Emergencies and How to Survive Them:
The Complete Guide to Staying Safe on the Road**

James Joseph

The Lyons Press, 2003

ISBN: 1592280315

Everything You Need to Know About Being a Teen Driver

Adam Winters

Rosen Publishing Group, 2000

ISBN: 0823932877

License to Drive

Alliance for Safe Driving

Thomson Delmar Learning, 1999

ISBN: 0766803023

Safe Young Drivers: A Guide for Parents and Teens

Phil Berardelli

Nautilus Communications; 2nd ed edition, 2000

ISBN: 0967519144

Other Products

Driving in Bad Weather

- VHS/DVD

You're driving along and suddenly hit a patch of glare ice and start to skid. What do you do? You drive into a severe thunderstorm and water is left standing on the road. Do you adjust your driving in any way? You suddenly encounter thick fog on the highway and can't see beyond your headlights. Should you switch on your high beams? These and many other situations are discussed and demonstrated as we watch a new driver experience some unpleasant surprises. An excellent way of experiencing common weather-related driving problems from the point of view of the driver. A MeridianProduction. (17 minutes)

Item #25236 • Meridian Education Corporation • www.meridianeducation.com • 1-800-727-5507

Driving Safely: Reason on the Road

- VHS/DVD

Viewers will follow a new driver as various situations are encountered. We see common driving behaviors like tailgating, not using turn signals, cutting cars off, and other inconsiderate behavior from inside as well as outside the car. Not only do viewers see how dangerous such behavior can be, but experts also give insight into how some incidents can escalate into violence. Finally, the SAFE process is explained and demonstrated: Scan, Anticipate, Figure, Execute. This is an excellent perspective for all new drivers and a good refresher for experienced ones. A Meridian Production. (15 minutes)

Item #25237 • Meridian Education Corporation • www.meridianeducation.com • 1-800-727-5507

Practicing Basic Control Tasks Behind the Wheel

- VHS/DVD

Filmed on actual roadways, this engaging video systematically demonstrates low-risk methods of parking, entering traffic, steering, backing up, and turning around. The program's host, a calm and likeable driving instructor, reinforces the techniques while encouraging students to continually practice them. He also addresses a variety of dangerous road conditions and suggests using the Three Seconds Rule to maintain the proper following distance. In addition, he offers tips like coasting before braking and avoiding jackrabbit starts as ways of squeezing the most miles from a tankful of gas...as well as tips on avoiding the kinds of collisions that most commonly happen with an inexperienced driver behind the wheel. A Meridian Production. (17 minutes)

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2572 Brunswick Pike, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

Toll Free: 1 800/727-5507

Fax: 1 888/340-5507



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