

Preparing Teen Drivers to Be Focused at the Wheel

We all know that driving distracted is a dangerous thing to do. Many things can distract us from driving like using a phone, worrying about a test, being frustrated by other drivers, or talking to a friend in your car. What things distract you? The good news is we don't have to let those distractions make us unsafe.

Build Focused Driving Habits:

- ☐ Check out the techniques on the next page. These simple methods help you focus your attention before and while you drive.
- ☐ Use the Student Driver Log on page 3 to track your practice hours. Write down how you prepared to focus each time you drove.

Before Each Drive:

Choose one goal, such as:

- I will arrive safely.
- I will adjust my driving for today's weather.
- I will use my turn signals clearly.

Take a minute to get ready; you might:

- Check the weather
- Adjust your seat and mirrors
- Put your phone away

Connect with what you feel:

- Place your feet flat on the floor. Notice the feeling of your feet on the floor
- Press your back into the seat. Notice where your body touches the seat
- Feel your hands on the steering wheel
- If you feel tense, relax that part of your body



Try These Methods to Improve Focus Behind the Wheel:

Track which methods work for you on your driving log (page 3).

5-4-3-2-1:

- Describe 5 things you can see (other cars, traffic lights)
- 4 things you can feel (feet on the pedal or hands on the wheel)
- 3 things you can hear (road noise, gravel under the tires)
- 2 things you can smell (fresh air or shampoo)
- 1 thing you can taste (gum or ChapStick)

Refocus When Stopped

Take a moment to slow down and refocus by noticing your surroundings.

Controlled Breathing

Slow breathing can help calm your body before or during a drive. Use the steps below to find your focus.

- Breathe in slowly through your nose
- Hold for a few seconds
- Breathe out slowly through your mouth
- This can help you feel calmer and more focused.

Positive Thoughts

Short positive phrases can help you stay calm and focused. Try one like:

- I am calm and focused.
- I pay attention and drive safely.
- I get better every time I drive.

You can also make up your own.

Student Driver Log

Complete this log to keep track of your driving experience and what methods are working to help you stay focused behind the wheel. Alaska requires you to have at least 40 hours of driving experience, including at least 10 hours of driving in progressively challenging circumstances, such as driving in inclement weather and nighttime driving.

Date	Drive Time	Focus Method Used (See page 2)	Driving Conditions	Reflections and Notes

