

Car Crash Resource for Teenagers

A car accident is a horrible experience that can leave you feeling scared and scattered. That's why it's important to know what to do now, before an accident occurs. Being prepared beforehand can make the process go a lot easier and potentially save a lot of money and heartache afterwards.

- 1. Stop.** Put the car in park, put emergency brake on, flip hazard lights on and regain your sense and calmness. Call your parents.
- 2. Check Surroundings.** Check yourself and your surroundings to make sure it is safe to get out of the vehicle. If it is not safe to get out stay in your vehicle and call 911.
- 3. Do Not Leave.** Do not leave the scene unless you are being threatened or feel unsafe, then call 911 and tell them why you are leaving.
- 4. Check for Injuries.** If it is safe to get out of your vehicle determine whether you or anyone else involved in the crash needs emergency medical treatment. If someone is significantly injured, do not move them. Do not ignore any pain or discomfort you are feeling, instead tell your parents and see a doctor.
- 5. Call 911.** If you haven't already called 911 do so now. Write down the name and badge number of the officer who responds. If it is a minor accident and the police do not come to the scene, file an accident report through the DMV at 800-558-9368 as soon as possible.
- 6. Limit Conversation With the Other Party.** Contain your emotions before getting out of you vehicle. Do not admit fault or place blame with anyone while at the scene. Do not accept or indicate responsibility to the other party even if you feel it was your fault. That discussion should be had with your insurance company.
- 7. Write Down Everything.** Names, address and phone numbers of driver and passengers of other vehicle, license plate numbers, insurance name, phone number and policy number, make and model of other vehicle, witness contact information, location of accident, and name and badge number of police officer, and your version of what happened.
- 8. Take Scene Photos.** Assuming it is safe to do so, use your phone or a camera and take pictures of the vehicles in the position they are, the license plates, any damage to vehicles involved, the other driver's license and insurance card, and any other pictures that help tell the story of what happened.

Prior to a car accident there are several things you can do to be prepared:

1. Obtain a container to store the following items you will need in case of an accident or an emergency:
 - A first aid kit
 - A list of your vehicle insurance name, phone number and policy number
 - A copy of vehicle registration
 - A list of your health insurance name, phone number and policy number
 - A list of emergency contact names and phone numbers
 - A spare phone charger
 - A copy of the following **Get These Facts**
 - A pen or pencil
2. Do not get in the car without a fully charged phone
3. Before you drive, place your phone somewhere in the car so that you will not be tempted to look at it or use it while you are driving, or program it to tell anyone trying to contact you that you are driving and unable to answer your phone.
4. Keep loose items in the console or glove box to avoid items flying around causing injury or getting lost during an accident.
5. Stay up to date on all car maintenance including but not limited to oil changes, checking tire pressure, keeping windshield wiper fluid filled, brake checks, "engine light on" checks, etc.
6. Know ahead of time where your hazard lights are.
7. Keep water in your car in case you or your car need it.
8. Prepare yourself ahead of time to be calm and to speak clearly to the police officer and/or other driver. Also be prepared that if the other person is upset or yelling, you should politely tell them you will wait to speak with them after the police arrive. Wait in your car until that time. Call 911 if needed.