

DMV Older Drivers QUICK TIPS

Most older people are capable and have a lifetime of valuable driving experiences. For these reasons, decisions about a person's ability to drive should never be based on age alone. However, changes in vision, physical fitness and reflexes may cause safety concerns. People who accurately assess these changes can adjust their driving habits so that they stay safe on the road or choose other kinds of transportation.

Real Risks for Older Drivers

- In 2000, older adults made up nine percent of the U.S. population but accounted for 13 percent of all traffic fatalities. (NHTSA)
- Drivers age 55 and over are involved in more crashes per mile driven compared with drivers 30-54. (AARP)
- In crashes of equal intensity, those 75 and older are three times more likely to die than a 20-year-old and 80-year-olds are four times more likely. (U.S. DOT)



Self Awareness Is the Key to Safe Driving

What You Can Do

- Be aware of the physical limitations which come with aging and how they may affect driving:
 - loss of visual acuity
 - diminished hearing
 - changes in physical strength
 - slower reaction time
 - side effects of medication
- Plan your routes and keep to the plan. Avoid heavy traffic and driving at night. Do practice runs for new routes and trips you must make at night.
- Listen to what people tell you who know you best and care about you most.
- Discuss driving with your doctor. He or she can evaluate the interactions and side effects of all the medications you may be taking.
- Refresh your knowledge of safe driving practices and learn about new traffic control and roadway design features through a mature driver class.
- Begin planning for alternative ways of meeting your transportation needs. Learn about transportation options in your community, then try them out to see which options work best for you.

Talk Now, Plan for Later

It's not easy to think about growing old, much less to talk about it. Bringing up the subject of safe driving may be awkward but, if you can talk now, you and your family can have a plan for the coming years. Here are some tips for making conversation easier:

- **Recognize** that an older driver is not necessarily an unsafe driver. Make decisions based on the specific needs of the person and the situation.
- **Acknowledge** that giving up or limiting driving is a big deal – symbolically and practically – for most older drivers.
- **Emphasize** that safety is most important.
- **Review** specific transportation needs and develop a way to accommodate them.
- **Agree** together on a plan of action. It may begin with avoiding risky driving situations, seeking education, rehabilitation or adaptive equipment and eventually lead to giving up the keys.

It may be helpful to gain an objective assessment of driving abilities rather than relying on personal assumptions or misperceptions. Look into the AARP's Driver Safety Program, AAA's Mature Operators Programs or contact a Certified Driving Rehabilitation Specialist through www.aded.net.

There are no age restrictions or age-based testing requirements to hold a Nevada driver license. However, the Department of Motor Vehicles can require potentially unsafe drivers of any age to submit to vision, knowledge and skills testing. Physicians, law enforcement officers and concerned citizens should contact the DMV for more information.

Older Driver Resources

Grand Driver

www.granddriver.info

AARP Driver Safety Program

1-888-227-7669 or www.aarp.org/drive

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

www.seniordrivers.org

Alternative Transportation/Eldercare

1-800-677-1116 or www.eldercare.gov

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