

Reducing the Stress of Driving

A huge number of traffic deaths, injuries, and permanent disabilities result from people being in too big a hurry to care about their fellow citizens. Those other drivers are your neighbors, friends, and family.

For those living in metropolitan or high-traffic areas, driving is probably one of the most stressful things you do every day. Even for those in lower-traffic areas or who often ride public transportation, any driving you do could still become a stressful endeavor under the wrong conditions.

We all have to take a driving test to get a driver's license. Some people are more patient behind-the-wheel when they are novice drivers, and their habits get sloppier as time goes on. How many of those rules you learned in driver education do you still follow every time you drive?

The following tips might help reduce some of that driving stress:

- **Relax, there's no need to hurry.** If you left 15 minutes late for an appointment, no matter how fast you drive you'll still probably be late. Going 10% to 20% faster than the speed limit will only save, at most, a few minutes unless your trip is an extremely long one (over an hour). Obey the speed limits. It's less stressful, less dangerous, and will save you money with fewer traffic tickets and possibly improved gas mileage.

- **Be courteous, even when you don't feel like it.** Did another driver cut you off? Is someone tailgating? Concentrate on driving safely and getting to your destination. Don't incite road rage, and never drive in a dangerous or aggressive manner. Be courteous and safe.
- **Pay attention to the road and other motorists at all times.** Driving requires your focused, undivided attention as much as possible if you want to avoid tragedy. Pay attention!
- **Ditch the attitude, and ditch the anger.** Don't drive with a "chip on your shoulder." Everyone else's time is just as important as your time. You're not the only one who has places to go and things to do. **It's not all about you** so stay calm and relaxed and enjoy the fact that you have transportation to get to the places you intend to get to.

Let's all try to chill out a bit when driving and gain the benefits of reduced stress and hopefully reduce driving injuries and fatalities.

Hearty thanks to:

<http://sensibleharmony.com/2008/03/04/good-driving-habits-less-stress/>

A FEW MORE TIPS.....

What is aggressive driving?

In most states aggressive driving is a traffic offense or combination of offenses such as following too closely, speeding, changing lanes in an unsafe manner, failing to signal intent to change lanes, and other forms of negligent or inconsiderate driving. The trigger for the aggressive driver is usually traffic congestion coupled with a schedule that is almost impossible to meet. As a result, the aggressive driver generally commits multiple violations in an attempt to make up time. Unfortunately, these actions put the rest of us at risk.

What is road rage?

Road rage is a criminal offense. This occurs when a traffic incident escalates into a far more serious situation. For example, a person may become so angry over an aggressive driving incident that he or she overreacts and retaliates with some type of violence. These violent acts may range from a physical confrontation to an assault with a motor vehicle or possibly a weapon. Many road rage incidents have resulted from drivers overreacting and allowing their egos to stand in the way of common sense and good judgment rather than safely reporting aggressive driving incidents. A simple display of common courtesy will often be appreciated and may even become contagious.