

New Year's Resolution

Portland, like every other great city in the world, has its share of really horrible drivers. Based on statistics, it would be unfair to say Portland has more than its fair share, but we've all seen the people who clearly don't understand roundabouts, are too busy texting to notice the stop light has turned green, and those that decide to change lanes, then brake as they cut another driver off. Business abounds for any good Portland car crash lawyer.

As it's the start of another new year, we'd like to suggest Oregon drivers make a New Year's resolution to "arrive alive" this year. To help them achieve that goal, we list here our [Top 10 safe driving tips for 2012](#). Some will seem obvious, while others may sound a bit obscure, but the fact is that if all drivers followed these suggestions, a lot more of us would make it to our destinations in one piece than has been the case in years gone by. So, starting at Number 10:

1. **Never, ever drive drunk.** More than 30% of all auto accidents that end with a fatality involve a driver impaired by alcohol. If you're going out with plans to drink, either have an appointed designated driver who abstains for the evening, or spend a few dollars to take a taxi home. The alternative could be much more expensive.
2. **Speed kills.** Boring, but true, because the statistics show that for every extra mile per hour you travel, the likelihood of being in a car crash increases between four to five percent. The faster you go, the more likely it is that someone is going to need a car crash lawyer.
3. **Keep your mind on the road** covers a multitude of do's and don'ts. Texting while driving is a new scourge on our roads, accounting for more than 2,600 deaths per year annually, and rising fast. Talking or texting on a cell phone while behind the wheel can delay reaction times by up to 20%, and when the tiniest fractions of a second can mean the difference between life and death, 20% is just way too big a risk to take. Then again, so is putting on makeup, eating or playing with stereos and sat nav systems.
4. **Stay awake!** A shocking 20% of all accidents can be at least partially attributed to a driver who is sleepy. Get a friend to take over, or stop for a cup of strong coffee or energy drink. Snack on sugary foods, turn the radio up loud and roll down the window to breathe in some cold night air.
5. **Seat belts save countless lives every year**, yet some people refuse to wear them. Some wear them only if they're going on a long trip, forgetting that 75% of accidents happen within two miles of home. Buckle up, and while you're at it, have a look at these child car seat safety tips.
6. **Be cautious in bad weather.** Slow down on wet or icy roads, and if you find yourself in dense fog, pull well off the road and turn off your lights. Why? Because if you don't, other drivers who are trying to drive through the fog will see your lights and drive towards you, even though you're no longer on the highway and are stationary. They may not be able to stop before they realize you're not moving.
7. **Please don't drive so close to the car in front of you.** Use the three-second rule, whereby you pick a stationary object on the side of the road. When the car in front of you passes it, start counting. If you get to the object before three seconds have passed, you're too close. At night or in bad weather, that figure should be doubled to six seconds.

8. **Watch out for the other guy.** Stay alert to every possible hazard, and you still won't be covering all the bases, but by using your mirrors, maintaining proper gaps and your position in your lane, you'll at least give yourself a fighting chance.
9. Stay patient and don't rise to the bait of other drivers. **If you've ever experienced the frustration** of being cut off, tail gated, or you've been the object of rude gestures and honking horns, you understand this. Every car crash lawyer has had clients who were in the right, but could have avoided the collision if they had just driven a bit more defensively.
10. **Maintain your vehicle.** Check your tire pressure on a regular basis. Get your brakes checked by a trained mechanic any time you feel them going a bit "soft" or "grabby," even between regular maintenance visits. Soft or vibrating brakes can be an indication there's a problem with the vehicle's hydraulic systems, so never let this one go unchecked. There are some excellent [videos with great car maintenance tips and advice](#) available free online.

Most people understand the rules of the road, even if they drive as if they don't. Staying safe is often just about something as simple as leaving five minutes earlier than normal so you don't have to rush, or remembering to put on your seatbelt, even if you're just going to the supermarket a half mile from your home.

As long as there are drivers on Oregon roads, there will be accidents, and if you find yourself the victim of someone who crashed into you while they were texting, combing their hair or who thought it was all right to drive after just a couple of drinks, please don't hesitate. [Contact a Portland car crash lawyer](#) who has dealt with every kind of negligent driver and awkward insurance company. Tell them your story. They'll give you an honest assessment of what you can expect if you file a lawsuit, give you a good idea of the kind of compensation you can expect to receive and guide you through the entire process.