

Driver distractions

QFleet driver safety fact sheet

A distraction occurs when the driver's attention is temporarily focussed on another task, object, event or person not related to driving.

For example:

- a mobile phone
- a navigation system
- email/internet technology
- an entertainment system
- a loose or unrestrained object
- passengers
- pedestrians
- other vehicles
- roadworks/construction activity
- billboard/advertising material
- animals.

To minimise distractions, before commencing to drive, the driver should ensure that:

- the driver's seating position, seat belt, head rest, internal and external mirrors, radio and air conditioning controls and other vehicle controls are correctly adjusted
- passengers, cargo and other objects are properly restrained
- the windscreen and other window glass are clean
- the hands-free mobile phone is set up and operational

- the satellite navigation device (GPS) is set up and operational
- correct eyewear (e.g. sunglasses, prescription spectacles or contact lenses) is being worn.

The driver will minimise distractions while driving by refraining from:

- turning around or looking to the side to talk to passengers
- taking their eyes from the road to look at roadside distractions
- reading documents, maps or street directories
- performing paperwork
- using a laptop or DVD player
- operating/programming a GPS system
- eating or drinking.



Mobile Phones

Hand-Held

It is an offence for a driver to use a hand-held mobile phone to send or receive text messages or to make or receive calls or perform any other function while the vehicle is moving, stationary but not parked including while stopped in traffic or at traffic lights. The driver must stop and park safely before using a hand-held mobile phone.

Hands-Free

A driver may legally use a hands-free phone while driving **except** for the following:

- Provisional drivers (P1 phase) under 25 years of age are prohibited from using a mobile phone at any time while driving including the use of hands-free kits, loudspeaker function and Bluetooth accessories.
- Passengers of Provisional drivers (P1 phase) under 25 years of age are prohibited from using a mobile phone on loudspeaker. They can use a hand-held or hands-free mobile phone where only a one-way conversation can be heard by the driver. i.e. the mobile phone cannot be on loudspeaker.

Research has shown that a driver using a mobile phone, whether hands-free or not, has a four times greater chance of having a crash.

The safest way for a driver to use a hands-free phone is by:

- turning the phone off and having calls redirected to message bank which can be accessed and actioned when the vehicle is safely parked (preferred option)
- setting up the hands-free phone and accessories before commencing the trip
- pulling over before answering or making calls
- restricting phone use to an absolute minimum
- keeping calls short
- not taking notes.

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