

What has been one of the most important topics in the US recently? One of the most detrimental things that could happen? Distracted drivers! Whether the driver is a 16 year old with their first car or a very experienced semi driver, distracted driving is very dangerous.

There are different ways people define distracted driving. The FMCSA (Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration) says distracted driving is driving while reaching, holding, dialing, texting, or reading- and believe it or not, there are other things beside texting and driving that causes wrecks. The FMCSA also defines using a mobile device as using at least one hand to hold a mobile phone to make a call, dialing a mobile phone by pressing more than a single button, or reaching for a mobile phone in a manner that requires a driver to maneuver so that he or she is no longer in a seated driving position restrained by a seat belt. But there are many other things that can either be or cause distracted driving; like exhaustion, smoking, cell phone use, daydreaming, someone or something outside the vehicle, eating and drinking, or even using a map. Yes, maps can be extremely deadly; go figure!

Now I'm going to elaborate on a few of my points that can cause distracted driving, starting with exhaustion.

While on the road, truckers can become tired from their long hours sitting in a cab and driving. If they're not well rested, exhaustion can cause the truckers to lose focus, doze off while driving, begin swerving, or not pay enough attention to the road ahead and their surroundings; all of which can result in accidents. My next point is one that is closely related to exhaustion; Daydreaming. Over the road, truck drivers spend long periods of time behind the wheel. Zoning out and daydreaming can cause the driver to lose focus and can result in accidents as well. And finally, to the maps. Who woulda thought that maps could be dangerous! Though, if you think about it, checking a map for directions is incredibly distracting, as it takes the driver's eyes off of the road for extended periods of times. This can be extremely hazardous if the driver is in traffic or on the highway while attempting to navigate. Even just a glance at a map for not even 10 seconds is plenty of time to get into a wreck.

When someone knows that they are driving "kinda" distracted, they might think something along the lines of, "Oh its fine for just a second. The other people will be paying attention just fine." But if everyone thought this way, then we would be in one heck of a mess.

When my dad gets back from his runs, he tells us about all of the dangerous driving behaviors that other people have as well that he has to look out for while he drives down the road. Every day he sees people texting and driving, eating, and turning around to deal with their children. Once, he even said he saw a guy shaving with an electric razor while driving on the freeway in heavy traffic. That man could easily swerve and nick himself, end up dead, or much worse; he could end up with a bad shave! All jokes aside, he could also injure an adorable 7 year old girl going on her first camping trip with her father, or MY adorable 41 year old truck driving father! And now, our big truck drivers have to watch out for themselves becoming distracted while also keeping an eye out for other distracted drivers that could cause a wreck.

In short, we all have responsibility on the road; right from the children occupying the backseat of the car up to the person behind the wheel. So don't be a fool, cause distracted driving ain't cool.