



Coaching Your Teen Driver

Parents: You are the most important influence on your teenager's driving.

Teenagers have learned about driving by watching you drive.

Teens have learned both your good and bad habits.

Before you begin driving with your teen:

1. Make sure your vehicle is in good working condition.
2. Review your own driving habits. Correct bad driving habits and do all you can to demonstrate safe driving habits.
3. Be a good example when you drive. Your teenager has been watching you drive since he or she sat in the car seat, and now your child is paying closer attention than ever before. Be a courteous driver and a good role model for road safety.
4. Know the Virginia traffic laws. How can you insist on your teen knowing the law if you don't?
5. Your teenager will bring home the *40-Hour Teen/Parent Driving Guide*. Make sure you take the time to thoroughly review it with your teenager. This is your guide for skill instruction. The guide includes a log in the back to record your practice sessions. This record of practices must include 30 hours of daytime driving and 10 hour of driving after dark.

While you are practicing with your teen:

1. Start with familiar streets gradually introducing more challenging situations.
2. Use parking lots for practice.
3. Don't ridicule your teenager's driving.
4. Stay focused on responsible driving.

Things to remember:

1. The riskiest time for teens to drive is at night, with other teen passengers, and on the weekends. You will need to supervise these times carefully.
2. The five leading causes of teen crashes and fatalities are: inexperience, distractions, speeding, failure to use safety belts, and alcohol and drug intoxication.
3. If you are too scared to practice with your teenager, ask another adult family member or enroll your child in a commercial driving school.
4. Spending time to help your teenager become a safe driver is an important responsibility.