

# Stay Prepared: Safe Driving for Older Adults



A Guide to Help You Make Confident  
and Safe Choices on the Road

Staying safe on the road doesn't mean giving up independence - it means staying informed and making smart choices. This guide offers simple reminders and practical tips to help older drivers stay confident and safe behind the wheel.

➔ Since 2020, crashes involving senior drivers have increased across the state of Connecticut.

- Older drivers are more likely to be involved in crashes at intersections.
- Judging the speed of oncoming vehicles—especially during left turns—can become more challenging with age.

**The good news:** Small adjustments in habits, planning, and awareness can greatly reduce risk and help older adults stay safe and independent.

➔ **Core Safety Principles**

Health, Vision & Medications:

- Get regular vision and medical checkups.
- Ask a doctor or pharmacist to review medications for side effects like drowsiness, dizziness, or slowed reaction time.
- Make sure glasses or contacts are up to date.

**Key reminder: If something affects how you feel, it can affect how you drive.**

Vehicle Readiness:

- Keep windshields, mirrors, and headlights clean.
- Make sure dashboard displays and controls are easy to see and read.
- Adjust seats, mirrors, and steering wheels for comfort and visibility.

Smart Driving Choices:

- Drive during daylight hours whenever possible.
- Avoid driving in poor weather conditions.
- Always wear a seatbelt.
- Maintain a safe following distance using the “1004 rule”:
  - Pick a marker ahead (tree, sign, lamp post).
  - When the car ahead passes it, count: 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004.
  - You should not reach the marker before finishing the count.

## Intersection Safety

**Best Practices:**

- Always look left, right, and straight before entering an intersection.
- Look far ahead to anticipate problems and plan your actions.
- Use intersections with green arrow signals for protected left turns when possible.

**If Left Turns Feel Unsafe:**

- Turn right instead.
- Make another right turn at the next intersection.
- Two right turns can often replace one left turn safely.
- Bring a passenger when possible to serve as a “second pair of eyes.”

**Route Planning:**

- Plan trips ahead of time.
- Choose familiar routes with good lighting and clear intersections.
- Avoid high-traffic areas when possible.



# What Did You Learn?

- **1. True or False: Older drivers are involved in fewer intersection crashes than younger drivers.**
  - A. True
  - B. False
- **2. Which driving situation poses the highest risk for older drivers?**
  - A. Highway driving
  - B. Parking lots
  - C. Intersections
  - D. Rural roads
- **3. What is the “1004 rule” used for?**
  - A. Checking tire pressure
  - B. Keeping a safe following distance
  - C. Remembering traffic laws
  - D. Adjusting mirrors
- **4. Why can left turns be more challenging as we age?**
  - A. Reduced hearing
  - B. Difficulty judging oncoming vehicle speed
  - C. Slower vehicles
  - D. Road design
- **5. Which is a safer alternative to a left turn?**
  - A. Speeding up
  - B. Waiting longer
  - C. Making two right turns
  - D. Avoiding seatbelts
- **6. True or False: Medications can affect driving ability.**
  - A. True
  - B. False
- **7. What should drivers do before entering an intersection?**
  - A. Look straight ahead only
  - B. Look left, right, and ahead
  - C. Follow the car in front
  - D. Accelerate quickly

## Remember!

Safe driving isn't about giving up independence - it's about making informed choices that protect you, your passengers, and everyone on the road.

**Small changes.  
Smart planning.  
Safer journeys.**

Answer Key:  
False, C, B, B, C, True, B

Notes:

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This Key Guide is designed to be a takeaway companion to the video “Ask Me Anything” with older drivers. Scan the QR code to watch it!

**Quick Tip! As you watch, listen for:**

- Questions older drivers commonly ask law enforcement.
- Tips officers share about intersections, left turns, and awareness.
- How preparation and small changes can prevent serious crashes.



For more information, please visit [cpcanet.org](http://cpcanet.org) or [drivefosavelivesct.com](http://drivefosavelivesct.com)