

WORK ON DRIVING SAFELY

A road safety guide for drivers of fleet vehicles



Mobile phones

It is illegal to drive or ride a vehicle while using a hand-held mobile phone. The penalty is a significant fine and three demerit points.

This means that talking, sending or receiving text messages, playing games or taking photos are illegal when using a hand-held phone. It is also illegal to perform these activities when your vehicle is stopped but not parked. For example when you are waiting at traffic lights.

A hands-free device can reduce the physical effort to make and receive calls but it doesn't necessarily make it safe to use a phone while driving. It is illegal to use a hands-free phone while driving if it causes you to lose proper control of your vehicle. The penalty is a significant fine and demerit points.

If you must talk on a hands-free phone while driving:

- make sure it is a hands-free phone that is set up and working before you start driving.
- keep the conversation short. Don't engage in complex or emotional conversations.
- tell the person on the other end that you are driving and may have to end the call.
- never text message (SMS) while driving.
- end the call if it is distracting you from driving.

Remember, if you don't have proper control of your vehicle because you are talking on a hands-free mobile phone you are guilty of an offence.

No mobile phone use by learner and PI provisional drivers and riders

From 1 July 2007, learner and provisional drivers and riders must not use a mobile phone while driving or riding.

This includes phones in the hands-free mode or with loud speaker operating, sending or receiving SMS messages, playing games or any other function on your phone.

The penalty for mobile phone use is three demerit points (or four if the offence occurs in a school zone) and a fine.

Learner and PI drivers and provisional riders are developing their vehicle control, hazard perception skills. Mobile phone use can distract the novice drivers and riders from the driving task. Studies have found that using a mobile phone while driving is dangerous as it slows reaction times and interferes with a driver's perception skills and increases the chance of having a crash.

So switch your phone off.

Source: Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) website 2009

FACT FILE

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