

GPS And Driving

Most of us are familiar with Global Positioning Systems or (GPS) and its significant contribution in the areas of mapping, tracking, and navigation. GPS is used in a variety of ways by different people to make common tasks much simpler. GPS devices that are either installed permanently in a car or through hand-held devices that can go from the car to the office, home, restaurant, or hotel have become quite popular for use as navigational guides among consumers in the past few years.

Today's GPS technology has a myriad of features for users. With GPS it is possible to create detailed maps with line-by line directions that even include the exits you may need to use and a visual of the city streets along your route. You can also create a report of traffic conditions ahead of you in case you may need to take a detour to your destination. Air temperature, wind direction and speed, bad weather alerts, and much more is possible with GPS technology.

Although having all of these GPS features available to aid driver's in getting from one destination to another is convenient and quite useful, it can also result in a driver being distracted from paying attention to their own driving as well as to the driving of the other driver's sharing the road with them. Insurance companies report that 'distracted' driver's are responsible for causing more accidents than even those accidents which are as a result of "impaired" driver's under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Some of the GPS systems that are installed in vehicles today are part of a subscription service that is purchased along with the GPS device. Many of these services offer voice-activated assistance with a simple push of a button to activate the system. Some of these GPS systems are installed directly into the vehicles onboard computer system and either turn on when a key is inserted in the ignition, or operate continuously through the car's battery. These in-car systems even have the capability to determine when a vehicle has experienced an impact such as an accident, and the operators who man these systems at a "receiving" center can alert authorities to disabled motorists. GPS is also valuable in assisting police to locate stolen vehicles. The best feature with these voice-activated GPS systems is that a driver can get directions and needed assistance without taking their eyes off the road which is very important to reducing accidents and saving lives.

Responsible driver's, who don't have voice-activated GPS technology, should enter the necessary coordinates for getting from one point to another prior to getting out on the road. If a traffic report to determine the flow of traffic ahead is needed, it is advisable that driver's pull their vehicles off the road to the safety of the shoulder to access such information. Driving is a responsibility that shouldn't be taken lightly. Your life and the lives of other's depend upon your careful attention driving on the roadways.

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About the Author

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