



## Driving Distractions:

### How Cell Phones Distract

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that they receive more complaints and requests for information about cell phone use than any other driving issue. Part of the reason is because cell phone users are readily visible to other drivers, at least in the handheld mode. In fact, it's probably safe to say that almost every driver has either had a near-crash experience with a cell phone user or has witnessed risky behavior of some sort. The concerns about the safety of such driving are growing.

Human factor experts tell us that there are four kinds of driving distractions:

1. **Visual** Looking away from the roadway would be an example of this.
2. **Biomechanical** An example is manipulating a control, such as dialing a phone or adjusting a radio, and can often be associated with a visual distraction.
3. **Auditory** Such as being startled by a ringing phone.
4. **Cognitive** The common experience of traveling from point A to point B and suddenly realizing that we aren't sure how we got there or what happened in between. Being "lost in thought" or being in focused conversation with someone causes us to withdraw from situational awareness.

Researchers are obtaining evidence that shifting from handheld to hands-free phone use while driving does not result in eliminating all cell phone distractions. **It addresses the visual and mechanical distractions, but does not address auditory and cognitive issues.**

### Handheld vs. Hands-Free

A recent study contrasted the effects of hand-held and hands-free cell phone conversations and responses to traffic signals in a simulated driving task. Control groups listened to the radio or a book-on-tape while performing the simulated driving task. The study found that motorists who talk on hands-free cell phones are:

- 18 percent slower in braking
- 17 percent slower to regain the speed they lost when they braked
- Less likely to recall seeing pedestrians, billboards, or other roadside features

The phone conversation itself resulted in significant slowing in the response to simulated traffic signals, as well as an increase in the likelihood of missing these signals.

Since both handheld and hands-free cell phones resulted in equal deficits, the interference was not due to distrac-

tions such as holding the phone. These findings also rule out interpretations that attribute the deficits during cell phone conversations to simply a lack of verbal attention, because deficits were not observed in the book-on-tape control. (Active engagement in the cell phone conversation appears to be necessary to produce the attention deficits.)

The principal findings are:

1. Drivers engaged in cell phone conversations missed twice as many simulated traffic signals as when they were not talking on the cell phone.
2. Drivers took longer to react to those signals that they did detect.
3. These deficits were equivalent for both types of cell phone users.

#### In this issue:

- Manage stress by taking control!
- Cell phones - and the dangers you aren't aware of.
- What do you really know about your feet?



## YCPARMIA

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### How Much Do You Know: *About Foot Safety?*

1. Job-related foot hazards include heavy objects that fall on feet and stubbing or banging toes. True    False
2. OSHA requires protective footwear in areas where foot injuries are possible. True    False
3. You don't need foot protection if you work on hot floors. True    False
4. Protective footwear's impact-resistant toes are usually steel. True    False
5. To prevent slips and falls, shoes should have:
  - a. Steel toes
  - b. Nonskid soles
  - c. Heels
6. Metal insoles or reinforced soles help protect feet from:
  - a. Punctures
  - b. Slips and falls
  - c. Electricity
7. Wear footguards over shoes in areas where heavy objects may fall on feet. True    False
8. Sandals are acceptable work shoes. True    False
9. For work with corrosives, the best footwear is impermeable boots made of:
  - a. Leather or plastic
  - b. Steel
  - c. Rubber or neoprene
10. Even if a job doesn't require protective footwear, you should wear shoes with low heels and nonskid soles. True    False

**Answers:**

1. True. 2. True. 3. False. 4. True. 5. b. Nonskid soles 6. a. Punctures. 7. True. 8. False. 9. c. Rubber or neoprene. 10. True.

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### TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR STRESS!

People often feel the most stressed when they are not in control of their daily activities and this frequently happens at work.

Take control of your work routine by following these stress-reducing tips:

1. **Plan:** Control your time by taking the first 5 minutes to lay out your day's work and spend the last 5 minutes to plan tomorrow's work. Of course, unexpected situations may always arise, but working them into your plan as much as possible will help you feel more in control and less stressed.
2. **Organize:** Control your workspace and environment by keeping it neat and organized. Eliminate clutter.
3. **Itemize:** Control large projects by breaking them down into smaller tasks that you can tackle one at a time.
4. **Separate:** Control work/life balance by leaving work at work. Use your ride home to switch into family & personal gears.

#### LISTEN UP!

*"Be a good listener. Your ears will never get you in trouble."* – Frank Tyger

*"When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen."*

– Ernest Hemingway

*"It is the province of knowledge to speak and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen."*

– Oliver Wendell Holmes