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MINNESOTA TRAFFIC LAWS FOR YOUNG DRIVERS

Minnesota teen drivers are over represented in traffic crashes each year due to driver inexperience, distractions, nighttime driving, speeding and lack of seat belt use.

To minimize risks of crashes, injury or death, [Minnesota's graduated driver's licensing law](#) helps teens hone their driving skills the first year of licensure by reducing exposure to high risk situations such as carrying teen passengers and driving at night. Violating these laws is a misdemeanor

Nighttime Driving Limitation

[Statute: 171.055 Subd. 2\(b\)](#)

For the first six months of licensure: Driving is prohibited midnight - 5 a.m.

Passenger Limitations

[Statute: 171.055 Subd. 2\(c\)](#)

For the first six months of licensure: Only one passenger under age 20 is permitted, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. For the second six months of licensure: No more than three passengers under age 20 are permitted, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Cell Phone Use and Texting

[Statute: 171.055 Subd. 2\(a\), 169.475](#)

It is illegal for drivers under age 18 to use a cell phone, whether hand-held or hands-free – except to call 911 in an emergency. It is also illegal for drivers of all ages to compose or read text messages and emails or access the Internet using a wireless device while the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic.

Drinking and Driving

[Statute: 169A.33, 169A.20](#)

It is illegal for a person under age 21 to drive after consuming any amount of alcohol. Consequences for underage drinking and driving are loss of license for at least 30 days and court fines.

Seat Belt Use

[Kathryn Swanson Seat Belt Law \(M.S. 169.686\)](#)

Minnesota's seat belt law is a primary offense, meaning drivers and passengers of any age and in all seating positions must be buckled up.

Source: "Teen Driver Road Rules" - Minnesota Department of Public Safety



MINNESOTA SAFETY COUNCIL

Making Minnesota a Safer Place to Live
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