

Quick Start Guide: Setting Up the Car

The Ohio State University Driver Rehabilitation Program

QR codes take you to a video about that skill.



Get your car set up before driving

Check and adjust 4 things before you drive:

- Seat
- Steering wheel
- Seat belt
- Mirrors

Check out the back of this page or these videos to learn more.

Seat



Steering Wheel



Seat Belt



Mirrors



Understand the controls for the driver's seat

Make sure you know where these controls are located, what they are used for, and how to use them.

1. Gear shift
2. Turn signals
3. Headlights and highbeams
4. Windshield wipers and the wiper speed settings
5. Speedometer
6. Gas level
7. Hazard lights
8. Temperature controls and defroster
9. Safety features that might light up, vibrate, or display an image on the dashboard.

Examples include:

- Blind spot alert on the mirrors
- Wheel vibration for staying in the lane

Cars have different types of safety features. Look at the car's user manual to learn about them.



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Are you ready to drive?



Before starting a practice session, check to make sure you are ready:

1. Is the car set up for you? Make sure your seat, steering wheel, seat belt, and mirrors are all set up.
2. If you take medicines, have you taken them correctly that day? Don't drive if your medicine may affect you.
3. How is your mood and focus for paying attention while driving? Make sure you are ready to focus on driving.
4. Are you hungry? Have a snack first if you feel hungry.

Tips for setting up the car

Seat

- Feet should reach the pedals easily
- Chest about 10 inches from the wheel (about the length of a piece of letter size paper)
- Top of head rest should be below the top of your head
- Top of the steering wheel should be below shoulder height

Steering Wheel

- Adjust the steering wheel after moving the seat
- Make sure you can comfortably hold the wheel at 9 and 3 o'clock position

Seat Belt

- Should be positioned across hips and shoulder
- Adjust the belt lower if it hits your neck
- Never wear a seat belt under your arm or behind your back

Mirrors

- Adjust the rearview mirror to see as much of the back windshield as you can
- Side mirrors should show a little bit of the side of the car



Bonus Tip! Commentary Driving

Ride as a passenger to review a driving route, or talk about rules at intersections or traffic lights. It is a great way to learn and feel more prepared for sitting in the driver's seat.

This handout is a quick guide for use with The Teen Driving Plan from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. For the full resource, visit: teendriversource.research.chop.edu

