

Night Driving

By law, you must use your lights one-half hour after sunset until one-half hour before sunrise and at any other time you cannot see clearly without them. When you are driving at night your vision is reduced and driving conditions and behavior must change to allow for the differences in the environment.

Dawn and dusk are two high-risk times to drive a vehicle. The problems of seeing contrasting colors and images is due to reduced visibility. Use your headlights on low beam and make sure others see you.



Since average low beam headlights provide safe vision for only 150 feet, you are overdriving your headlights if you are going at a speed that does not let you stop within the distance your headlights illuminate.



When approaching another vehicle you must dim your bright lights when you are within 500 feet.

Night Driving

The teen driver encounters many-high risk factors when driving at night. In *Teen's Nighttime Risk Factors* by Frederik Mottola, seven factors are identified and should be discussed between parent and young driver. The seven factors and salient points are:

1. Less visibility—roadway lighting or lack of lighting, full moon or new moon, depth perception alteration, physiological changes.
2. Social setting—alcohol and other drugs, frolics, joy riding.
3. Driver distractions—passengers, games, peer pressure.
4. Change in temperature—colder air, surface freezes, moisture on surface.
5. Driver fatigue—biological clock, not alert, and slow reactions.
6. Driver's emotional balloon—day's activities, risk acceptance higher.
7. Vehicle dynamics—low tire pressure can effect response, number of occupants changes axis balance.

Nighttime driving tips

- Plan your trip before you leave.
- Keep your attention on your driving.
- Keep your eyes moving.
- Use the night setting for your inside rearview mirror when lights blind you from behind.
- Increase your following time to at least 4 seconds of space.
- Never wear sunglasses at night.
- Keep instrument panel dim and dome light off.
- Keep the windshield and headlights clean.
- Use headlights at night (not parking lights).
- Your eyes need more time to respond to images along your path of travel. Decrease your speed and always have an escape path available.