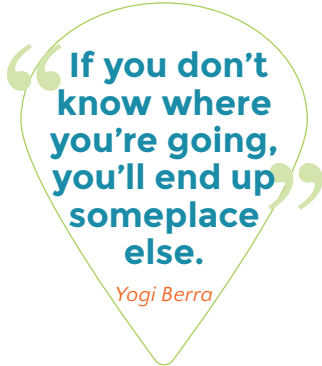


Driving outside your comfort zone



It's day two of Drive Safely Work Week and today's focus is on the importance of planning ahead when driving in unfamiliar areas. Advance planning is never more important than when you get out of your normal routine—be it driving in a new location, unfamiliar conditions, in a different vehicle or a combination of all three.

DRIVING IN UNFAMILIAR VEHICLES

Whether it's a vehicle repair, vacation or business trip, there's a good chance you may drive a rental car at some point. For some, driving a rental or using a car sharing service is common. The next time you rent a car:



PREPARE FOR A BREAKDOWN

- Program a few key phone numbers into your cell phone, including the car rental's toll-free number and any roadside assistance programs you use. Carry a car charger for your phone.

CHECK THE EQUIPMENT

- If possible, rent a vehicle similar in size and features to one you are accustomed to driving. Many rentals have only basic levels of equipment—the vehicle may not have ABS (outside of the U.S.) or automatic head lights, so be clear on what you are getting.
- Inspect the tires for excessive or uneven tread wear. Bald or worn tires could fail and will affect vehicle control, particularly on wet or icy roads. Make sure the spare tire is there, it's fully inflated and that a jack and lug wrench are available.

GET ACQUAINTED WITH THE VEHICLE

- Start the engine and make sure no caution lights come on.
- Get familiar with wiper, heating, cooling and audio controls.
- Check that floor mats are properly positioned and there are no bumps or tears that might interfere with acceleration and braking.
- Check under the vehicle to ensure there are no leaks. It may be easiest to pull out of the space, exit the vehicle and check for fluids that may have leaked.
- Position mirrors so you have the best visibility, and make sure you are positioned correctly to the steering wheel and have adjusted the head restraint.*

#PLANAHEAD TO REDUCE STRESS

- Plan your route in advance. Before your trip, load your cell phone with the addresses of places you will visit. Familiarize yourself with the area using a paper map in case GPS fails. If you'll be using GPS, use voice directions to minimize distraction.
- When returning the vehicle, #PlanAhead to leave plenty of time. There are a lot of distractions associated with airport car rental facilities. Proper planning will keep you calm and focused.

* BE WELL-ADJUSTED ON THE ROAD

The steering wheel should be at least 10" (25 cm) from your chest. Adjust the head restraint so the top is even with the top of your head—or at least the top of your ears. The back of your head should be 4" (10 cm) or less from the head restraint.

To set mirrors, sit in normal driving position and center the rearview mirror. Next, lean your head about 4" (10 cm) to the left and adjust the driver's side view mirror until you can barely see the edge of the rear of your vehicle in the mirror. Do the same thing for the passenger side mirror by leaning 4" (10 cm) to the right. While you won't see your vehicle in the side view mirrors when sitting in the normal driving position, this mirror adjustment will enable you to see more of the adjoining traffic lanes, as well as hazards next to the vehicle.

Note that there are various ways to set mirrors and this is one way, but not necessarily the only way.

✓ **YOUR PLAN:** When driving an unfamiliar vehicle, leave enough time to inspect the vehicle, get acquainted with it by adjusting controls and safety equipment, and plan your route.



FLYING THEN DRIVING IN UNFAMILIAR PLACES

Both work and pleasure can require more than one mode of transportation. Choices made in the air can affect your capacity to drive once you've landed.

SHOULD I DRINK ALCOHOL?

- It may seem harmless to have a drink during the flight or on a layover, but even one drink can contribute to fatigue and affect alertness once you are behind the wheel. It takes the human body about an hour to process one drink.
- Take a moment to consider the length of your flight and ensure you have plenty of time in the air before you transition to driving.

DO I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING ONCE I LAND?

- Before you travel, map your route and bring a hard copy. If using a rented or shared vehicle, don't rely on unknown technology to make sure you can find your destination. Know how to get from the airport to your meeting, hotel or journey's end before you depart.



AM I PREPARED FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS?

- If you have any conditions that might require special consideration during travel, talk with your manager in advance. For example, if you have difficulty with night vision, you may want to discuss staying an extra night in a hotel.
- If you arrive late in the evening or even early in the morning, are you empowered to book a room in a hotel near the airport, or arrange for hired transportation if you feel too drowsy to drive safely? Talk with management in advance so you know your options.

YOUR PLAN: Flying to a new destination requires extra care once there and on the road. Consider the dangers of drinking alcohol during the flight and watch for signs of fatigue that often accompany air travel across time zones.

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INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

SLEEP AIDS AND JET LAG

- Considering taking a sleep aid on a flight? Know that some can remain in your body long enough to impair driving hours after landing. It's critical to follow your doctor's instructions, and avoid taking sleep aids with alcohol. If the flight doesn't have the potential for 7-8 hours of sleep, you may experience drowsiness upon arrival and may still be cognitively impaired by the drug. On short flights, the risks do not outweigh the rewards of taking a sleep aid.
- If traveling through time zones, assume jet lag will be a factor and you may not be alert enough to drive—especially in an unfamiliar location. Estimate one day per time zone for your body clock to adjust to local time. Be aware that jet lag can be worsened by lack of sleep, a long period of time in an uncomfortable position, stress, caffeine and alcohol.

WHEN YOU LAND

- Traveling by car in a foreign country can be difficult for even the most experienced traveler. Depending on your destination, you may encounter dramatically different vehicles and

driving rules, in addition to heavy traffic and inadequate roads. You may also share the road with significantly more motorcyclists, pedestrians and cyclists.

- If you have hired a driver, verify the driver's identification to ensure you are riding with the proper person.
- If you plan on driving in a country for the first time, do your research and be familiar with the driving laws and inherent risks. You will likely be required to obtain an international driving permit. The U.S. Department of State's website has tips for driving abroad: <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go/safety/driving.html>
- Use common sense to avoid unnecessary risk. Avoid travel after dark or in unfamiliar areas and always carry a good road guide or map.

YOUR PLAN: Use caution when taking sleep aids during long flights and do your homework by preparing in advance for the challenges of navigating a foreign country.



SOMEONE ELSE DOING THE DRIVING?

When riding in a taxi or using a car service, **never let safety take a back seat.** Crashes happen in all types of vehicles, with all levels of drivers at any time in any place. Always buckle up—no matter who is doing the driving. Make sure you have a working safety belt before the driver pulls out and if not, catch the next cab. If your driver is not buckled in, insist that he or she do so for their safety and yours. In the event of a crash, you want your driver secured in place and conscious! If the driver refuses, choose another taxi or car service.