

“A lack of clarity could put the brakes on any journey to success.”

Steve Maraboli
Author

Plan Ahead to have a clear head

It's day three of DSWW and today's focus is on the importance of planning ahead so you have a clear head when your plans include driving. Like any complex task, safe driving requires you to be at the top of your game. Focused attention, quick reaction time, and smart decision making are needed every time you take the wheel.

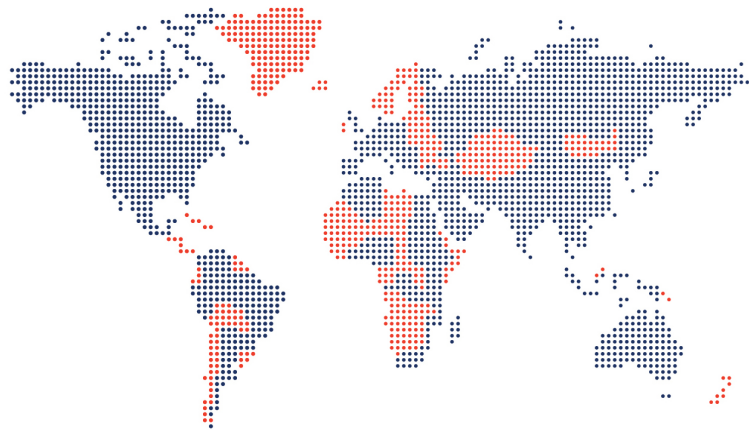
Every day, nearly 30 people in the U.S. die in vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver.¹

Driving impaired not only puts lives at risk, you could also face a DUI arrest. According to various sources, the cost of a DUI can exceed \$10,000. Drivers arrested for DUI face jail time, possible loss of license, higher insurance rates, and expenses from attorney fees, fines, court costs, towing, lost time at work—even job loss. And maybe irreparable damage to your reputation.



AMERICA HAS MORE DRUNK DRIVERS THAN MOST COUNTRIES HAVE PEOPLE

17.2 MILLION AMERICANS HAVE DRIVEN ONE OR MORE TIMES IN THE PRECEDING 12 MONTHS WHEN THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE OVER THE LEGAL LIMIT FOR ALCOHOL AND DRIVING. THAT'S MORE THAN THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF EACH OF THESE COUNTRIES.



NHTSA.GOV/DRIVESOBER

PLANNING A NIGHT OUT?

- **Designate a driver beforehand.** If you plan to consume alcohol, #PlanAhead for a sober ride home. If you have a designated driver instead of a cab, consider treating the driver to dinner and non-alcoholic beverages.
- **Know your risks.** Be more attentive when the risks are higher. In 2013, nearly half of fatal crashes occurred on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday. Nearly 1/3 of all fatal crashes occurred between 3PM and 9PM.² Plan travel times to minimize risks.
- **Be alert.** Steer clear of anyone who appears to be driving under the influence. Pull over or have a passenger contact police to report the location of drivers you suspect may be impaired.
- **Be a responsible host.** If you have guests, and alcohol will be served, always provide food and alternative beverages and be willing to take the keys if you need to. #PlanAhead to have transportation options available and be prepared to offer your couch for the night.



DID YOU KNOW?

Micro-brews pack a mega punch

Know your ABVs

The popularity of craft beer is exploding across the country. Be aware that these beverages often have high alcohol content. A typical mass-market beer may have 4.5% alcohol by volume (ABV). Craft beers can have ABV levels that are twice as high. Check the menu or label or ask the server about a beer's ABV. Depending on the individual, just one high ABV beer can cause impairment and multiple beers could easily put you over the legal limit. It is the position of NETS that driving should be avoided after any level of alcohol is consumed.



✓ **YOUR PLAN:** #PlanAhead for a sober ride home before heading out. Serving others? #PlanAhead to have options for transportation home available or be ready to host overnight guests.



¹ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Traffic Safety Facts 2013 Data: Alcohol-Impaired Driving. Washington (DC): NHTSA; 2014

² National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. 2014. Traffic Safety Facts 2013. Report No. DHS 812 139. Washington, DC: US Department of Transportation.

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STRESS

It stands to reason that good advance planning helps reduce stress. But what about stress caused from an unexpected event, something that wasn't part of your plan? Things like a sudden family emergency, a tough day at the office, or an argument with your spouse or significant other can knock you off course. Knowing a few strategies ahead of time can help get you safely back on track.

- If you are angry, take a few minutes to calm down before getting behind the wheel. Anger can often lead to speeding and poor driving decisions which can easily lead to a traffic ticket or worse, an injury.
- Be alert to signs you are stressed or tense. Are you gripping the wheel too tightly? Are your shoulders hunched forward? If so, pull over and take a few minutes for some deep breaths to re-center your focus. Deep breathing is one of the easiest ways to lower stress.
- There are occasions when we just should not be behind the wheel. If you have received upsetting news or are dealing with significant emotional stress and have to travel by car, it may be best to let someone else do the driving.

YOUR PLAN: Self-awareness and mindfulness are key. Before driving, take a moment to remind yourself of the top priority—getting you and your passengers to your destination safely. Don't start the trip until you can do so with focus.



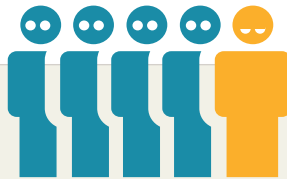
MEDICATIONS

Many over-the-counter, prescription drugs and herbal supplements for common ailments including allergies, colds, depression, muscle pain, anxiety and high blood pressure can cause drowsiness, slow reaction time and impair vision and coordination. Take an active role in managing your medications by working closely with your health care providers. Never assume they are aware of all the medications or supplements you are taking.



YOUR PLAN:

- Talk with your doctor or pharmacist to understand side effects and interactions of prescription and over-the-counter medications or supplements you take. Side effects may differ in combination.
- Talk to your doctor about adjusting the timing of doses to eliminate or minimize drowsiness during times you need to drive or about alternative medications that don't cause drowsiness.
- Pay attention to your body. When taking medications, be mindful of how you feel. Plan to avoid driving when taking a new medication until you know how it will affect you.



1 in 5 drivers reported having driven on more than one occasion in the past 30 days when they were so tired, they had a hard time keeping their eyes open.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. Jan. 2015. 2014 Traffic Safety Culture Index.

LACK OF SLEEP

A recent analysis of crashes in the U.S. concluded that more than 100,000 injury crashes and 6,400 fatal crashes involve a drowsy driver each year.³

If you have been awake for more than 20 hours, you could be just as impaired as if you had a blood alcohol content of .08—the legal threshold of DUI across the U.S.⁴ This is especially relevant for shift workers or international travelers who have been awake for extended periods. And, it's important to know that even a small amount of alcohol can amplify the effects of inadequate sleep.⁵

YOUR PLAN:

- Make a good night's sleep a priority.
- Plan your schedule carefully, being cautious of setting early morning or midafternoon meetings that can put you on the road during times when you are likely to feel drowsy.
- Caffeine from either coffee or cola will boost awareness for just a short time and an open window or loud music have no lasting effect. The only true countermeasure to drowsiness is sleep.
- If you know in advance your sleep may be cut short, make plans for alternate transportation.
- Drowsiness can sneak up on you, so pull over and take a break when you experience warning signs such as:
 - ✓ Yawning or blinking frequently
 - ✓ Difficulty remembering the past few miles driven
 - ✓ Missing your exit
 - ✓ Drifting from your lane or hitting a rumble strip



³ The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Nov 2014, *The Prevalence of Motor Vehicle Crashes Involving Drowsy Drivers, United States, 2009 – 2013.*

⁴ The National Sleep Foundation, 2009.

⁵ Howard ME, et al. *The interactive effects of extended wakefulness and low-dose alcohol on simulated driving and vigilance.* Sleep. 2007;30(10):1334–40.