

Contract for Drivers

As a teen begins to drive, it is very important for there to be clear communication of the expectations and responsibilities between the new driver and parents.

The Purpose of this contract is:

- 1. To establish expectations, agreements and the consequences of not abiding by the agreements as set forth in this contract;*
- 2. To define with clarity the expectations of both you, the new driver and us, the parents;*
- 3. To establish communication and a program whereby you may acquire greater privileges and responsibilities by demonstration, over a period of time, the ability to make responsible choices and decisions;*
- 4. To establish a meaningful 'right of passage' process for you through the 'learning to drive' process of training, support and encouragement by us.*

The parents (us/we) and the new driver (you) both understand that becoming a driver in today's aggressive environment is a very risky activity, especially for young, inexperienced drivers. The primary objective is to decrease this risk as much as possible. For this reason, the undersigned parents and new driver agree to the following:

1. It is understood and agreed that having a driver's license and driving a motor vehicle are privileges. Any privilege has to be earned, and it must be earned on a continuing basis. This means that driving privileges may be revoked due to any infraction of this contract
2. Breaking the driving laws or abusing a motor vehicle can result in the loss of driving privileges, even if we learn about it from a source other than the police. You may never know who may be observing you.
3. You will strive to maintain the **grades, conduct, and attitude** at the same high level as when we first granted your driving privileges.
4. Until you are of legal age, you agree that there will be absolutely no **drinking or smoking**. There also will be no drinking or smoking in the car by any other person at any time. If this agreement is broken at any time, all driving privileges may be lost for a period of up to one year.

5. At no time will **alcohol or drugs** be in any car belonging to you or us. The consequences of breaking this agreement will be an automatic loss of driving privileges for up to one year.
6. No one else will be allowed to drive a vehicle entrusted to you. This means **you may not lend your vehicle to friends.**
7. You will agree to **call us for advice and/or transportation** at any hour, from any place, if you are ever in a situation where you do not want to drive home, or if you are with a friend or date who should not be driving
 - ◆ We agree to come and get you at any hour, any place, no questions asked and no argument, or, we will pay for a taxi to bring you home safely. Discussion related to the situation will be delayed until the next day and will not result in loss of driving privileges.
8. If you are ever in a condition that might render you **less than 100 percent competent** behind the wheel of a car, phone us. We will come get you. This will not result in the loss of driving privileges.
9. You are never to be a **passenger in a car in which the driver should not be driving.** A call to come and get you will not result in loss of driving privileges. If you cannot reach us, hire a taxi. We will pay for it, and there will be no punishment.
10. Driving is **limited to within the city limits** of our town except with prior approval or for the purpose of getting home. The consequences of breaking this agreement may be the loss of driving privileges for up to one month.
11. If you receive a traffic **violation for speeding** between 1 and 10 mph over the posted speed limit, you will be responsible for all costs associated therewith, including any additional cost in automobile insurance. If the traffic violation is speeding more than 10 mph over the posted speed limit, or a reckless or careless driving violation, you will be responsible for all costs associated therewith, including any additional cost in automobile insurance. In addition, all driving privileges may be lost for a period of six months. Repeated offenses of traffic violations will be treated severely, with probable loss of driving privileges for a longer period of time.

- ◆ You understand that the impact of just two minimum traffic violations on the cost of automobile **insurance** is estimated to be several thousand dollars over the next five year period. Violations and accidents remain on your record with most companies for five years. For more serious violations or an 'at-fault' accident, the potential cost of auto insurance is in some cases not affordable.

12. You will wear a **seat belt** in any vehicle, in which you are either driving or riding, and when you are driving will be responsible for any other passengers wearing a seat belt. The consequences of breaking this agreement may be the loss of driving privileges.
13. You understand that driving a car is not an appropriate place or time to '**horse around**', and that people are killed and injured as a result of 'horsing around' in a car. The consequences of breaking this agreement may be the loss of driving privileges.
14. You understand that there will be absolutely no **riding on the hood or area outside or on the car** by anyone at any time. The consequences of breaking this agreement may be the loss of driving privileges.
15. You recognize that while ownership of the car is retained by us, you shall **respect the property** by keeping the car reasonably clean and maintained. In addition, you shall not bring the car home with less than a quarter tank of gas.
16. You understand that use of **cell phones** is highly distracting and takes away from the concentration required to drive. Cell phones are only to be used by passengers, or if you have come to a stop and are safely parked. Cell phones are never to be used while driving – even in the 'hands free' mode.
17. **Be a good passenger** for your driver. Do not distract them and do not allow them to become distracted from their driving.
18. After receiving your license, you must have 50 hours of 'undistracted driving'. This means no passengers and no radio, CD, iPod, etc. This is time for you to become acquainted with driving by yourself with limited distractions. After 50 hours, we will discuss passengers.

19. The following shows the vulnerability of new drivers and passengers when other teenagers are in the car. We reserve the right to restrict who and how many **passengers** are in the car at any given time.

A study from Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health found:

- ◆ A sixteen-year-old driver has a 39% greater risk of death when there is one teenage passenger in the car with them.
- ◆ A sixteen-year-old driver has an 86% greater risk of death when there are two teenage passengers in the car with them.
- ◆ A sixteen-year-old driver has a 138% greater risk of death when there are three or more teenage passengers in the car with them.

A Dec. 2001 Report from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety:

- ◆ In the year 2000, two thirds of the teenage **passengers** killed in car crashes died while other teens were driving.
- ◆ Having a teenage **boy passenger** in the car nearly doubles the death rate for both male and female teen drivers.
- ◆ The risk declines when a teenage boy drives a teenage girl. But the risk of death increases again if the male driver has two teenage girls in his car.

Proven Safety tips:

- ◆ Before a teen can drive alone, document 50 hours of adult supervised driving over a six-month period. Including 10 hours at night.
- ◆ Parents should drive with their kids under various road and weather conditions including rain, snow and rush hour.
- ◆ Not driving after 9pm and, not allowing teen passengers unless an adult is present can sharply reduce risk.
- ◆ The greatest benefits come if the curfew and passenger limits are imposed until the teen reaches 18 years of age.

Researchers acknowledge that these tips can be difficult for parents, but also state, "The price of kids' lives is just too much to pay for our own laziness."

As you demonstrate the acceptance of greater personal responsibility and a genuine sense of maturity, we shall agree to more responsibilities and decision making for you.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Parent(s): _____.

Newly licensed driver: _____.

This document is not designed to be a legal document, but more a starting point for ongoing discussion between new drivers and their parents or guardians. Hopefully it will be a guide to clarify expectations of the new driver and provide evidence-based resources on why new drivers are at greater risk than the general driving population.