



Mobile phones and Driving

Údarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre
Road Safety Authority

Working To Save Lives

What is the law?

You can only use your mobile when you're driving if you are phoning 999 or 112, or it is another type of emergency. It is an offence to hold a mobile phone in your hand or support it with another part of your body, for example between your head and shoulder, when you are driving.

If the Gardaí charge you for this offence you will get a fixed charge notice of €60. If you pay the fixed charge you will get two penalty points. If you choose not to pay the fixed charge and are then convicted in court you will get four penalty points and a fine of up to €2,000.

Using a hands-free kit with your phone is not illegal, but it will stop you concentrating for a short time when you use your mobile phone and this puts other people using the road at risk. You could be prosecuted for dangerous driving, careless driving or driving without due care and attention because of this. And you could also have your licence endorsed or even lose your licence.

So remember, the safe control of your car, van or bus is your responsibility.

Don't use your mobile phone and drive!



**GET THE POINT!
NOT THE POINTS!**



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Mobile phones and driving

Mobile phones can be very helpful to a driver. You can:

- call for help when your car breaks down;
- tell the emergency services that there's been a crash; or
- let someone know that you're delayed.

However you shouldn't use your mobile phone when you are driving, as it's not safe and could be illegal. Using your mobile phone this way means that you are not concentrating fully on driving, so you're putting yourself and the lives of other people in danger. Even if you're a careful driver, you can easily get distracted by a phone call or text message and you could have a crash.

Remember, a car moving at 50 km per hour will travel 14 metres (around four car lengths) in just one second!



What should I do when I'm driving?

Even with a hands-free kit or 'blue tooth' system you can be distracted when you use a mobile phone while you are driving. Here are some things you should do with your mobile phone (hand-held and hands-free) if you are driving.

1. Turn off your mobile phone or put it on the 'silent' or 'meeting' option setting before starting your journey.

2. Use the voicemail on your mobile phone so people can leave messages for you while you're travelling.
3. Stop regularly on your journey so you can check for messages and return any calls.
4. Make sure the place you stop is a legal and safe place to park. It is illegal to stop on a motorway unless it is an emergency.

Remember

- It is illegal to hold a mobile phone in your hand or support it with another part of your body, for example between your head and shoulder, when you're driving. You can only use your mobile when you're driving if you are phoning 999 or 112, or it is another type of emergency.
- Never use a hands-free kit or 'blue tooth' system when you are driving. It will distract you and so it is not safe.
- Never take notes, look up a number or send text messages while you are driving.
- If you need to use your mobile, stop your car, keep your calls short and avoid emotional or stressful calls.

What should I do when I call someone on their mobile phone?

When you call someone on their mobile phone, be aware that the person might be driving and what you are saying might distract them. So if the person is driving you should:

- tell them that you will call them back; or
- wait until they pull their car over; and
- be aware that they should be concentrating on driving and not on your conversation.

How does using a mobile phone while I'm driving affect how I drive?

Many research studies have found the same results. If you drive and use a mobile phone (hand-held or hands-free) it will hinder your driving in different ways. It makes it harder for you to:

- keep in lane;
- drive at the right speed and at a speed that other drivers can predict;
- keep a good distance from the car in front; and
- judge safe gaps in traffic.



It also affects your reaction times and your general awareness of other traffic.

You are **four times** more likely to have a crash if you use a mobile phone when you are driving.*

* Department for Transport UK