

Fact Sheet

New Road Safety Rules:

Using mobile phones and visual display units

Effective 9 November 2009

From November 2009, there will be some changes to Victoria's road safety rules.

The changes include amendments to the rules for using mobile phones and visual display units.

Road safety reason

Using a mobile phone or a visual display unit as you drive is distracting and creates dangerous situations that could be fatal.

The risk of being involved in a crash increases by as much as four times, when using a mobile phone as you drive.



Mobile phones

Using a mobile phone while driving is prohibited except if:

- ▶ The driver is making or receiving a phone call on a hands free unit.
- ▶ The phone is secured in a commercially designed holder fixed to the vehicle.
- ▶ The phone can be operated by the driver without touching any part of the phone.

All other functions (including video calls, texting and emailing) are prohibited.

Holding the phone (whether or not engaged in a phone call) is also prohibited. Holding includes resting the mobile on the driver's lap.

Learner and P1 drivers, are not permitted to use a mobile phone at all while driving.

Visual display units

A driver must not drive a vehicle that has a television receiver or a visual display unit operating if any part of the screen is visible to the driver or is likely to distract another driver.

A driver can use a driver's aid (such as a Global Positioning System - GPS) but it must be an integrated part of the vehicle design, or secured in a commercially designed holder, which is fixed to the vehicle.

Exemptions

The rule relating to securing visual display units does not apply to motorcycles.

What you have to do

Don't use your mobile phone or your driver's aid when you are driving, unless it is within a commercially designed holder fixed to your vehicle.



Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I still use my mobile phone with an earpiece and a connecting cord?

Yes. Wireless devices (or any hands free device, including earpieces that are connected to the phone via a cord) can be used whilst driving.

You must however ensure that whilst you are using such a device, that you do not hold the phone in your hand, or press any buttons on the phone itself, or touch any part of the body of the phone.

2. Can I still use my portable GPS device?

Yes, as long as it is secured in a holder fixed to the vehicle.

3. Where is the safest place to secure my GPS Device?

VicRoads recommends that drivers secure their GPS systems to the right of the steering wheel out of the central field of view. This ensures that the GPS does not obstruct the line of view of the driver.

Why the change?

These changes will contribute to the Victorian Government's road safety strategy *arrive alive 2008-2017*, which aims to reduce the road toll by a further 30 per cent by 2017.

Reviewing our road rules helps to make sure they are meeting current traffic conditions and assists road users get to where they are going as safely and efficiently as possible.

The new road safety rules being introduced will ensure that road rules are consistent across Australia, to minimise confusion for people travelling interstate.

More information

For more information about the new road rules visit the VicRoads website at vicroads.vic.gov.au/roadrules or call 1300 360 745.

The information in this fact sheet was current at the time of printing and is intended as a guide only. For full details about the Road Safety Road Rules 2009 see vicroads.vic.gov.au