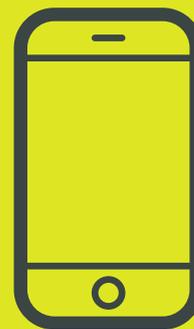


# QuickSmarts

## Mobile Phone Distractions



## \$1000 fines and 4 demerit points for mobile phone offences from 1 February 2020.

### The penalties

From 1 February 2020, the penalties for illegally using a mobile phone while driving are a \$1000 fine and 4 demerit points. This is to help deter people from this dangerous behaviour.

The fine and demerit points applies to all drivers who use their phone illegally including car, truck drivers and motorcycle riders.

Learner drivers will also lose their licence after just one mobile phone offence. P-plates can also lose their licence for a single offence.

Double demerit points apply for a second mobile phone offence in 12 months. This you will receive another \$1000 fine and a further eight demerit points. This will cost most drivers their licence.

Bicycle riders will also be fined \$1000 for illegally using a mobile phone while riding, but no demerit points will be issued.

### The rules

The mobile phone rules have not changed.

It is illegal to hold your phone in your hand while driving. This includes to text, talk, call or perform any other function, even when you're stopped at traffic lights.

If you have an **open or P2 licence** you can use a phone hands-free, for example, in a cradle attached to the vehicle. However, you must have proper control of your vehicle and drive with due care and attention at all times.

However, it is illegal for **learner and P1 drivers under 25 years old** to use a phone in any way while driving. This includes using maps, Bluetooth and handsfree. Passengers of these drivers also cannot use phones on loudspeaker.

For **bicycle riders**, it is illegal to use a phone in your hand while riding or stopped at the traffic lights.

However, you can use your phone hands-free or when it is in a cradle.

## The message is clear – Leave your phone alone.

Drivers and riders are encouraged to set up the Do Not Disturb While Driving function on their phones to help avoid using their phones.

Information on the new penalties the rules and how to set up the Do Not Disturb While Driving function on phones can be found on the Queensland Government's StreetSmarts website at <https://streetsmarts.initiatives.qld.gov.au/driver-distraction/leave-your-phone-alone>

# The facts

On average 29 people are killed and 1284 seriously injured each year on Queensland roads as a result of crashes where driver distraction played a part.<sup>1</sup>

However, the true extent to which distractions (including mobile phones) contribute to road crashes is likely to be higher because drivers may not admit to police they were distracted at the time of the crash.

Using a mobile phone while driving multiplies your risk of a serious crash by four.<sup>2</sup>

Research shows using a mobile phone while driving can be as risky as drink driving.<sup>3</sup>

The unexpected can happen at any time – so even the smallest distraction can be deadly. Using a mobile phone when driving means taking your eyes and mind off the road – which can have serious consequences.

Even when your eyes are off the road for just two seconds, a vehicle moving at 60km/h travels more than 33 metres. The average person's time to react to an event is 1.8 seconds.

This means nearly four seconds can pass before the average distracted driver can react to a hazard, increasing their risk of a serious crash.

This table shows the distance travelled in two seconds by a driver at various speeds

| Travel speed | Distance travelled (in 2 secs) |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 40 km/h      | 22.22 metres                   |
| 50 km/h      | 27.78 metres                   |
| 60 km/h      | 33.33 metres                   |
| 80 km/h      | 44.44 metres                   |
| 100 km/h     | 55.56 metres                   |

1 Data Analysis, Department of Transport and Main Roads QLD. Fatality data extracted. 15 October 2020 using road casualty statistics 2015-2019.

2 McEvoy, S., Stevenson, M., McCart, A., Woodward, M., Haworth, C., Palamara, P. and Cercarelli, R. (2005). 'Role of mobile phones in motor vehicle crashes resulting in hospital attendance: a case-crossover study'. *BMJ* 331: 428-30.

3 Stayer, D., Drews, F. and Crouch, D. (2006). 'A comparison of the cell phone driver and the drunk driver.' *Human Factors* 48(2): 381-91.

13 QGOV (13 74 68)

 | **StreetSmartsQLD**