

When is the Most Dangerous Time to Drive?

Know your legal rights after a collision, no matter when it happens

Driving in Texas can be dangerous at any hour of the day, especially during rush hour. But according to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the deadliest time to drive is between the hours of [6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.](#) when it's dark outside.

However, within that timeframe, most traffic fatalities across the U.S. (for example, 6,810 deaths in 2022) happen at night from [6 p.m. to 8:59 p.m.](#) That's followed by the hours of:

- 9 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. – 6,175 fatalities in 2022
- 3 p.m. to 5:59 p.m. – 5,839 fatalities in 2022
- Midnight to 2:59 a.m. – 4,774 fatalities in 2022

Additionally, NHTSA data shows that Saturday is the most dangerous day to drive, with [7,006 traffic fatalities](#) in 2022. That's followed by:

- Sunday – 6,041 traffic fatalities in 2022
- Thursday – 5,238 traffic fatalities in 2022
- Wednesday – 5,073 traffic fatalities in 2022

What are the risk factors during the daytime?

The risk factors often vary by time of day. Driving during daylight hours, there are certain unique dangers that put everyone on the road at risk, including:

Traffic congestion

Heavy traffic during peak hours increases the risk of [car accidents](#) due to stop-and-go traffic, lane changes, and frequent merging. When traffic gets backed up and people become impatient, drivers are more likely to take risks that could potentially lead to car accidents.

Speeding and aggressive driving

Speeding and aggressive driving behaviors are common during the daytime, especially during rush hours when many people are in a hurry. Many drivers speed to make up time or to get through traffic quickly. Some may even engage in tailgating, weaving in and out of traffic, and not yielding the right of way.

Distracted driving

One of the leading causes of car accidents during the day is distracted driving. This can include activities such as texting, talking on the phone, eating, or using in-car technologies, as many

busy drivers attempt to multitask behind the wheel. According to the NHTSA, distracted driving resulted in [3,308 traffic fatalities](#) in 2022.

What are the most common nighttime driving risk factors?

The evening and nighttime hours are considered the most dangerous times to drive. The most common risk factors include:

Reduced visibility

Driving at night inherently comes with reduced visibility. This makes it harder for drivers to see obstacles, pedestrians, or other vehicles. Headlights only illuminate so much of the road, and darkness can obscure hazards that would be more visible during daylight hours.

Driver fatigue

Late at night, many drivers have been awake and active for many hours. Fatigue can set in and slow down reaction times, impair judgment, and increase the likelihood of falling asleep at the wheel. According to the NHTSA, drowsy driving resulted in [693 road deaths](#) in 2022.

Alcohol-impaired driving

Evening hours are often associated with social activities where alcohol is consumed. As the night progresses, the chances of encountering drunk drivers under the influence increase. The NHTSA reports that [13,524 people died](#) in drunk driving car accidents in 2022.

Decreased traffic enforcement

Police patrols may be less frequent during late evening hours compared to peak traffic times. With fewer officers on the road, drivers may be more inclined to engage in risky behaviors such as speeding, texting while driving, or driving under the influence.

How do holidays and special events affect road safety?

Holidays and special events are times for celebration, but they also bring an increased risk on the roads. Understanding these risks can help you make safer driving decisions.

National holidays (e.g., New Year's Eve, Fourth of July)

Holidays such as New Year's Eve and the Fourth of July are synonymous with festivities, fireworks, and, unfortunately, a surge in car accidents. These celebrations often involve alcohol, and as people travel to and from parties, the number of impaired drivers on the road spikes.

Major sporting events

Whether it's the Super Bowl, World Series, or a local college rivalry game, major sporting events can turn the roads into a hazard zone. Before the game, excitement runs high as fans head to watch parties or the stadium, often leading to distracted driving.

After the event, the risk increases as fans who have been drinking try to make their way home. The post-game traffic rush, combined with impaired driving, makes the roads a risky place to be.

How can I protect my rights if I was hurt in a car accident?

No matter what day, hour, or time of year it is, the actions you take after a car accident can impact the outcome of your claim. First and foremost, you should always seek medical attention, even if you think you can walk off your injuries.

Many injuries can worsen over time if left untreated. Sometimes, they don't produce any symptoms or pain for several hours or days. When you see a doctor, they can evaluate your condition, provide an official diagnosis, and begin treatment early. This also helps you establish a link between your crash and the resulting injuries.

You'll also need to provide the date, time, location, and other relevant information to your insurance company. However, you should never discuss how the car accident occurred or who was at fault. Let an investigation from an experienced Texas car accident lawyer reveal the facts.

Also, avoid providing a recorded statement to the other driver's insurance company, even if they contact you with seemingly harmless questions. Anything you say can be twisted and misconstrued as admitting fault. It's best to let an attorney do the talking and negotiating for you.

Lastly, keep all medical records, pay stubs, vehicle repair estimates, hospital bills, and other documentation that validates your damages. Your attorney can use this information when determining how much money you're eligible to receive for your accident. This way, you won't get short-changed by the insurance companies.

Contact our Houston car accident lawyers for help

If you've been injured in a car accident in Houston, don't let the insurance companies dictate the outcome of your injury claim. The Houston car accident attorneys at [Smith & Hassler](#) have spent over 30 years fighting for injured motorists and [securing the compensation](#) they deserve.

That includes a **\$1.38 million settlement** for a client who suffered a traumatic brain injury in a truck accident and another **\$800,000** for a victim of a T-bone crash. We understand the tactics insurance companies use to minimize payouts, and we won't let them take advantage of you.

Don't hesitate to take the first step toward justice. We offer a free consultation to review your case and discuss your legal options. And because we work on a contingency fee basis, you won't pay a dime unless we win your case. This means you can focus on your recovery while we focus on getting results. [Contact us](#) today for a free consultation, and let us start building your case.