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## Too Busy to Drive?

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I looked in the rearview mirror and couldn't believe my eyes. There, maybe a car length and a half behind me, was a woman doing her eyebrows. She appeared to be using a mirror attached to her sun visor. I couldn't believe it. We were doing 55 mph in afternoon rush hour traffic in Kansas City, Mo.

I marveled as I watched her in the mirror, angling her eyebrow pencil. She obviously had one eye focused on the mirror; I could only hope she was watching me with the other. Then it occurred to me that if I had to suddenly hit the brakes she could easily poke her eye with that pencil or, worse yet, never slow down and hit me from behind.

Obviously distracted driving isn't a man or woman thing — how many times have you watched anyone, regardless of gender, eat, shave, do their hair, read, play with a laptop or find other things to occupy their time behind the wheel? Is it that driving has become so boring, or maybe some folks are just trying to be masters of multitasking?

Here are some distracted driving tips from Farm Bureau Insurance to keep you on the straight and narrow:

- Change your ways and recognize the activities that distract you, such as eating, talking on the phone or changing a CD. Once you recognize these distractions, you can work to eliminate them.
- Make a plan. Know your route in advance and make sure you clearly understand your directions. Check the weather and road conditions. If you're traveling with children, ensure they are properly buckled up and you have items to keep them occupied, such as books on tape or soft toys.
- Manage your time so you don't have to multitask or drive aggressively on the road.
- Don't let your drive time become your downtime. Driving isn't the time to catch up on phone calls, personal grooming or dining.
- Scan the roadway to ensure you're aware of others at all times. Be prepared for other drivers to be unpredictable.

- Concentrate on your driving. Make sure you're not upset or tired when getting on the road. This is not the time to have a serious or emotional conversation with your passengers.
- Pull over in a safe place if you need to do something that will take your eyes and/or mind off the road.
- Reduce the use — use technology sensibly.
- Take a refresher class. Everyone can pick up bad habits through the years. A driver improvement course can raise your awareness and help you assess your driving behaviors.
- Buckle up, every trip and every time.

For more information on distracted driving, visit <https://safety.army.mil>.

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