

Driving Strategies

The following table outlines some of the driving challenges that may come up for the older driver and the solutions that contribute to a safe journey.

Driving Challenges	Solutions
I feel overwhelmed by the number of signs, road markings, pedestrians and vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan the trip route. • Drive in familiar areas.
I am uncertain in handling the demands of high speeds and heavy traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive during the day. • Avoid rush hours. Find alternative routes with less traffic.
<p>I have difficulty judging gaps in traffic, making it harder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To turn left at intersections or • To merge with traffic when turning right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive during the day. Avoid rush hours. Find alternative routes with less traffic. • Remind yourself to look both ways when approaching an intersection. • Find routes where left turns have green-arrow signals. Avoid left turns by taking routes that require right turns. • Avoid highways where speed makes distance judgment more difficult.
I am concerned about seeing and reacting too slowly to cars coming out of driveways and side streets or cars ahead slowing down street signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scan far down the road continuously to anticipate future problems and plan actions. • Keep a safe distance behind another car by finding a marker (tree, sign, lamppost) and, as the car in front passes it, count 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004. Leave enough space to reach the same marker at the count of 1004.

<p>I have difficulty seeing traffic and street signs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always wear glasses with current prescription. Choose glasses that allow you to see to the sides. • Visit an eye doctor every year to check for cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration, and diabetic retinopathy. • Avoid sunglasses or tinted lenses at night. • Avoid car windows that are darkened or tinted.
<p>I feel challenged to see lane lines and other pavement markings curbs, medians, and other vehicles, especially at dawn, dusk, or night</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always wear glasses with current, prescription. • Visit an eye doctor every year to check for cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy. • Avoid sunglasses or tinted lenses at night. • Avoid car windows that are darkened or tinted. • Keep windshield, mirrors, and headlights clean. • Avoid ear windows that are darkened or tinted. • Check headlight aim at car inspections. • Keep windshield, mirrors, and headlights clean. • Increase the brightness on the instrument panel.
<p>I am uncomfortable at night from glare of oncoming headlights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit high enough in the seat to see the road at least 10 feet in front of the car • With oncoming traffic, look to the lower right side of the road • When choosing a car, look for rearview mirrors that automatically filter out glare.

Adapted from NI ITSA, *Driving Safely While Aging Gracefully*

Handouts are from Chapter 6, *Drivewell* (ASA): www.asaging.drivewell