

We Care About Your Safety

Use the following guidelines when you drive...



Always ensure you and all occupants are properly buckled up. Children under 4 must be in a child seat.



Don't drink and drive. Nearly half of all fatal crashes are alcohol related. If you drink, use a designated driver.



Observe and obey posted speed limits. Speeding fines are expensive and may cause your insurance rates to increase.



Aggressive and distracted drivers are becoming increasingly common on the roadways. Be courteous and aware when driving.

**Presented by the
University of Florida
Police Department
Community Services
Division
(352) 392-1409**



Questions/Compliments/Complaints

If you have a question about procedures or a complaint about your treatment, contact the UFPD and ask to speak with a supervisor. You may also send a letter of compliment if you feel the officer was particularly helpful in your situation. Compliments or complaints about officer conduct should be made within a reasonable time.

Address:

P.O. Box 112150 Gainesville, FL 32611

Email:

updinfo@admin.ufl.edu

**What To Do When
Stopped By A
Law Enforcement
Officer**



**Know Your
Rights and
Responsibilities**

**UF UNIVERSITY of
FLORIDA**
The Foundation for The Gator Nation

Why Do Police Stop People?

There are many different reasons why you might be stopped by the police. Whatever the reason, the officer needs your cooperation:

- The police may want to warn you about a potentially dangerous situation.
- You may have committed a traffic violation.
- Your vehicle may match the description of one used in a criminal act.
- The officer might think you are in trouble and need help.
- You may have witnessed a crime.
- The officer may have reason to believe that you have committed, are currently committing, or are about to commit a crime.

If you are stopped by the police while driving, you may feel confused, anxious or even angry. These are natural feelings, but remember, traffic stops can also be stressful and dangerous for the police officer. Each year, a number of law enforcement officers are killed or seriously injured while making the "routine" traffic stop. Police officers are especially vulnerable during the hours of darkness.

With this in mind, there are things that you, as a law abiding citizen, can do to help lessen the uneasiness of the experience.

REMEMBER: Be courteous and cooperative in any stop by the police. If you are courteous and cooperative, officers will respond in kind.

What to do when an officer stops you:

When you see the blue overhead lights and/or hear the siren, remain calm, slow down, and pull over in a safe location off the roadway.

- Do not exit your vehicle unless asked to do so. This is for safety reasons.
- Keep your hands on the steering wheel so the officer can see them.
- Inform the officer of any weapons in your vehicle and their location. Do not reach or point to the location.
- Avoid any sudden movements, especially toward the floorboard, rear seat, or passenger side of the vehicle.
- Comply with the officer's request to see your driver license, proof of insurance, and vehicle registration. Florida law requires you to carry these with you.
- If your documents are out of reach, tell the officer where they are and request permission to reach for them.

If there are passengers in your vehicle, encourage them to remain quiet and cooperate with instructions. You, as the operator, are solely responsible for your vehicle and its occupants.

Avoid becoming argumentative. Arguing will not change the officer's mind. If you contest the violation, you will have an opportunity to address the matter in court.

Answer all questions truthfully.

The officer may issue you a ticket. If you feel the reason is vague or unclear, politely ask the officer for details.

If asked to sign a citation, do so. It is not an admission of guilt.

You have the right to politely deny a request by a police officer to search your car; however, if probable cause is present, the officer has the right to search your vehicle without your consent.

Understand that each situation is unique, and the police officer must alter his or her response to fit the circumstance. Generally, however, a police officer will:

- Provide his/her name.
- Inform a person of the reason for being stopped.
- Only arrest a person for a crime committed in the officer's presence, or when the officer has probable cause to believe the person has already committed the crime.

Florida Statute 316.126 states that all drivers shall yield the right of way to emergency vehicles.

When an emergency vehicle approaches, drivers are to immediately pull over parallel to the nearest edge, stop, and remain in a stopped position until the vehicle has passed. When an emergency vehicle is stopped on the roadside,

drivers are to vacate the lane closest to the emergency vehicle. If that is not possible, drivers shall slow to a speed that is 20 MPH less than the posted limit when the speed limit is 25 MPH or greater; or travel at 5 MPH when the posted limit is 20 MPH.