



The American Driving Society, Inc.

Trail & Recreational Driving Safety List

- Never remove your bridle while your horse is put to a carriage.
- Do not tie your horse to a trailer if still hitched to a carriage.
- Teach your horse to “whoa” and “stand” before attempting a drive away from home.
- Check if there is drinking water available at the driving facility.
- Before the drive, check for harness wear and vehicle soundness.
- Make sure your breeching is properly adjusted.
- Use noseband/caveson for a bridle with blinkers to keep the cheeks from gaping.
- Consider using a gullet strap, or braid your horse’s mane into your bridle to prevent easy removal.
- Law requires a Slow Moving Vehicle sign if driving on public roads. It must be visible and three feet above the ground.
- Consider a safety vest, leg reflectors and/or a bicycle flag and lights for better visibility.
- Have a Spares Kit including halter(s) and lead(s) for each horse, and a First Aid kit for horses and humans. Consider wearing an up to date medical armband, at minimum for the driver.
- Carry a fully charged cell phone on your person. Know the drive manager’s number.
- Wear appropriate clothing, including sturdy footwear, driving gloves, and well-fitted equestrian helmet.
- Carry a whip. It “replaces” your riding legs. Don’t use reins for a “go forward” cue.
- If driving a pair, you need a groom. Do not drive two or more horses by yourself.
- When the horse is put to the vehicle, a knowledgeable driver needs to be in the vehicle with the reins in hand.
- Do not lead the horse from the ground while it is put to a vehicle.
- The driver is always the first person in the vehicle and the last one out.



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- Stay on marked trails. Watch the trail ahead for turkeys, deer, and other animals. Avoid being out during hunting seasons.
- Do not let your horse nibble on plants along the trail. Some may be poisonous.
- Go from light to dark areas slowly so horse's eyes can adjust.
- Cross roadways as quickly as possible. Cross perpendicular to railroad tracks.
- Cross bridges with care. Observe the condition of the bridge before you cross.
- Descend steep grades slowly. Support your horse, especially with metal shoes on pavement.
- Call out to another driver to ask to pass. Once past, leave plenty of room between turnouts. Do not blow past another turnout.
- If a driver meets a rider, stop the carriage. Riding horses are often afraid of moving wheels. Allow the rider to determine how to safely pass.
- If driving on the road, drive in the middle of the lane. Look for places to get off the road safely.