

Taking Control of Your Driving Options
A Self-Awareness Questionnaire

You want to stay active in your community and remain as independent as possible, for as long as possible. An important first step in doing so is to honestly assess your current abilities behind the wheel so that you can plan ahead for the day when you have to limit or stop driving. Use this questionnaire • like a mirror to help you see yourself more clearly. Helpful resources follow the questions.

1. How important is driving in your life?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not at all important

How confident are you with your current driving ability?

- Extremely confident
- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Somewhat unconfident
- I'm concerned about my driving

The following areas are important in driving safely:

Vision

How would you rate your vision?

- Very good. Easy to read signs, glare doesn't bother me, I can see well at night.
- Good
- Bothersome at times
- Very bad (daylight), I have problems reading signs, seeing roadway markings.
- Very bad (night time), I have trouble handling glare.

Reaction Time

How would you rate your reaction time?

- Very good. I can stop quickly and handle fast moving and heavy traffic.
- Good
- Not as good as it could be.
- Very bad. Not reacting in time, frequently having to stop quickly.

Flexibility

How would you rate your flexibility?

Very good. Can raise arms above my shoulders easily, turn head to see over my shoulder. No trouble checking to see vehicles in the blind spot).

Good

Not as good as it could be. Trouble seeing over shoulder, getting in and out of car.

Very bad. Great difficulty turning head to check my blind spot.

Challenging Situations

Does driving in any of the following situations make you feel anxious?

(Check all that apply)

On freeways

In rain

At night

When I'm being tailgated

When merging into traffic

When making left turns

When driving in unfamiliar places

Other:

Medications

Have you reviewed your prescription, over-the-counter and herbal medications with your doctor to see how they may be affecting your driving?

Yes No

Considering Future Possibilities for Transportation

When you think about your transportation future, how aware are you of transportation resources other than your own car?

Very aware, I know about local buses, train stations, vans service, volunteer driver programs, or walking and biking routes.

Somewhat aware, I know who to call for information.

I don't know of any.

I know of some, but I'm not comfortable using them.

Don't know and don't care to know.

How You "Fit" in Your Car

When you are driving, seeing traffic and pedestrians is as important as obeying the laws. Make sure that you are at least 11 inches from the steering wheel and you can:

- 1) see three inches over the steering wheel;
- 2) reach the pedals;
- 3) see behind you when your head is turned.

Sometimes adjusting your seat or sitting on a pillow can help you see around you. If you have trouble reaching the pedals, talk to a car dealer about installing pedal extenders, or see a driver rehabilitation specialist for vehicle adaptations that can extend your safe driving years. <http://www.driver-ed.org/custom/directory-cdrs/?pageid=320>

Resources

"Safe Driving for Older Adults" National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/olddrive/OlderAdultswebsite/>

Brochures on headlight glare, flexibility and other issues important to older drivers are available from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety
www.seniordrivers.org.

AARP's "Driving Safety Program".

To find classes in your area, call 1-888-AARP-NOW

The Auto Club offers a "Safe Driving for Seniors" program.
Call your local Auto Club office for a schedule of classes.

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