FLORIDA TRIP TIPS GUIDE

A SAFER FLORIDA
HIGHWAY SAFETY & MOTOR VEHICLES

If you are visiting Florida, welcome to our beautiful state!

If you already live here, then you know about the beauty and wonders of Florida. The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles hopes you enjoy your travels across the state. With more than 18 million residents, 15 million licensed drivers, 16 million registered vehicles and 88 million visitors, Florida's roads can be some of the busiest in the country. We ask all motorists to obey traffic laws and practice good driving habits.

The mission of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles is "Providing Highway Safety and Security through Excellence in Service, Education and Enforcement." We work hard to develop, maintain and support a safe driving environment through quality law enforcement, public education, and customer service. We encourage everyone traveling in Florida to join us as we lead the way to "A Safer Florida."

Welcome to Florida!

General Safety Tips

Driving in Florida

- Drive on the right side of the road.
- Keep your driver license, proof of insurance, registration or car rental documents with you at all times.
- Speed restrictions are strictly enforced.
- Turn on your wipers and head lights (not your hazard lights) when it rains.
- If you are stopped by law enforcement, remain in the car and let the officer come to you, unless directed otherwise by the officer.

Driving Under the Influence (DUI)

- In Florida you must be 21 years of age to purchase, consume or possess alcohol.
- Open containers of alcoholic beverages are not allowed within vehicles in Florida.
- Drivers with a .08 blood alcohol level (BAL) or higher are presumed to be impaired.
- Fines can range from $300 up to $1000 for a first offense. (These fines do not include possible court costs.)
- Offenders will be given 50 hours of community service.
- Probation will be for no more than one year.
- Any person convicted of DUI shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than 6 months for a first conviction.
- Vehicles will be impounded for 10 days.
- The offender's driver license will be revoked for at least 6 months.
- It is unlawful for persons under the age of 21 to have a .02 BAL and to drive or be in actual physical control of a motor vehicle.
- Drivers under the age of 18 with a .02 BAL may be taken to an addictions receiving facility.

Distracted Driving

Potential Distractions include:

- Cell phone use, including texting
- Eating or drinking
- Other people, inside or outside the vehicle
- Outside traffic or other vehicles
- Adjusting radio/cd player/other devices
- Smoking

Please avoid these distractions!

General Safety Tips

Move Over Law for Emergency Vehicles

www.flhsmv.gov/fhp/misc/MoveOver.htm

- When approaching emergency vehicles with emergency lights on, motorists are required to move over one lane away from the emergency vehicle as soon as it is safe to do so. Move Over, It's the Law!
- On a two-lane road, drivers must reduce speed by 20 miles per hour below the posted speed limit.
- If a driver cannot move over safely, the driver must reduce their speed by 20 miles per hour below the posted speed limit.

If a Law Enforcement Officer pulls you over

- Slowly and carefully pull off the road.
- At night, turn on your interior lights or stop in a well lit area.
- Remain in your vehicle unless asked to do otherwise.
- If you are pulled over by an unmarked law enforcement vehicle, call 911 to verify.

Work Zone

- Stay alert! Be patient.
- Pay close attention to changes in traffic patterns and speed limits.
- Turn on your headlights.
- Pay attention to construction workers.
- Keep up with the traffic flow.
- Don't change lanes in a work zone.
- Expect the unexpected!
- Speeding fines are doubled in work zones when workers are present.

General Safety Tips

Aggressive Drivers

- Do not engage them.
- Get out of the way.
- Avoid eye contact.
- Don't gesture.
- Report serious aggressive driving to law enforcement by calling *FHP.

Florida GrandDriver

What You Should Know About Aging and Driving:

- Know the traffic rules and signs.
- Avoid risky drive times.
- Find a safe way to your destination.
- Take a driver refresher course.
- Drive a safe car.
- Have your hearing and vision checked annually.

Florida GrandDriver®

Get Around Safe and Sound

Go to www.floridagranddriver.com

Handling Emergencies/Breakdowns

- Move the vehicle entirely off the road, if possible.
- Get all passengers out of and away from vehicle to a safe area.
- Turn on the vehicle's emergency flashers.
- Raise the hood of vehicle.
- Call *FHP for assistance.

Wet Brakes

- Pump brakes lightly after driving through water.
- Be prepared - brakes may pull to one side or may not hold at all.
- Dry the brakes by driving slowly in a low gear and applying the brakes lightly.

Tire Blowout

- Don't use the brakes.
- Concentrate on steering.
- Reduce speed slowly.
- Brake lightly after the car is under control.
- Pull off the roadway at a safe speed.

Driving in Fog

- Drive with the head lights on.
- Do NOT use the high beams.
- Slow down and use caution.
- Use wipers and defrosters to maximize your visibility.
- Use the right edge of road or road markings as a guide.

Submerging Motor Vehicles

Manual Windows

- After a crash, regain control, stay calm and don't panic.
- Unbuckle your seat belt and any passenger's.
- Roll down the manual window and swim to safety.

Electric Windows

- Wait until the vehicle is almost flooded and take a deep breath.
- Use a heavy object in the vehicle to break out the bottom of a side or a back window (not the windshield).
- Push the glass outward and swim to safety.

General Safety Tips

Traffic Crashes

Your Responsibilities

Stop

- If you are in a crash you must stop.
- If anyone is hurt, you must get help.
- If your motor vehicle is blocking the flow of traffic, move it out of the way of traffic. If you cannot move your vehicle alone, ask for help or call a tow truck.

Report the Crash

- Be prepared to give your name, address, vehicle registration number, proof of insurance and your driver license to others involved in the crash or law enforcement, upon request.
- If the crash caused injury, death or property damage, the incident must be reported to law enforcement.

Court Appearance

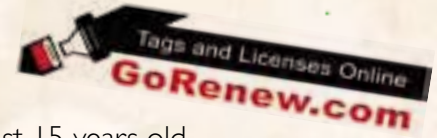
- If you are charged in a crash, you may have to go to court.

Insurance Laws

- Florida's Financial Responsibility Law requires owners and operators to be financially responsible for damages and/or injuries they may cause to others in a crash.
- Florida's No-Fault Law requires owners of motor vehicles to obtain minimum coverage of $10,000 Personal Injury Protection (PIP) and $10,000 of Property Damage Liability (PDL).
- Motorists must carry proof of insurance while operating a motor vehicle in Florida.

Driver License

Requirements to obtain a Florida Driver License



Learner's Permit

- To apply you must be at least 15 years old
- You must provide:
  - Two original or certified forms of identification
  - Your Social Security Number
  - A parental consent form
  - Proof of completion of Traffic Law and Substance Abuse Education Course
- You must:
  - Pass vision, road signs and road rules test
  - Be in compliance with school attendance, if under 18
- Drive only until 7:00 P.M. during the first three months and until 10:00 P.M. thereafter
- Drive with a licensed driver who is at least 21years of age and occupies the front seat

Operator's License

To receive your operator's license, you must:

- Provide a Florida Learners License, which has been held for at least one year with no traffic convictions
- Provide parent or guardian certification of at least 50 hours behind the wheel with at least 10 hours at night
- Pass an on-the-road driving test and written test

Check out www.flhsmv.gov/offices/ to find the closest office.

Restrictions

- 16 year old drivers can drive between 6 A.M. and 11 P.M. unless accompanied by a licensed driver at least 21 years old and in the front passenger seat or when going to or from work.
- 17 year old drivers can drive between 5 A.M. and 1 A.M. unless accompanied by a licensed driver at least 21 years old and in the front passenger seat or when traveling to or from work.

***Parents and guardians can go to www6.hsmv.state.fl.us/DLCheck/main.jsp to check teen driver records.*

Persons required to obtain a Florida Driver License

www.flhsmv.gov

- Non-Residents-must obtain a Florida driver license within 30 days if they are:
  - accepting employment in Florida
  - engaging in any trade or profession in Florida
  - entering children in public schools in Florida
- Military Personnel-Members stationed in Florida and dependents must get a Florida driver license if:
  - the service member or spouse claims a homestead exemption
  - the service member becomes employed
  - the spouse becomes employed
  - a child becomes employed

Driver License

Immigrants

- Each immigrant who applies for an original Florida driver license or identification card must submit all of the following identification:
  - Alien Registration Receipt card (Green card, Form I-151 or I-551)
  - I-551 stamp in passport or on I-94 form
  - Immigration Judges Order with the customer's A-number granting asylum
  - I-797 with customer's A-Number
  - I-797 or another form from the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services

Non-Immigrants

- Each non-immigrant who applies for an original Florida driver license or identification card must submit all of the following:
  - Employment Authorization Card (Form 1688B or I-766)
  - Proof of non-immigrant classification (Form I-94, not expired, with required supporting attachments)
  - F-1 and M-1 classification must also be accompanied by I-20
  - I J-1 or J-2 designation, must be accompanied by an IAP-66
  - Refugee, asylee and parolee classifications, must be accompanied by additional documentation

Canadian Citizens

- Canadian citizens are non-immigrants and are allowed to stay in the U.S. without obtaining BCIS documentation. However, to obtain a Florida driver license or ID card, the following is needed:
  - Canadian passport
  - Original or certified Canadian birth certificate
  - Canadian Naturalization Certificate (if applicable)

Persons required to obtain a Florida Vehicle/Vessel Registration

- If moving to Florida, you must register your vehicle/vessel within 10 days after:
  - accepting employment in Florida
  - engaging in any trade or profession in Florida
  - entering children in public schools in Florida
- To register a vehicle, you must have vehicle insurance from a Florida insurance agent.
- Take proof of Florida insurance, the original out-of-state title and verification of the motor vehicle's vehicle identification number (VIN) and completed form HSMV 82040 or 82042 to your local Florida county tax collector's office.

Motorcycles

www.motorcycles.hsmv.state.fl.us/

Age Limitations

- No one under 16 years of age may legally operate a two or three wheel motor vehicle in Florida that travels more than 20 MPH.
- No one with a Florida Learners Permit may legally operate any two or three wheel motor vehicle in Florida.
- Persons under 21 years of age must successfully complete the Florida Rider Training Program 15-Hour Basic Rider Course to obtain a Motorcycle Endorsement or a motorcycle only license, which also requires the same knowledge test as required for a regular Class E driver license.
- Effective July 1, 2008, ALL first time motorcycle drivers, regardless of age, must complete the basic motorcycle safety course.

Helmet and Eye Protection Requirements

- Anyone under 21 years of age MUST wear a Department of Transportation (DOT) approved motorcycle helmet when operating or riding on a motorcycle.
- Anyone at least 21 years of age may ride a motorcycle without a helmet ONLY if they carry medical insurance coverage of at least $10,000.
- Everyone must wear DOT approved eye-protection while riding a motorcycle.

Know Your Responsibilities

- Be visible.
- Wear proper clothing.
- Use your headlight(s) at all times.
- Ride in the best lane position to see and be seen.

Communicate Your Intentions

- Use proper signals, brake light and lane position.
- Maintain adequate space from other vehicles when following, being followed, passing, and being passed.

RIDE PROUD. DRESS LOUD.

- It is important for motorcyclists to wear clothing that is not only protective but visible during all hours of the day.
- While inconspicuous black clothing may be in fashion, it offers little visibility on roadways. Other color categories which are difficult to detect include: gray, beige and other neutrals.

For more safety tips go to:
www.rideprouddressloud.com

Pedestrians & Bicyclists

www.flhsmv.gov/fhp/

Safety Rules for Pedestrians

- Always walk on the shoulder of the road facing traffic.
- Look left and right before stepping off any curb to cross a street.
- Cross only at intersections or designated crosswalks.
- Cross with the green light or WALK signal.
- Wear light colored or reflective clothing.
- If you must walk on a street at night, use a flashlight.
- Carry some form of ID.

Rules of the road for bicycles

- Ride with the flow of traffic.
- Obey all traffic laws.
- Yield to traffic when appropriate.
- Be predictable.
- Stay alert!

Safety Rules for Bicyclists

- Wear a properly fitted bicycle helmet.
- Adjust your bicycle to fit your height.
- See and be seen.
- Control your bicycle.
- Watch for and avoid road hazards.
- Avoid riding at night.
- Look before turning.
- Watch for parked cars.
- Carry some form of ID.
- While riding between sunset and sunrise, lights (in front and rear of the bicycle) are required.

Seat Belts & Child Restraints

www.flhsmv.gov/fhp/cps

Seat Belts

- Drivers and front seat passengers must wear seat belts.
- All persons under the age of 18 must wear a seat belt or be in a child safety seat no matter where they are riding in a motor vehicle.

Seat Belts:

- Keep you from being thrown from the vehicle
- Keep you from being thrown against others inside the vehicle
- Keep the driver behind the wheel and in control of the vehicle

Child Restraints

- It is recommended that children age 12 and younger not be allowed to sit in the front passenger seat, particularly when there is an active airbag. Children under 8 should ride in a booster seat.
- All children age 3 and younger must sit in either a crash tested federally approved child restraint device or a vehicle manufacturer's integrated child seat.
- Children ages 4 and 5 must be placed in either a separate carrier, an integrated child seat or a seat belt.
- Infants should ride in a child safety seat and in the rear facing position until they are one year old AND weigh at least 30 pounds.
- It is dangerous to place infants in a rear facing child safety seat in front of an active airbag.

Remember

- The back seat is safer than the front seat.
- Use a combination lap/shoulder seat belt.
- Don't tuck a shoulder belt under the arm.
- Don't put a shoulder belt behind a child's back.
- Don't strap two children into one belt.
- Don't let anyone ride with the seat back reclined.

www.trafficsign.us/index.html

Traffic Signals

Red = Come to a complete stop.

Yellow = Stop if you can.

Green = Go!

ALSO:

- **Flashing Red Light** = Stop!
- **Flashing Yellow Light** = Move forward with caution.
- **Non-Operating Signals** = Treat as a four way stop.

Signs

Travel along any Florida highway and you will see a wide variety of road signs. In addition to the posted message, every sign's color tells you something about what's ahead.

Yellow = General Warning Signs
Unexpected Conditions

Red = Stop!
Do not enter or wrong way

Blue = Motorist Services
or Guidance

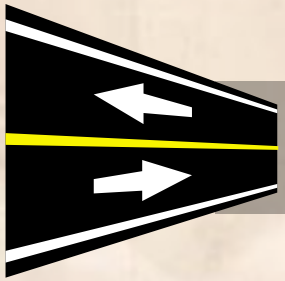
White = Regulatory Signs
Traffic Laws

Orange = Construction
or Maintenance Warning

Brown = Public Recreation Areas
and Scenic Guidance

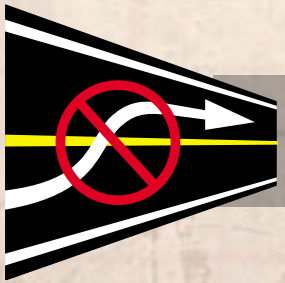
Guides, Directional Information
Helpful or interesting information

Pavement Markings

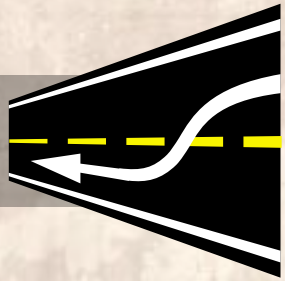


Yellow Lane Lines
Used to separate traffic moving in opposite directions

White Lane Lines
Used to separate traffic moving in the same direction

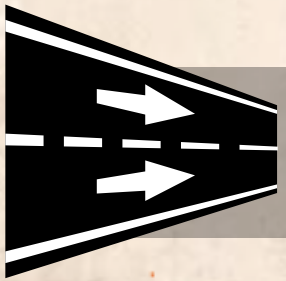


Solid Yellow Lines
Used to prohibit vehicles from crossing the line



Broken Yellow Lines
Motorist can pass with caution

Solid White Lines
Used to prohibit vehicles from changing lanes



Broken White Line
Used to separate two lanes travelling in the same direction. Change lanes with caution.

Double Solid White Lines
Used to separate two lanes of traffic going in the same direction. Crossing is prohibited.

Use of directional signals prior to and while you are changing lanes is required by law!

Signals, Signs & Pavement Markings

Handicapped Parking Permits

www.flhsmv.gov/html/titlinf.html

Florida Resident Applicant

- Complete application to establish eligibility.
- A Florida driver license or Florida identification card is needed.

Fees

- A service fee may be applied by the county tax collector offices or tag agencies.

Permits from other States

- Florida law enforcement will accept a valid license plate or parking permit issued to a disabled person by any other state or district.

Citizen of Another Country

- A temporary disabled parking permit may be issued to a citizen of another country who is here in a visitor status if the following is submitted:
  - A copy of the out-of-country parking permit
  - A passport or comparable identification to verify ownership of the out-of-country parking permit (A Florida driver license or ID card is not required)

Temporary Permit

- A valid temporary parking permit may be issued for up to 6 months.
- A fee will be charged at the county tax collector's office or tag agency.
- Permits are issued at the county tax collector offices.

FYI's

www.flhsmv.gov

Lost Traffic Ticket

- If you lose your traffic ticket, you must contact the Office of the Clerk of the Court in the county where the ticket was issued.
- Tickets must be paid directly to the County Clerk of Court located in the county where the ticket was issued and processed.
- Online listing of Florida Clerks of Court: www.dlis.dos.state.fl.us/fgils/coclerks.html

Gun Laws

- Florida law gives citizens the right to possess and transport a firearm or other weapon for self-defense or other lawful purpose without a license if securely encased within the vehicle.
- There is no firearm registration in the state of Florida.
- There are 28 states with reciprocity with Florida. Go to www.licgweb.doacs.state.fl.us/newsconcealed/carry.html to find out more.
- If pulled over, please give the law enforcement officer any concealed weapons licenses you may have and inform them you have a firearm.

School Bus

- On a two-way street or highway, all drivers moving either direction must stop when approaching a school bus with lights activated and the stop sign displayed.
- On a divided highway, raised barrier or unpaved median (at least 5 feet wide), drivers do not have to stop if moving in the opposite direction of the bus.

Triple Towing

- A driver is permitted to tow only one other vehicle or trailer. (The exception applies to commercially permitted vehicles.)

Riding in RV or trailers

- No person or persons shall occupy a travel trailer while it is being moved upon a public street or highway.

Riding in the Bed of a Truck

- It is unlawful for anyone age 18 or younger to ride in the bed of a truck when operated on any state, county or municipal road.

Go Renew is a fast and easy way to do business:

- Renew your license plate (registration), mobile home or vessel registration, or disabled parking placard at www.GoRenew.com
- Change address on your license plate (registration), mobile home or vessel registration or disabled parking placard at www.GoRenew.com
- On-line motor vehicle checks are available free of charge at www6.hsmv.state.fl.us/rrdmvcheck/mvchecking
- Renew your driver license or identification card at www.GoRenew.com

Unique to Florida

SunPass – 1-888-TOLL-FLA
www.sunpass.com/

If you are going to be traveling in areas of Florida where tolls will be collected, consider investing in a SunPass.

- A SunPass is an electronic transponder that attaches to your windshield. The SunPass will allow you to drive through designated SunPass, E-Pass and O-Pass lanes.
- The cost of the tolls are automatically deducted from a prepaid account.
- If you are interested in getting the SunPass, log onto www.SunPass.com for more information

Our mission is to improve notification of loved ones by law enforcement. When tragedy strikes . . . family and loved ones need to know.

This service will allow you to provide emergency contact information to law enforcement in the event of an emergency. This information may save crucial time if ever it becomes necessary to contact family members or other loved ones. This service is only available to individuals holding a current Florida Driver License or Florida Identification Card.

Go to www6.hsmv.state.fl.us/dlcheck/findcustomer to enter your information.

FYI's

Florida's Turnpike

Florida Turnpike – 1-800-749-7453
www.floridasturnpike.com/

- Florida's Turnpike is 460 miles of beautiful and safe toll highways.
- The Turnpike system includes the Mainline from Miami to Central Florida, as well as the Homestead Extension, the Sawgrass Expressway, the Seminole Expressway, the Beachline Expressway (formerly know as Martin Andersen Bee Line Expressway), the Southern Connector Extension of the Central Florida Greeneway, Veterans Expressway, the Suncoast Parkway and the Polk Parkway.
- The average number of drivers on the Florida Turnpike each day is 1.8 million.

IMPORTANT
PHONE NUMBERS AND CONTACTS

EMERGENCIES 9-1-1
Call 911 to report life-threatening situations such as roadside emergencies and highway crashes.

FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL
www.flhsmv.gov
Call *FHP OR *347 to report drunk drivers, traffic crashes, stranded or disabled motorists, or any suspicious incidents.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (FDOT) TRAFFIC INFORMATION
www.dot.state.fl.us
Call 511 statewide service (Florida Department of Transportation) for traffic information for the entire state from construction projects on Florida's highways and many other various transportation related links.

VISIT FLORIDA *www.visitflorida.com*
VISIT FLORIDA is the state's official source for travel planning for the sunshine state. VISIT FLORIDA also operates the state's five official Florida Welcome Centers at I-10, Campbelltown, Jennings, Yulee, Pensacola, U.S. 231, I-75, I-95 and the Florida Capitol in Tallahassee.

THE STATE'S OFFICIAL SOURCE FOR TRAVEL PLANNING
VISIT FLORIDA

HURRICANE TRACKING MAP
www.floridadisaster.org/kids/index2/htm
This link is offered as a guide to safety actions for Florida weather events and includes a variety of safety activities you can practice at home with friends.

FLORIDA REST AREA and WELCOME CENTER INFORMATION
www.dot.state.fl.us/statemaintenanceoffice/ra_map.htm
Link showing the entire state of Florida's rest areas, welcome centers, turnpike service plazas and truck comfort stations.

DRIVING DISTANCES in FLORIDA
www3.dot.state.fl.us/mileage/ default.asp
Link that allows you to type in the to and from addesses to get the actual mileage for your trip. Distances are computed along the shortest route.

FLORIDA DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
www.floridadisaster.org/index.asp
Information on current weather conditions, beach safety awareness, hazardous weather and a number of safety prevention measures for your stay in the sunshine state.

Florida Disaster.org

AMBER ALERT HOTLINE
www.floridaamberalert.com
AMBERT ALERT empowers law enforcement, the media and the public to combat child abductions by sending out immediate, up-to-date information that aids in the child's safe recovery.

TRIP TIPS

This report was prepared for the State Safety Office, Department of Transportation, State of Florida, in cooperation with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation and/or Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation.

The conclusions and opinions expressed in these reports are those of the subgrantee and do not necessarily represent those of the State of Florida, Department of Transportation, State Safety Office, the U.S. Department of Transportation, or any other agency of the State or Federal Government.

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www.dot.state.fl.us

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