

TEACH MY TEEN TO DRIVE

THE CALM COACH SYSTEM

The First Drive Checklist

7 Things to Do Before Your Teen Gets Behind the Wheel

Most parents wing it. The first drive becomes chaos. This checklist ensures your teen's first time behind the wheel is calm, structured, and sets the tone for every drive after.

INSIDE THIS CHECKLIST

- ✓ Choose the Right Location
- ✓ Adjust Everything BEFORE Starting the Car
- ✓ Set ONE Goal for the Drive
- ✓ Agree on a Communication Plan
- ✓ Put Your Phone Away (Yes, You Too)
- ✓ Practice the 3-Second Pause
- ✓ End with What Went RIGHT

FREE from teachmyteentodrive.com

Print this. Bring it to the car. Thank us later.

THE FIRST DRIVE CHECKLIST

1

Choose the Right Location

Start in an empty parking lot. Not your neighborhood. Not a quiet street. An EMPTY parking lot early on a weekend morning. Your teen needs space to make mistakes without consequences.

TIP: Church parking lots on weekday afternoons are perfect.

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2

Adjust Everything BEFORE Starting the Car

Mirrors, seat position, steering wheel height. Do all of this with the car OFF. Once the engine starts, your teen's stress level jumps. Don't add "adjust your mirror" to their mental load.

TIP: Teach the mirror check: left, center, right. Make it a habit from drive one.

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3

Set ONE Goal for the Drive

Not five. Not "let's practice everything." ONE goal. "Today we're going to get comfortable with starting and stopping." That's it. Your teen knows what success looks like.

TIP: Write the goal down. Say it out loud together before starting.

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4

Agree on a Communication Plan

Before the car moves, agree: "I'll give you directions calmly. If I say 'slow down,' just ease off the gas. If I say 'stop,' brake gently." This prevents the panic-yelling cycle.

TIP: Use the phrase: 'I'll tell you what to do BEFORE you need to do it.'

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5

Put Your Phone Away (Yes, You Too)

This isn't just about distraction. It's about respect. If you're asking your teen to focus 100%, model it. Phone goes in the glovebox. For both of you.

TIP: This sets the standard for every future drive.

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6

Practice the 3-Second Pause

Before you react to ANYTHING your teen does, pause for 3 seconds. Count in your head. This is the single most important coaching technique. Your instinct is to gasp, grab, or yell. The pause stops all three.

TIP: Breathe in for 3 seconds. Then speak. Every time.

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7

End with What Went RIGHT

After the drive, don't start with corrections. Ask: "What's one thing you feel good about?" Then share YOUR positive observation. Corrections come later. Confidence comes first.

TIP: A teen who feels successful will WANT to practice again.

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BONUS: PHRASES TO USE (NOT YELL)

Instead of:

"WATCH OUT!"



Say:

"Check your right mirror."

Instead of:

"SLOW DOWN!"



Say:

"Ease off the gas a bit."

Instead of:

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!"



Say:

"Let's pull over and talk about that."

Instead of:

"YOU'RE TOO CLOSE!"



Say:

"Give a bit more space to the car ahead."

Instead of:

"BE CAREFUL!"



Say:

"Stay in the center of your lane."

Instead of:

GASP



Say:

"You're doing fine. Nice and steady."

This Checklist Is Just the Beginning

The first drive is ONE session. You have 50+ hours ahead.
Highway merging. Night driving. Bad weather. Close calls.

The Calm Coach System gives you the exact phrases,
techniques, and frameworks for ALL of it.

Get The Full System - \$97

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TEACH MY TEEN TO DRIVE

Educational resource for parents. Not a licensed driver's education course.