



Hands-Free Driving in Ohio — Calls, Texts & Voice the Legal Way

Calls, texts and voice the legal way in Ohio An Extended Guide · No. 1934

————— An Extended Guide · No. 1934 —————

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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1. The 60-Second Version If you only read one page, read this one. Ohio law now treats your phone the same way it treats a seat belt: it is something you must handle the right way, every single time you drive. The short version is simple. You cannot hold your phone or use it in your hand while the car is moving. You can still make calls, answer calls, and send a text, but you do it hands-free, with the phone in a mount or paired to the car, and you talk instead of type. An officer can stop you for holding the phone alone. None of this is hard once it is set up, and that is the whole point of this guide. The law may sound strict on paper, but living within it is mostly a matter of a few good habits that quickly become second nature. Once your phone and car are set up to work together, you will barely think about any of it. Keep the phone out of your hand and in a mount or paired to the car. Take calls through Bluetooth or the car's screen, hands on the wheel. Send texts by voice, never by typing or scrolling. Turn on Driving Focus on an iPhone or Driving Mode on Android so it all happens on its own. If anyone under 18 drives your car, they cannot touch a phone at all. WATCH OUT Do every bit of your setup — pairing, mounts, settings — while safely parked. Never poke at the phone to get it ready while you are rolling. THE LAW 2. What Ohio's Hands-Free Law Actually Says One sentence covers most of it. The law came from a bill called Senate Bill 288. It took effect on April 4, 2023. For the first six months, officers handed out warnings to let folks learn the new rule. Starting October 5, 2023, they could begin writing real tickets. The heart of it is one plain idea: while you are driving, you may not hold a phone or other electronic device in your hand, and you may not use it in your hand. The phone does not have to be glued to your ear for it to count. Holding it on your lap, propping it with a hand, or tapping out a message all fall under the same rule. The law was written to cut down on the crashes that happen when eyes and hands leave the road.

GOOD TO KNOW

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The rule is about the device being in your hand and your attention being on it. Hands-free use through your car or a mount is exactly what the law steers you toward. THE LAW 3. What 'Primary Offense' Means for You Police can stop you for this alone. You may hear the phrase 'primary offense,' and it matters more than it sounds. It means an officer does not need any other reason to pull you over. In the old days, a phone ticket was often a secondary thing — you had to be speeding or weaving first, and the phone was tacked on. Not anymore. If an officer sees the phone in your hand while you drive, that by itself is reason enough to stop you. That is why the simple habit of keeping the phone out of your hand, every time, is the thing that keeps you out of trouble. There is no 'just this once' that is safe, because the sight of the phone in your hand is the whole offense. The phone in your hand is enough reason for a stop. You do not have to be driving badly for it to count. The safest habit is simply never holding it while moving. THE LAW 4. The Fine, the Points, and Work Zones What a ticket can cost. A first offense can carry a fine of up to one hundred fifty dollars and two points on your license. Points add up, and enough of them can touch your insurance, so they are worth avoiding. There is one place where it gets a lot steeper: work zones. In a construction or maintenance zone, the fines are doubled. Ohio has plenty of orange-barrel stretches in the warmer months, and those are exactly the places where a distracted driver does the most harm, so the state leans hard on them. The real cost, of course, is never the money. It is the fender-bender or worse that a glance at the phone can cause. The ticket is just the state's way of nudging you back to the road. Where you are What it can cost First offense, normal road Up to \$150 and 2 points In a work zone The fine is doubled

THE LAW

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Repeat offenses Higher fines and more points 5. The Free Course That Can Erase a First Ticket A second chance worth knowing about. Here is a piece of good news that many people miss. If you get a first offense, the state offers a way to have the fine and the points waived. You complete an online distracted-driving course that the state puts out, and in exchange the penalty can be set aside. It is the kind of thing a court will tell you about, but it is easy to overlook when you are flustered by a ticket. The course is a short refresher on why the law exists and how to drive without the phone in hand. If this ever happens to you or someone in the family, ask the court about the distracted-driving course before you simply pay the ticket. It can save the money and, more importantly, keep the points off your record. TIP If you or a family member gets a first ticket, ask the court about the state's online distracted-driving course before paying. For a first offense it can wipe out both the fine and the points. WHAT YOU CAN DO 6. Calls and Voice-to-Text Are Still Fine You are not cut off from the world. People sometimes hear 'hands-free law' and think they can never touch the phone again. That is not it at all. If you are 18 or older, you can still make and receive phone calls, as long as your hands are free — through the car's Bluetooth, the car's built-in system, or a single tap or swipe to answer. You can use voice-to-text, where you speak and the phone writes your message for you. You can ask the voice assistant to call someone, play music, or start directions. What the law takes away is the holding and the typing and the staring. What it leaves you is nearly everything you actually need, done with your voice and your eyes on the road. Make and take calls hands-free, through the car or a headset. Dictate texts by speaking instead of typing. Ask the voice assistant to call, navigate, or play music. Answer a call with a single tap or swipe if your setup needs it.

WHAT YOU CAN'T DO**6. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

7. The Things to Leave Alone When in doubt, don't touch it. It helps to have a clear list of what is now off-limits while the car is moving. You cannot hold the phone in your hand for any reason. You cannot type a text, dial a number by hand, or scroll through messages, email, or social media. You cannot watch a video or record one. You cannot hold the phone up to take a photo. Even reading something on a phone you are holding is the kind of thing that gets you stopped. The simple test is this: if the phone is in your hand and your eyes are on it, you are on the wrong side of the law. Set everything up before you roll, and let your voice do the rest. WATCH OUT Scrolling at a red light still counts as using the phone. The law applies whenever you are in the driver's seat of a vehicle that is on the road, not only when the wheels are turning. YOUNG DRIVERS 8. The Under-18 Rule for Grandkids Stricter, and for good reason. There is a special, stricter rule for drivers under 18, and it is worth sitting down with any teenager in the family to go over. A driver under 18 may not use an electronic device at all while driving — not even hands-free. No calls, no voice texts, no fiddling with the phone through the car screen. The phone should be put away and left alone for the whole drive. New drivers have the most to learn and the least room for a mistake, so the state holds them to the highest standard. If you have a grandchild learning to drive, the kindest thing you can do is help them build the habit of silencing the phone and tucking it away before they turn the key. Drivers under 18 cannot use a phone at all while driving. Hands-free does not make it legal for them. Best habit: phone silenced and out of reach before the drive starts. Lead by example — they learn from how you drive.

THE FINE PRINT

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9. When the Rules Bend a Little A few sensible exceptions. The law is not out to punish good sense in an emergency. There are exceptions written into it. You may use a phone to report an emergency, such as calling 911 to report a crash, a fire, a crime in progress, or a medical problem. You may use the phone when you are parked — pulled off the road or stopped somewhere safe and legal, not just halted at a light in traffic. Emergency responders doing their jobs have their own leeway as well. The thread running through every exception is safety: the law bends when using the phone is the safe, responsible thing to do, and it stays firm when the phone is just a distraction. If you truly need to make a real call or send a message, pull over somewhere safe first. GOOD TO KNOW Pulling into a parking lot or onto a safe shoulder to handle something on the phone is always allowed, and it is the right move whenever a task really cannot wait. GETTING SET UP 10. Pairing Your Phone to the Car by Bluetooth The one-time setup that does the heavy lifting. Bluetooth is the little wireless link that lets your phone and your car talk to each other without a cord. Once you pair them a single time, they find each other on their own every time you get in. Then your calls come through the car speakers, and the car's buttons answer and hang up for you — all completely hands-free. This is the backbone of driving legally, and it is a ten-minute job you do once, parked in the driveway.

- 1 Park the car and turn it on so the screen is awake.
- 2 On the car screen, find Settings, then Bluetooth or Phone, and choose to add or pair a device.
- 3 On your phone, open Settings, tap Bluetooth, and make sure it is turned on.
- 4 Watch for your car's name to appear on the phone, then tap it.
- 5 A code may show on both screens — check that they match and tap to confirm.
- 6 Make a test call to a friend and confirm it comes through the car speakers. WATCH OUT If your car's name never shows up, turn the car's Bluetooth off and on, then try again. If it still hides, give me a call and we will get it paired together.

GETTING SET UP

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11. Using the Car's Own Built-In System The buttons were made for this. Most cars built in the last fifteen years have a built-in way to handle calls, with a little phone button on the steering wheel or the dashboard. Once your phone is paired by Bluetooth, those buttons come alive. A button with a green phone picture answers or starts a call; a red one hangs up. Many cars also have a 'talk' button, often with a little speech symbol, that lets you say a name out loud to call someone. Learning these three buttons means you can run every call without ever reaching for the phone. Sit in the parked car for a few minutes and press each one so your fingers learn where they are. When they are second nature, going hands-free feels completely natural. Green phone button: answer or place a call. Red button: end the call. Talk or voice button: say a name to call hands-free. Steering-wheel volume keeps your hands on the wheel too. GETTING SET UP 12. CarPlay and Android Auto as Hands-Free Helpers Your phone, big and simple, on the car screen. If your car has CarPlay for an iPhone or Android Auto for an Android phone, you already own a wonderful hands-free tool. These put a large, simple version of your phone on the car's screen, with big buttons for calls, maps, and music, and a voice button that does nearly everything. Because the phone stays in your pocket or a mount and you work through the car screen and your voice, this is a tidy way to stay on the right side of the law. You plug in with a cable, or connect wirelessly on cars that allow it, and the car screen does the rest. I have a separate guide all about getting these two connected if yours is being stubborn. GOOD TO KNOW Even with CarPlay or Android Auto, keep your long glances off the screen. Set your destination before you leave and let the voice directions guide you.

GETTING SET UP

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13. A Good Phone Mount Changes Everything Give the phone a home that isn't your hand. A phone mount is a simple holder that clips to a vent, sticks to the dash, or grips the windshield, and it may be the single best few dollars you spend on driving. When the phone has a home up near your line of sight, you are never tempted to pick it up, and a quick glance at the map does not mean looking down into your lap. Choose one that holds the phone firmly and sits where you can see it without blocking your view of the road. A magnetic mount, with a small metal plate on the phone or case, makes dropping the phone in and out effortless. Set the phone in the mount before you drive and leave it there the whole trip. Vent clips are cheap and easy; magnetic mounts are the most convenient. Place it high enough for a quick glance, but never blocking your view. Make sure it holds the phone tight so it does not fall on bumpy roads. Load the phone into the mount while parked, then leave it alone. VOICE 14. Meet Siri, Your iPhone's Voice Helper Talk to it and keep driving. Siri is the iPhone's built-in voice helper, and it is tailor-made for hands-free driving. You wake it by saying 'Hey Siri' out loud, or by pressing a button, and then you simply tell it what you want in plain words. 'Hey Siri, call my daughter.' 'Hey Siri, text Tom I am running late.' 'Hey Siri, give me directions home.' It does the dialing, the typing, and the map-setting for you while your hands stay on the wheel. To make sure it is ready, open Settings, find Siri, and turn on 'Listen for Hey Siri' so you never have to touch the phone to wake it. A few minutes of practice in the driveway and you will wonder how you drove without it. Siri will not always get every word perfectly right, but for the everyday business of calling, texting, and setting directions, it is a faithful helper that keeps your hands where they belong.

- 1 Open Settings on the iPhone, then tap Siri (or Siri & Search).
- 2 Turn on 'Listen for Hey Siri' and follow the short voice setup.
- 3 Practice: say 'Hey Siri, what time is it' to be sure it hears you.
- 4 Try 'Hey Siri, call' and a name to place a hands-free call.

VOICE

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15. Meet Google Assistant on Android The same idea, for Android phones. Android phones have their own voice helper, usually called Google Assistant. It works the same friendly way as Siri. You say 'Hey Google' out loud, or press and hold the home button, then tell it what you need. 'Hey Google, call Mary.' 'Hey Google, send a text to my son.' 'Hey Google, navigate to the pharmacy.' It handles the calling and the typing so your hands never leave the wheel. To switch it on, open the Google app or your phone's settings, find Google Assistant, and turn on the 'Hey Google' voice wake-up. Like any helper, it gets better the more you use it, and a little practice while parked builds the confidence to lean on it out on the road. Say 'Hey Google' to wake it without touching the phone. Ask it to call, text, or navigate in plain words. Turn on 'Hey Google' in the Assistant settings so it is always listening. Speak naturally — you do not need robot words.

VOICE 16. Speaking a Text Instead of Typing It Your voice becomes the keyboard. Voice-to-text is the feature that lets you send a message without ever touching the keys. You start it by voice — 'Hey Siri, text Carol' or 'Hey Google, text Carol' — and then you simply say your message out loud. The phone turns your words into the text and offers to send it. It is not perfect; it may hear a word wrong now and then, and it will not always add the punctuation you would. But for the everyday 'on my way' or 'running ten minutes late,' it is a safe, legal way to stay in touch. If a message really needs to be long or exact, that is a sign to pull over and handle it parked. For the quick ones, let your voice do the work. TIP Keep spoken texts short and simple. If you have to read the screen to fix what it heard, you have drifted back into using the phone by hand — better to send it short or pull over.

DO NOT DISTURB**11. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

17. Turning On Apple's Driving Focus Let the iPhone quiet itself for you. The iPhone has a wonderful feature called Driving Focus, sometimes called Do Not Disturb While Driving. When it is on, the phone senses that you are driving and quietly holds your calls, texts, and notifications so they do not pester you. People who text you can even get an automatic reply that says you are driving and will respond later. The best setting is to let it turn on automatically when the phone notices car motion or connects to your car's Bluetooth. That way you never have to remember it. Set it once, parked, and the phone takes care of the rest every drive after that.

- 1 Open Settings on the iPhone and tap Focus.
 - 2 Tap Driving.
 - 3 Under 'Turn On Automatically,' choose Automatically or When Connected to Car Bluetooth.
 - 4 Set an Auto-Reply message if you like, so texters know you are driving.
 - 5 Save it and take a short drive to see it switch on by itself. **DO NOT DISTURB**
18. Turning On Android's Driving Mode The same quiet, for Android. Android has its own version, usually part of Google Assistant and called Driving Mode, along with a Do Not Disturb setting that can switch on while you drive. When it is on, it holds back the buzzes and rings, offers big voice-friendly buttons, and can read messages aloud and let you answer by voice. You can set it to start on its own when the phone connects to your car's Bluetooth or senses driving. Because Android phones differ a little from brand to brand, the exact wording on your menus may not match word for word, but the idea is always the same. If you cannot find it, this is a perfect thing to sort out together over a cup of coffee. Look in Settings under Google, then Driving Mode, or in the Assistant settings. Set it to start automatically on car Bluetooth or detected driving. It can read texts aloud and take your reply by voice. Menu names vary by phone brand — the feature is there even if the words differ.

DAY TO DAY

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19. Answering a Call the Legal Way Hands on the wheel, start to finish. Here is how a call should feel once everything is set up. The phone rings, but it rings through your car's speakers. A name shows on the car screen or you hear who it is. You press the green button on your steering wheel, say hello, and talk — hands never leaving the wheel, eyes never leaving the road. When you are done, you press the red button to hang up. At no point did you hold the phone or look at it. If you would rather not take the call, you simply let it go; with Driving Focus on, the caller may get a note that you are driving. That is the whole rhythm of hands-free calling, and it becomes second nature fast. After a week or two you will not even remember a time when you reached for the phone, because the car and the steering-wheel buttons will handle every call for you without a second thought. GOOD TO KNOW If a call comes in and you are not sure who it is, there is no rule that says you must answer. Letting it go to voicemail and calling back when parked is always the safe choice.

DAY TO DAY 20. The Single Tap or Swipe Rule One touch is allowed; a session is not. The law does leave room for a single, brief touch — one tap or one swipe — to answer or end a call, the way you might press a button on a headset. What it does not allow is holding the phone, dialing a whole number by hand, or thumbing through screens. The spirit of it is that a quick press to pick up is fine, but settling in for a session with the phone in your hand is not. The simplest way to stay well clear of the line is to lean on the steering-wheel buttons and your voice, so you rarely need even that one tap. When your setup does the answering for you, there is nothing to think about. A single tap or swipe to answer or hang up is allowed. Dialing a full number by hand is not. Scrolling or typing is never allowed. Steering-wheel buttons and voice keep you well clear of the line.

MAPS

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21. Setting Your Map Before You Roll Decide the destination parked. A map on the screen is one of the great gifts of a modern phone, but it can also be a trap if you fiddle with it while moving. The rule to live by is simple: set your destination before you pull out of the driveway. Type or speak the address while parked, start the directions, and then put the phone in its mount. From there, the map talks to you — 'in half a mile, turn right' — so you can follow along by ear with only quick glances. If you need to change the destination mid-trip, that is a job for a safe stop, or a job for your voice: 'Hey Siri, navigate to the hospital.' The phone does the work so your eyes can stay up.

- 1 While parked, open your map app (Apple Maps, Google Maps, or Waze).
 - 2 Type or speak your destination and start the directions.
 - 3 Set the phone in its mount where you can glance without reaching.
 - 4 Turn the voice volume up so you can follow by ear.
 - 5 Drive, and let it talk you through the turns.
- COMMON MISTAKES 22. The Habits That Still Get People Stopped** Small slips with a real cost. Even careful drivers trip over a few common habits, and it helps to name them. Checking a text at a red light is still using the phone, and an officer beside you can see it. Holding the phone to glance at the map, instead of mounting it, puts it right back in your hand. Picking up the phone to see who is calling, rather than letting the car tell you, is the same slip. Propping the phone against the wheel to watch a video — people really do this — is both illegal and dangerous. The thread is always the same: the moment the phone is in your hand and your eyes are down, you are exposed. Build the habit of leaving it be, and these slips simply stop happening. Checking messages at a red light. Holding the phone to read the map instead of mounting it. Picking it up to see who is calling. Dialing a number by hand while rolling. Propping it up to watch something.

GOOD HABITS

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23. A Simple Routine Before Every Drive Thirty seconds that keep you safe and legal. The easiest way to never worry about the law is to build a short routine you do every time, before the car moves. It takes about half a minute and it soon becomes as automatic as buckling the belt. Do it the same way each time and you will never find yourself reaching for the phone on the road, because everything will already be handled. This little routine is the whole guide boiled down to a habit you can keep without thinking. The beauty of a routine is that it does your remembering for you, so that even on a frazzled morning when your mind is on a dozen other things, your hands still do the right thing out of habit.

- 1 Get in and set the phone in its mount.
 - 2 Check that Bluetooth connected — your car's name or the phone symbol is showing.
 - 3 If you are headed somewhere new, set the map now.
 - 4 Let Driving Focus or Driving Mode switch on, or turn it on yourself.
 - 5 Now drive, hands on the wheel, voice ready.
- HELPING OTHERS**
24. Passengers Can Be Your Hands A rider makes it all easy. One of the simplest answers of all is often sitting right beside you. If someone is riding with you, the law has no problem with a passenger handling the phone. Let the person in the passenger seat take the call, read you the text, type the reply, or punch in the new address on the map. This is not a loophole; it is simply good sense, and it keeps the driver's hands and eyes where they belong. On a longer family trip, make the front-seat passenger the official phone-handler for the drive. It takes the pressure off you entirely and turns the phone into a shared tool instead of a temptation. **WATCH OUT** On road trips, give one passenger the job of 'phone and map.' The driver then never has to touch it, and everyone relaxes.

TRAVELING

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25. The Rules Change at the State Line What is fine here may not be elsewhere. If you drive out of Ohio to visit family or take a trip, remember that each state writes its own phone-and-driving rules, and they are not all the same. Some states are stricter, some a little looser, and the fines and the fine print differ. The wonderful thing is that the hands-free habits in this guide keep you safe in every one of them. No state will fault you for keeping the phone in a mount, taking calls through the car, and talking instead of typing. So you do not need to study the law in every state you pass through. Just carry the good habits with you, and you will be fine wherever the road leads. Every state has its own phone rules and penalties. Some are stricter than Ohio, some less so. Hands-free habits keep you safe in all of them. You do not need to memorize other states' laws if you simply stay hands-free.

WORK ZONES 26. Extra Care Around the Orange Barrels Where the fines double and the risk triples. Ohio's warmer months bring out the orange barrels, and work zones deserve a special mention because the law and common sense both get stricter there. Fines for using your phone are doubled in a work zone. More to the point, these are the places where lanes narrow, workers stand close to traffic, and a split-second of distraction does the most damage. The habit to build is to put the phone completely out of mind the moment you see the signs — no calls, no glances, nothing but the road and the cones. If a call comes in through a work zone, let it wait the few minutes until you are clear. It is the one stretch of road where even hands-free is best set aside. WATCH OUT In a work zone, the phone fine is doubled, and the risk to road workers is very real. Give those stretches your full attention and save even hands-free calls for after you pass through.

PEACE OF MIND

16. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

27. You Are Not Giving Up Anything Important The law asks for your attention, not your connection. It is worth stepping back for a moment, because some folks feel the law is taking something away from them. In truth, it is not. You can still reach your family, still take the call from the doctor's office, still get turn-by-turn directions to a new address, still have your music. All of it is still right there. The only thing the law asks is that you do it with your voice and your mounted phone instead of a hand and a stare. That is a small trade for the real prize, which is getting home safe and keeping the folks around you safe too. Think of hands-free not as a restriction but as a better, calmer way to drive. When you look at it that way, the law is not taking something from you at all; it is nudging you toward the kind of focused, unhurried driving that keeps everyone on the road a little safer, your own family most of all. You keep your calls, texts, maps, and music. You give up only the holding, typing, and staring. The payoff is a safer drive for you and everyone else. Once it is set up, the calm becomes a habit.

FAMILY 28. Teaching a Grandchild the Right Way Your example is the best lesson. If there is a new driver in the family, you are in a wonderful position to help. Young people under 18 cannot use a phone at all behind the wheel, and the habit that protects them is to silence it and put it out of reach before they ever start the car. The thing is, they learn far more from watching you than from any lecture. When they see you set the phone in its mount, let the calls ring through the car, and never once reach for it, that becomes the normal they carry for the rest of their lives. So teach the rule plainly, and then live it beside them. It may be the most valuable driving lesson you ever give.

GOOD TO KNOW Under-18 drivers cannot use a phone at all, even hands-free. The strongest way to teach that is to drive hands-free yourself, every time they are watching.

THE LAW**17. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

29. The Law Covers More Than Texting It is about the device in your hand. A common misunderstanding is that the law is only about texting while driving. It is broader than that. The rule speaks to holding or using any electronic device in your hand while you drive, which sweeps in a great many things people do without thinking. Dialing a number by hand, scrolling through a playlist, thumbing through photos to show someone, checking the weather, glancing at an email, holding the phone up as a flashlight — all of it is using the device in your hand, and all of it falls under the same rule. Once you understand that it is the holding and the looking that the law is after, not one particular app, the whole thing gets simpler. You stop asking 'is this one allowed' and simply keep the phone out of your hand. That single habit covers every situation the law could possibly raise, and it spares you from having to memorize a long list of do's and don'ts. When in doubt, the answer is always the same: set it down, use your voice, and keep your hands on the wheel. There is a real freedom in that simplicity. It is not only texting — it is any device use in your hand. Dialing, scrolling, checking the weather, showing a photo — all included. The law is after the holding and the looking, not one app. Keep the phone out of your hand and you cover every case at once.

GETTING SET UP

18. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

30. When Your Car Has No Bluetooth Older cars have good options too. Not every car has Bluetooth built in, especially if it has a few years on it, and that is no reason to feel stuck. There are several easy ways to go hands-free in an older car. The simplest is a small device that plugs into the lighter socket or an auxiliary jack and adds Bluetooth, so your phone's calls play through the car speakers. These cost very little and take only a minute to set up. Another option is a visor speakerphone, a little clip-on device that sits above your head, pairs with your phone, and lets you talk hands-free with clear sound. Some folks prefer a single discreet earpiece in one ear, which is allowed as long as the other ear is open to hear traffic. Whichever you choose, the goal is the same: your hands stay on the wheel and the phone stays out of them. An older car can be every bit as hands-free as a new one with a few dollars of gear and a little setup. Do not let the age of your car convince you that the hands-free law is a burden you cannot meet. The tools are cheap, widely available, and easy to live with once they are in place. A plug-in Bluetooth adapter adds hands-free to an older car cheaply. A clip-on visor speakerphone is another simple option. A single earpiece is allowed if your other ear stays open. An older car can be just as hands-free with a little inexpensive gear. **GOOD TO KNOW** If your car has no Bluetooth, this is a perfect thing to call me about. I will bring the right little adapter, set it up, and have you making hands-free calls in your own driveway.

DAY TO DAY

19. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

31. Letting the Phone Read Texts to You Hear your messages, hands-free. Taking a call hands-free is one thing, but what about the texts that come in while you drive? You do not have to pick up the phone to find out what they say. Both the iPhone and Android phones can read your incoming messages aloud through the car speakers and let you answer by voice, so a text becomes just like a little conversation. On an iPhone, this is part of the announce-messages feature, and with Driving Focus on, the phone can offer to read a new text and send your spoken reply. On Android, Driving Mode and the voice assistant do the same. You hear 'message from your daughter: running late, start without me,' and you simply say your answer out loud. The whole exchange happens with your eyes on the road and your hands on the wheel. Set it up once, parked, and your phone becomes a polite helper that keeps you in touch without ever asking you to look down. For many folks this one feature does more than anything else to make hands-free driving feel natural, because the pull to check a text is such a strong one, and this removes the temptation entirely.

- 1 On iPhone, turn on Driving Focus and allow it to announce messages.
- 2 On Android, turn on Driving Mode and allow it to read messages aloud.
- 3 When a text arrives, the phone offers to read it through the speakers.
- 4 Say your reply out loud and the phone sends it for you.
- 5 You never touch or look at the phone to handle the message.

GOOD HABITS**20. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

32. Where to Keep the Phone While Driving Out of sight can be out of mind. One of the quiet secrets of driving within the law is simply deciding, before you set off, where the phone will live for the trip. If it rides in your hand or your lap, it is a constant temptation, and temptation is what gets people a ticket. The best home for it is a mount up near your line of sight, where you can glance at the map but never need to pick it up. If you are not using the map, some folks prefer the phone tucked away entirely — in a bag, the console, or a pocket — so it is out of sight and out of mind, with the sound up so you still hear a call come through the car. There is no single right answer; what matters is that the phone has a settled place and is not loose in your hand. Decide where it goes, put it there before you drive, and leave it be. A phone with a home is a phone you are not tempted to hold. Decide where the phone lives before you drive. A mount is best if you need the map; otherwise tuck it away. Out of sight can be out of mind — and out of your hand. A phone with a settled home is not a temptation.

PEACE OF MIND

21. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

33. What Happens If You Are Pulled Over Stay calm; it is manageable. If you ever do see the lights behind you for a phone stop, there is no need to panic, and knowing what to expect takes the fear out of it. Pull over safely, turn off the car, and keep your hands where the officer can see them. Be polite and honest; officers deal with this all day and a calm, respectful driver makes the whole thing go easier. If you receive a citation, remember what we covered earlier: for a first offense, you can ask the court about the state's online distracted-driving course, which can wipe out both the fine and the points. A ticket is not the end of the world, and it is certainly not worth arguing over on the roadside. Take it calmly, note the details, and handle it properly afterward, remembering that for a first offense the online course can set things right. Keeping a cool head in the moment always serves you better than any argument could. The far better outcome, of course, is never to be in this spot at all, which is exactly what the simple hands-free habits in this guide are designed to ensure. Build those habits now, before you ever see the lights, and the whole question of what to do when stopped becomes one you are unlikely ever to need an answer to. Pull over safely, turn off the car, hands visible. Be calm, polite, and honest — it makes everything easier. For a first offense, ask the court about the online course. Handle a ticket properly afterward, never argue on the roadside. GET HELP

34. When to Call Bill You do not have to set this up alone. If any of this feels like a lot — pairing the Bluetooth, finding the Driving Focus setting, picking out a good mount, getting the voice helper to listen — that is exactly the sort of thing I am happy to do with you. A short visit in your driveway sorts it out: I will pair your phone to the car, set up hands-free calling and voice-to-text, turn on Driving Focus or Driving Mode so it all happens on its own, and have you practice until it feels easy. I have been doing this kind of work for more than thirty years, I serve folks right here in Portage County, and I come to you. If it is not working to your satisfaction, we make it right. That is my friendly guarantee, plain and simple. Call me at (330) 200-8042. I will pair your phone and set up hands-free calling and texting.

TIP

22. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

I will turn on Driving Focus or Driving Mode so it is automatic.

I will help a parent or grandparent get fully set up in their own car. Friendly guarantee: if it is not right, we make it right. Ask me about getting a grandchild's first car set up for safe driving, too — silenced phone, good mount, and the right habits from day one. CHEAT SHEET Everyday Cheat Sheet Keep this page handy. It points you straight to what to do for each task. I want to... Do this I want to... Do this Take a call safely Use Bluetooth or the car's screen, hands stay on the wheel Send a text Say it out loud with voice-to-text, never type Stop calls while driving Turn on Driving Focus on iPhone or Driving Mode on Android See the map Set it before you leave, then glance only Fix a first ticket Ask about the state's free online distracted-driving course Keep a teen safe Under 18 cannot touch a phone at all, even hands-free Get set up right Give me a call and I will do it with you Get help Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

HOW I CAN HELP

23. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

Your Visit — and My Promise In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included. Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo). GOOD TO KNOW My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated. Call or text (330) 200-8042 · Book a visit: billshometech.com/book · bill@billshometech.com This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

Before you pull out

Four quick habits that keep you legal.

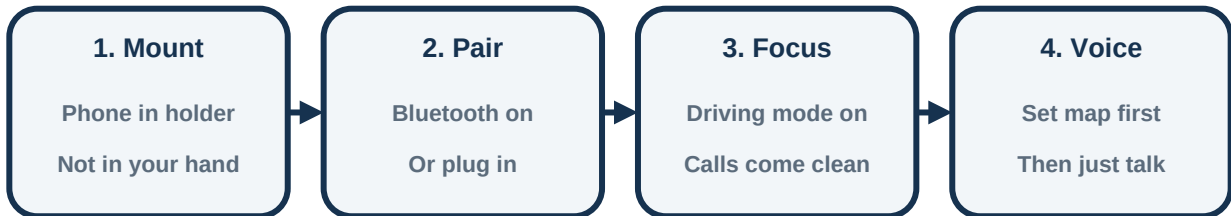


Illustration — a schematic. The order is a suggestion; do one box at a time.

A schematic of the plan — company steps vary; the order does not have to.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

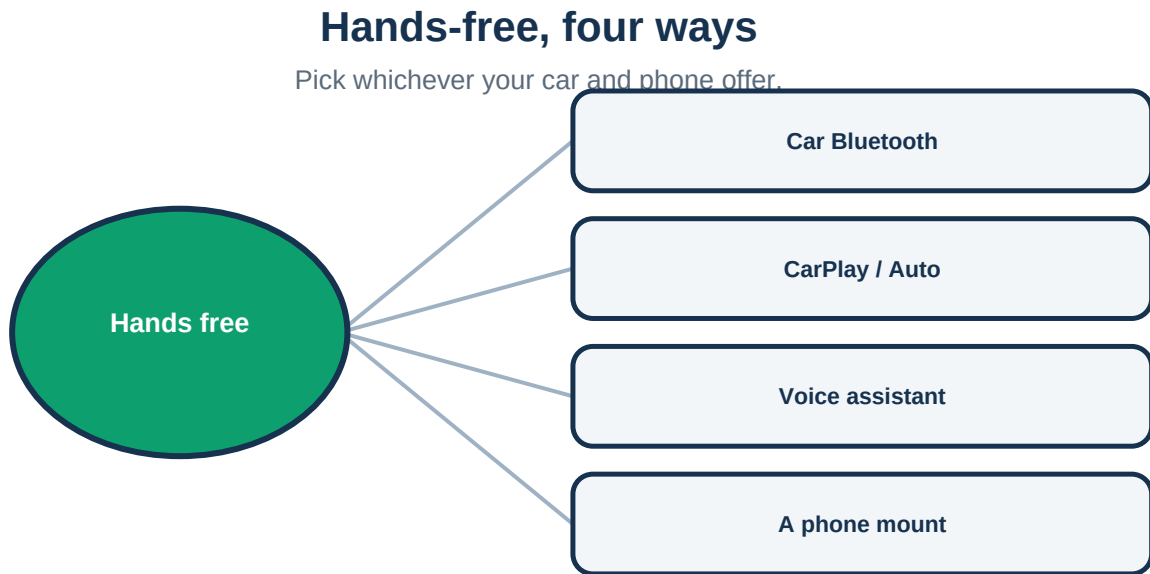


Illustration — a schematic. Set-up screens differ; each takes only a few minutes.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: **billshometech.com/book** · **bill@billshometech.com**

This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.