Senior Driving Safety Observation Checklist

Notice changes · document patterns · prepare for the next conversation

A practical caregiver tool for recording specific driving behaviors and conditions to discuss with the older adult, care team, or qualified driving professional.

A free resource from

The Caregiving Concierge™

by AdVantage Digital LLC

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Observe patterns · not age alone

A neutral way to record what you see before deciding what it means.

Driving ability should not be judged by age alone. Use this checklist to capture specific behaviors and the conditions in which they occur. One observation does not prove that someone is unsafe to drive; repeated patterns or serious events are more useful to discuss with an appropriate professional.

THIS CHECKLIST IS FOR (NAME)

PRIMARY CAREGIVER

DATE

DRIVE / ROUTE OBSERVED

1 LANE POSITION, SPEED & TRAFFIC RULES

- [ ] Stays within the lane without repeated drifting onto lane lines, the shoulder, or nearby lanes.
- [ ] Stops and yields appropriately at signs, signals, crosswalks, and intersections.
- [ ] Maintains a reasonable following distance and adjusts speed for traffic, weather, and road conditions.
- [ ] Does not stop, slow, or accelerate in ways that seem inappropriate for the situation.

2 TURNS, INTERSECTIONS & MERGING

- [ ] Checks surrounding traffic before turning, changing lanes, backing up, or merging.
- [ ] Judges gaps in traffic without repeated hesitation, abrupt moves, or forcing other drivers to react.
- [ ] Uses turn signals consistently and follows the intended lane through turns and intersections.
- [ ] Handles left turns, busy intersections, and merging without appearing unusually overwhelmed or confused.

3 NAVIGATION, ATTENTION & AWARENESS

- [ ] Follows familiar routes without becoming lost, missing expected turns, or taking unexplained detours.
- [ ] Notices traffic signs, signals, lane markings, pedestrians, cyclists, and nearby vehicles in time to respond.
- [ ] Keeps attention on driving and is not repeatedly distracted by conversation, devices, scenery, or other activity.
- [ ] Responds to changing traffic or hazards without unusually long delays.

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Control · patterns · follow-up

4 VEHICLE CONTROL, VISION & MOVEMENT

- [ ] Moves between the accelerator and brake smoothly without pedal confusion or obvious difficulty.
- [ ] Checks mirrors and blind spots when needed and steers or brakes without repeated abrupt or delayed corrections.
- [ ] Does not appear to miss signs, lane lines, curbs, vehicles, or pedestrians because of glare or difficulty seeing.

5 LOOK FOR PATTERNS BEYOND ONE DRIVE

- [ ] New dents, scrapes, near misses, crashes, traffic warnings, or tickets have appeared recently.
- [ ] The driver increasingly avoids certain conditions such as night driving, highways, heavy traffic, or unfamiliar routes.
- [ ] Passengers, relatives, neighbors, or friends have independently raised concerns about driving behavior.
- [ ] A familiar errand takes much longer than expected, or the driver cannot clearly explain an unusual route or delay.
- [ ] Driving seems different after a new illness, injury, medication change, vision problem, or change in mobility or thinking.

+ DRIVING OBSERVATION NOTES

DATE	ROUTE / CONDITIONS	WHAT HAPPENED	WHAT WAS NOTICED	FOLLOW-UP

Important: This checklist does not determine driving fitness. Age alone should not decide whether someone drives. Repeated concerns, crashes or near misses, getting lost on familiar routes, pedal confusion, or difficulty following traffic rules should be discussed promptly with an appropriate healthcare or driving-evaluation professional. If a driving situation appears immediately dangerous, prioritize safety rather than waiting to complete the checklist.

Specific notes can make a difficult conversation more concrete and help a professional understand what has changed, when it happens, and under what conditions.

Everything about your loved one's care, organized in one place.

The Caregiving Concierge™ helps families organize appointments, providers, medications, documents, schedules, transportation details, and other important care information in one secure workspace.

Sources informing this resource

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA): Driving Safely While Aging Gracefully; NHTSA: How to Understand and Influence Older Drivers; National Institute on Aging: Safe Driving for Older Adults; CDC: Older Adult Drivers.