

THE
SNOW LAW FIRM



**THINGS
YOU
NEED TO
KNOW IF
YOU HAVE
BEEN IN
A CAR
ACCIDENT.**

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one
in
every
six

vehicle accidents in the United States is the result of distracted driving. One in every three deadly vehicle accidents in the United States is the result of drunk driving. In both of these cases, it is almost always the case that one or more of the drivers involved is not at fault and is the victim of someone else's negligence. At The Snow Law Firm, we have an in-depth knowledge of personal injury law and years of experience dealing with car accident claims. We want to pass some of that valuable knowledge and experience on to you – below are five important things you need to know if you've been in a car accident:

YOU NEED TO CALL THE POLICE.

NOT every car crash is catastrophic. Sometimes, there may seem to be little or no damage to the vehicles involved in a crash, and the drivers and passengers may feel perfectly fine. Many people mistakenly assume that if they are just in a minor fender bender and no one seems hurt, they can just be on their way, but it's always a good idea to get the police involved.

HERE'S WHY: although you and the other people involved in the accident may feel fine at the time of the crash, many injuries from car collisions take time to develop and start showing symptoms. What this means is that you might start feeling some pain or experiencing some cognitive effects like confusion or disorientation days, weeks, or sometimes even months after a crash.

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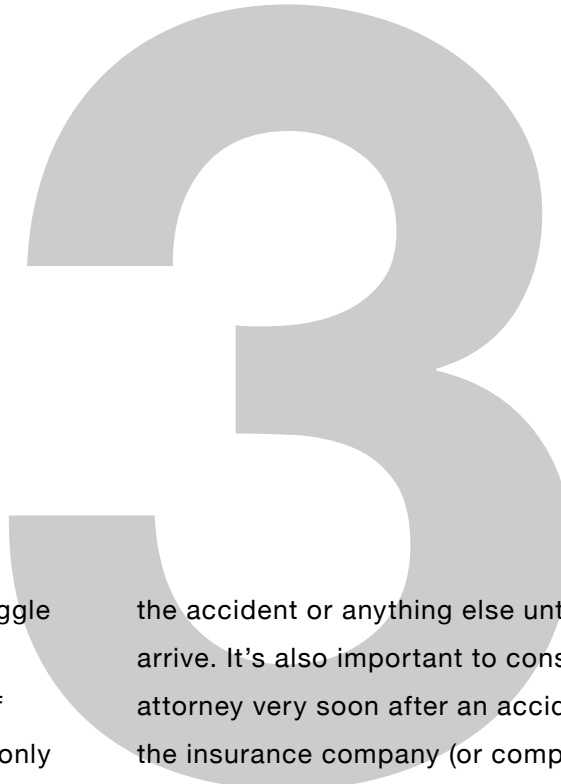
Calling the police is essential in any car accident because the police will file an official report detailing the events of the accident and documenting any evidence they find. This record of the event will be a powerful part of your case if, down the road, you discover that the accident caused or aggravated an injury and you want to seek compensation. It should go without saying that you should be completely honest with the police.

YOU NEED TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION WITH THE OTHER DRIVER(S).

THIS may seem like an obvious piece of advice, but many people, as we mentioned before, decide to forgo this formality if the accident seems to be minor. It's also fairly common that in the moments following a crash, people may feel disoriented, confused, or overly excited because they have just been put into an out-of-the-ordinary situation. Although they feel fine at the time, they become forgetful and don't exchange information with the other driver(s).

Should an issue with your health or your vehicle arise later on as a result of the crash, it will be important to have the other driver's (or drivers') information. Yet another advantage of calling the police as soon as you experience a vehicle collision is that they will also take down all the information about the parties involved in the accident in case you do, in fact, forget to do so.

YOU NEED TO AVOID ADMITTING THAT THE ACCIDENT IS YOUR FAULT.



THIS is something that a lot of people struggle with because many different things can be interpreted as an admission of guilt, even if that's not what you intend. For example, it only seems polite to apologize for what has happened when you're involved in an accident; however, apologizing for the crash can be interpreted as an admission of guilt. A simple "oops" or "I'm sorry" can signal to the police, the other driver(s), or an insurance company that you were somehow at fault in the crash. As a general rule, the best policy is to only get the essential information from the other parties involved and not discuss

the accident or anything else until the police arrive. It's also important to consult with an attorney very soon after an accident because the insurance company (or companies) will be calling you to go over the details of the accident, and you do not want to be unprepared for that conversation and accidentally admit it was your fault when, in reality, it was someone else's fault. Lastly, it's important to note that you should avoid mentioning any details about your situation on social media outlets like Facebook or Twitter – no matter what privacy settings you may have set up on your account.

YOU NEED TO GATHER YOUR OWN EVIDENCE.

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ALTHOUGH the police will likely report any noteworthy evidence from the scene of the accident, they can, like all of us, sometimes miss something important. If you have a camera or camera phone, take pictures at the scene to document anything that seems like it may be related to the crash:

- **Skid Marks**
- **External & Internal Damage To The Vehicles**
- **License Plates**
- **Vehicle Makes & Models**
- **Fluids On The Ground**
- **Damage To The Surrounding Area**
- **Injuries To The Drivers And/Or Passengers**
- **Anything Else That May Seem Noteworthy.**

I wouldn't hurt to survey what businesses are in the area either – you may be able to call them and ask if they have security footage of the crash. You should also get the contact information for any witnesses on the scene so that you can get ahold of them later if any issues should arise. Again, the police will most likely make a note of evidence as well, but sometimes it takes them a while to get to the scene, and sometimes vehicles are moved before they arrive – documenting as much of the event as possible from your perspective will help you if you decide to file a claim later on.

YOU NEED TO CONSULT WITH A PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEY.

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ATTORNEYS have acquired a negative reputation in the media and in the popular consciousness, but the knowledgeable, qualified, experienced, and compassionate attorneys at The Snow Law Firm are here to help you assess the merits of your case and help you receive the compensation you deserve for your ordeal. Although it would be better for everyone if insurance companies and other entities were looking out for everyone's best interests, the unfortunate truth is that many insurance companies and other entities are looking to cut costs and cheat people out of the compensation they deserve. So even if you didn't exactly follow through on all of the advice mentioned above, it never hurts to consult with an attorney to go over the details of your situation and see if you can recover any of the damages you're owed.

Sadly, every year, more and more accidents are the result of someone else's negligence. In 2012 alone, over 420,000 completely preventable accidents were caused by distracted driving (talking or texting on cell phones, fiddling with the radio, eating while driving, etc.). If you've been in a car accident recently, contact the attorneys at The Snow Law Firm to discuss your case as soon as possible. And if you have not yet been in a car accident, we sincerely hope that you will continue to be safe on the road. Just in case something does happen, though, keep this list of advice with you in your car so that you'll know what to do if you're ever the victim in a vehicle collision.



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