

As a high school student I have been gifted with the chance to own and drive a car for the past two years of high school, and like many high schoolers I have a phone. Owning both is a privilege, but it is also a curse because phones are great distractors whilst driving a car. Looking at crashes that resulted in fatality 9% were age 15-19 and 16% of that age group were using cell phones (National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2019, p. 2). People get distracted with their phones by wanting to change the current song they are listening to or wanting to text their friends back because they do not want to leave them unread. Now like those people who have been distracted with their phones while driving, I have been in situations where it has almost got me into accidents. This is all because I wanted to change the song I was listening to, and time and time again I just tell myself to get off my phone because the song I am listening to is not that important. Although this is the case, I keep distracting myself with wanting to listen to a new song. The ability to use your phone to listen to music and to text your friends, "I'm almost there" has greatly raised the distracted driving rate in the U.S. Thousands of lives have been ended because people would rather look at the notifications they received on their phones instead of looking at the road. In 2017, 3,166 lives were ended because of distracted driving (National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2019, p. 1). One thing that can help with distracted driving is advancing the technology of cars, to make sure we stay in our lane, and protecting us whenever the car in front of ours suddenly breaks and the car stops for us when we are not paying attention.

I believe that the advancement in the technology of our cars will help prevent distracted driving because if you start to veer out of your lane, the car will warn you with a beeping noise, letting you know you need to get back in your lane. Also, if the car brakes for you whenever a car in front of you comes to a sudden stop, maybe it will make you realize that you need to get off your phone and start looking where you are going before you become another one of the

victims of a distracted driving case. Although the new technology can help you, in many ways it can hurt you as well. The car may be able to keep your eyes on the road in these respects, cars today now have a screen on the dashboard, where you are able to control what song you play, your air conditioning, and many other things that can keep your eyes off the road. Something that has changed drastically is the ability to use electronic maps to navigate. Unfortunately, drivers do not always have these maps programmed before setting off on the road and doing it while driving can take as long as 40 seconds (Halsey, 2017). That is more than half a minute not watching the road and the possibility to end up a statistic. With the new built in screens you are able to answer phone calls, which means you will not only take your eyes off the road to answer it, but you will take glimpses at it as you are talking because that is what your eyes want to do. There are also ways for people to send text messages through their car by using voice commands to send it. People also like to mess with the different volume settings on their car by controlling the sound of the bass, or treble that comes out of the speaker, taking the drivers eyes off the road for seconds at a time. In fact, something as simple as changing the radio used to take a couple seconds can now take up to 24 seconds (Halsey, 2017). Although we are advancing our technology to help keep the drivers eyes on the road, new technology still affects where the driver is looking in his car. Be it answering a phone call, sending a text message, or messing with volume settings, the advancement in technology that could help keep your eyes on the road will take them off it as well. I have witnessed it first hand with my friends looking at the screens in their car in order to control certain things, which takes your eyes off the road for a longer time, than if you were to just use buttons. Technology is both an aid and a curse when it comes to distracted driving.

References

Halsey, A., III. (2017). *New cars have more distracting technology on board than ever before.*

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