

# Using a phone or a Sat Nav when driving - The Law

It's illegal to hold a phone or sat nav while driving or riding a motorcycle. You must have hands-free access, such as:

- a bluetooth headset
- voice command
- a dashboard holder or mat
- a windscreen mount
- a built-in sat nav

The device must not block your view of the road and traffic ahead.

You must stay in full control of your vehicle at all times. The police can stop you if they think you're not in control because you're distracted and you can be prosecuted.

The law still applies to you if you're:

- stopped at traffic lights
- queuing in traffic
- supervising a learner driver

## When you can use a hand-held phone

You can use a hand-held phone if either of these apply:

- you're safely parked
- you need to call 999 or 112 in an emergency and it's unsafe or impractical to stop

## Penalties

### Hand-Held

You can get a:

- £200 fine and 6 penalty points if you use a hand-held phone when driving.
- You'll also lose your licence if you passed your driving test in the last 2 years.

### Hands-free

While it's an offence to be seen using a hand held phone, regardless of whether driving has been affected, this is not the case for hands-free phones. If you're seen not to be in control of a vehicle while using a hands-free phone you can be prosecuted for that offence.

The penalties for 'not in proper control' are:

- £100 fine and 3 points, or
- Up to £1,000 (£2,500 if you were driving a bus or a goods vehicle) if it goes to court.

## Employers

Employers may be open to prosecution:

- If they cause or permit a driver to drive while using a phone or to not have proper control of the vehicle.
- If they require a driver to make or receive calls whilst driving.
- If their drivers drive dangerously because they're using a phone installed/provided by the employer.

Drivers can be prosecuted for Careless or Dangerous Driving in more serious cases and where a crash results that causes serious injuries or death. A prison sentence is normally handed down by the courts in such cases.