



**December 2019**

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# **Study: Road rage and aggressive driving**

**BASED ON A SURVEY OF 978 U.S. DRIVERS**

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# About the report

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The Zebra is the nation's leading insurance comparison site and an independent source for auto insurance quotes, consumer education, and original research about the insurance industry and forces impacting it – including potential risks like aggressive driving and road rage.

**This report is the most up-to-date exploration of aggressive driving on American roads today. Read on for insights about:**

- Aggressive behaviors drivers are observing on the road
- Aggression they're reporting having engaged in themselves
- Which behaviors drivers report seeing most frequently – and which ones annoy them the most
- Advice from drivers on how to manage frustration behind the wheel

# Aggressive driving

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**Aggressive driving** is any deliberate, unsafe driving behavior — like changing lanes without a turn signal or tailgating. Aggressive driving can include:

- Speeding in heavy traffic
- Tailgating
- Intentionally cutting off another driver
- Weaving in and out of traffic
- Changing lanes without signaling
- Blocking cars from passing or changing lanes
- Driving while distracted by a phone or device
- Running a red light or disobeying a traffic signal on purpose
- Honking to show anger or frustration

# Road rage

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**Road rage** takes aggressive driving behaviors to the extreme and can include making obscene gestures or actually touching another car (ramming, sideswiping). Other examples of road rage:

- Displaying angry or obscene gestures (middle finger)
- Yelling or cursing at another driver
- Throwing objects
- Purposely bumping or ramming another vehicle
- Sideswiping another vehicle
- Forcing another driver off the road
- Getting out of their vehicle to confront another driver
- Getting in a physical altercation with another driver

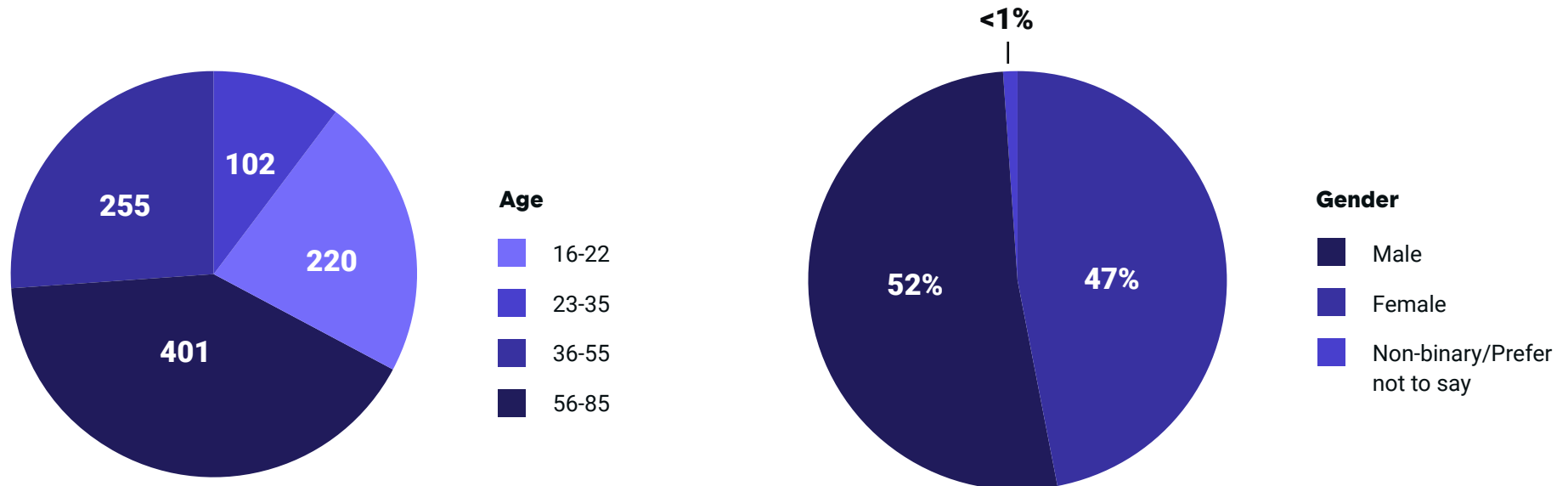
# About the survey



# Methodology

The Zebra's report presents the findings of an anonymous online survey of 978 drivers in all 50 states and Washington, D.C., who drive at least monthly. The survey was conducted by independent research firm SurveyGizmo from Oct. 15-31, 2019.

## SURVEY RESPONDENTS

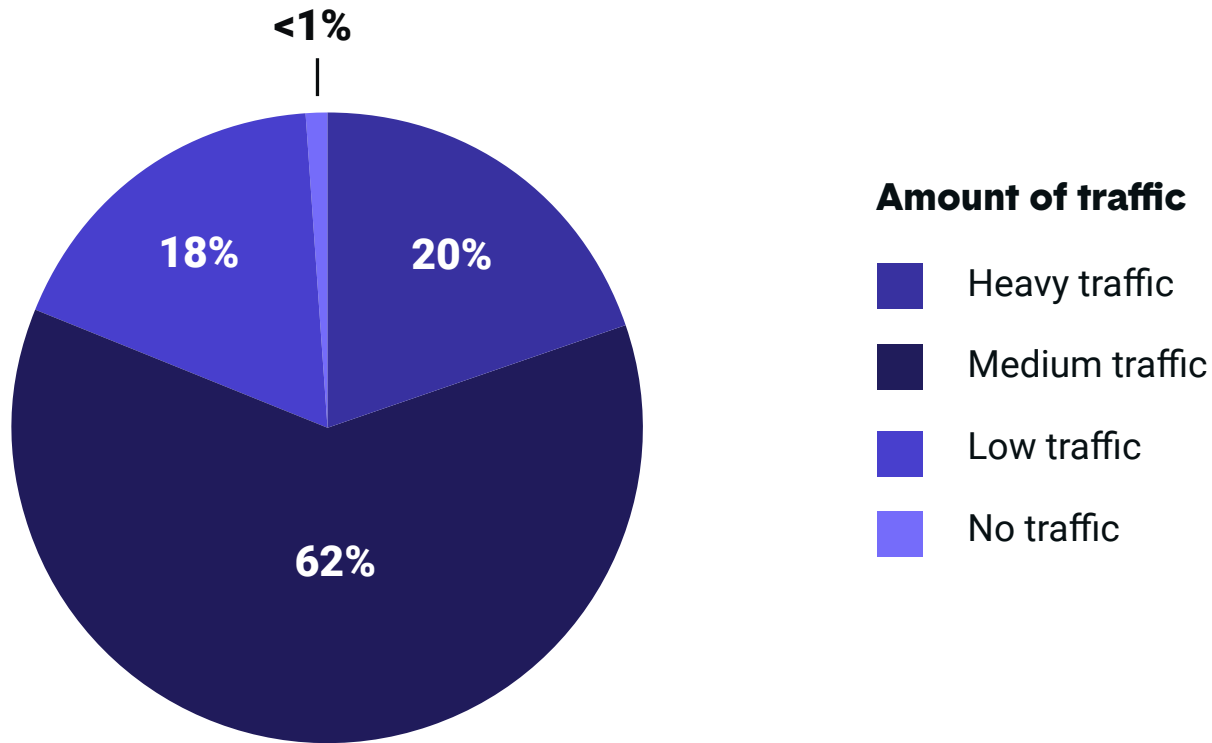




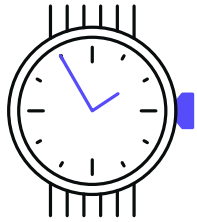
# About the respondents



**How much traffic** do you typically encounter on your routine driving route(s)?



# About the respondents



**How much time** do you typically spend driving per day?

Time spent	Total
30 minutes to 59 minutes	36%
15 to 30 minutes	25%
1 hour or more	18%
2 hours or more	9%
Less than 15 minutes	6%
3 hours or more	3%
4 hours or more	2%
Other	<1%



Most reported commute length:  
**30 to 59 minutes**

# **Driver behavior**



# Self-reported behavior



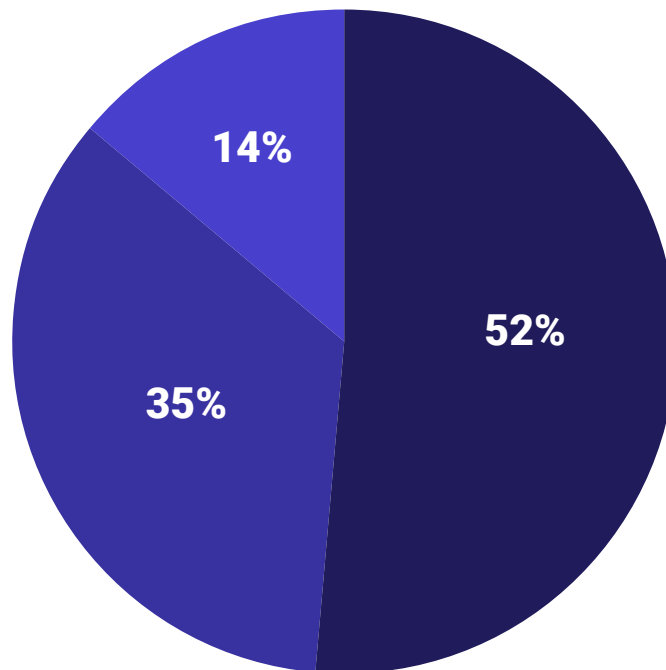
In the past year, have you engaged in any of the following activities while driving?

Behavior	Total
Honking to show anger or frustration	59%
Changing lanes without signaling	45%
Yelling or cursing at another driver or pedestrian	42%
Driving while distracted by a phone or device	41%
Making angry or obscene gestures (middle finger)	38%
Speeding in heavy traffic	33%
Weaving in and out of traffic	29%
Tailgating	28%
Running a red light or disobeying a traffic signal on purpose	26%
Blocking other cars from passing or changing lanes	25%
Cutting off another driver on purpose	18%
Getting out of your vehicle to verbally confront another driver	7%
Throwing objects	6%
Getting in a physical altercation with another driver	6%
Bumping or ramming another vehicle on purpose	5%
Forcing another driver off the road	5%
Sideswiping another vehicle	5%

# Frustration levels



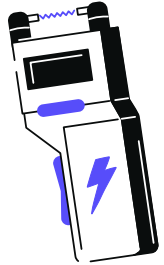
In the past year, how has your own **level of frustration** while driving changed or stayed the same?



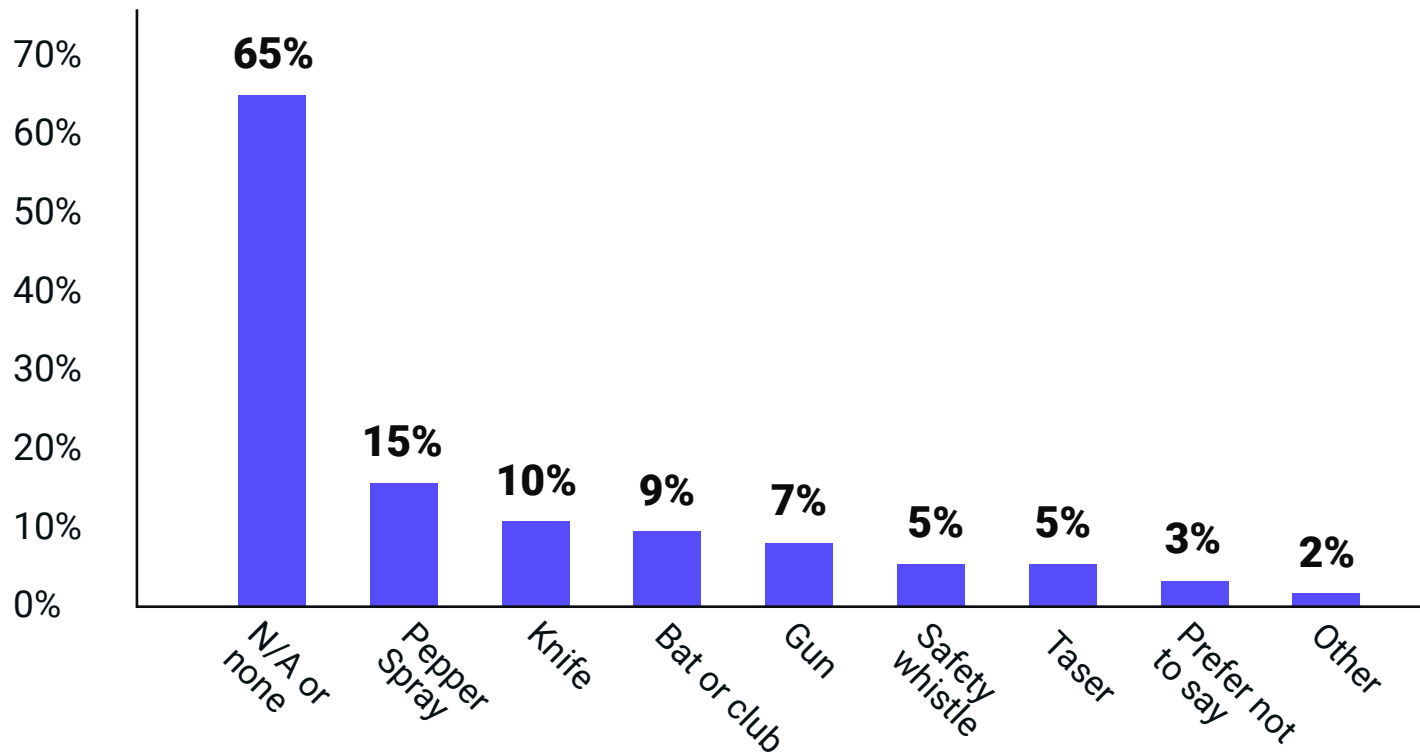
## Reported frustration

- Stayed the same
- I feel more frustrated or am frustrated more often while driving
- I feel less frustrated or am frustrated less often while driving

# Weapons for personal protection



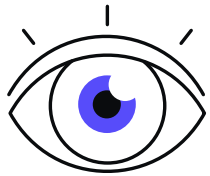
In the past year, have you kept any of the following in your car for **personal protection**?



**Observed  
behavior**

The background features a solid black field. A large, vibrant blue shape, resembling a stylized 'A' or a parallelogram, is positioned on the right side, extending from the top right towards the bottom center. To the right of the blue shape, a white triangle is partially visible, pointing towards the right edge of the frame.

# Other drivers' behaviors

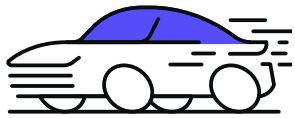


In the past year, what have **you observed other drivers doing?**

Behavior	Total
Honking to show anger or frustration	90%
Changing lanes without signaling	90%
Driving while distracted by a phone or device	88%
Weaving in and out of traffic	87%
Tailgating	86%
Speeding in heavy traffic	86%
Running a red light or disobeying a traffic signal on purpose	83%
Making angry or obscene gestures (middle finger)	81%
Yelling or cursing at another driver or pedestrian	77%
Cutting off another driver on purpose	77%
Blocking other cars from passing or changing lanes	76%
Getting out of their vehicle to verbally confront another driver	39%
Throwing objects	36%
Forcing another driver off the road	33%
Sideswiping another vehicle	31%
Getting in a physical altercation with another driver	30%
Bumping or ramming another vehicle on purpose	21%

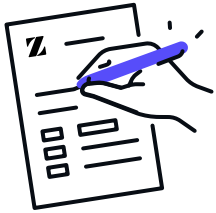


# Incidents of aggressive behavior toward you



In the past year, has **another driver exhibited** any of the following behavior toward you?

Behavior	Total
Tailgating your vehicle	64%
Honking to show anger or frustration	50%
Cutting you off on purpose	36%
Making angry or obscene gestures (middle finger)	36%
Blocking you from passing or changing lanes	31%
Yelling or cursing	29%
Forcing you off the road	5%
Getting out of their vehicle to verbally confront you	3%
Throwing objects	3%
Getting in a physical altercation with you	2%
Sideswiping your vehicle	2%
Bumping or ramming your vehicle on purpose	2%
N/A - another driver has not exhibited aggressive driving/road rage behavior toward me in the past year	11%



## What happened?

"I didn't turn left at a light as quickly as I should've so the **driver behind me honked and yelled at me.**"

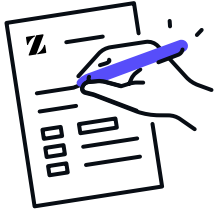
"I was **given the finger and then cut off.**"

"I slowed down to stop for a yellow light and **another vehicle honked at me.**"

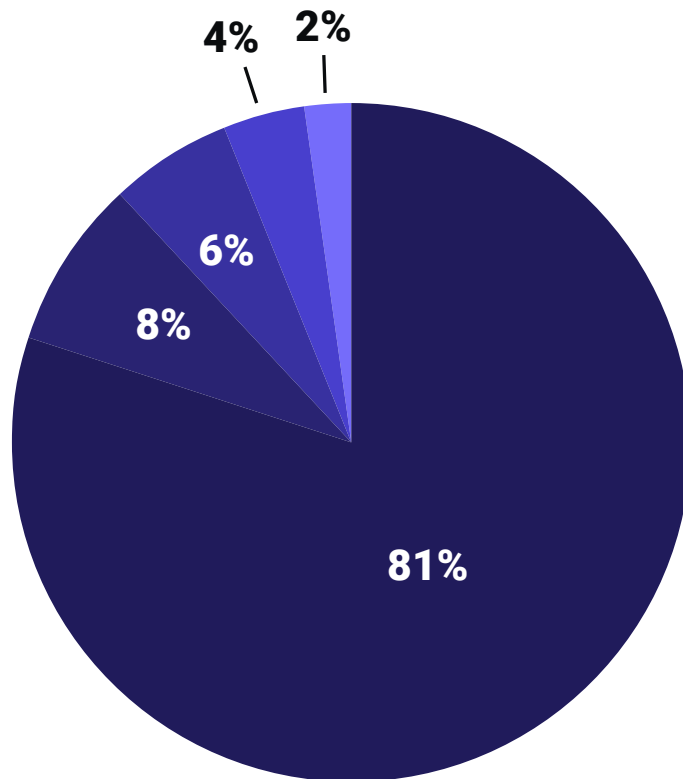
"He was driving slow and I **cussed him out.**"

"I have had people cut me off **if I'm not driving 'fast enough' and I'm already going with the flow of traffic** and keeping a safe distance."

"**He threw a wrench out of his window** after he passed me."

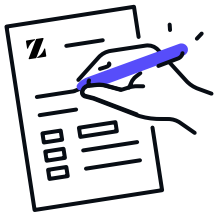


Have you previously **reported road rage** or aggressive driving to police?



**Frequency of reporting road rage**

- Never
- I have previously reported aggressive driving or road rage to police, but not in the past year.
- One time in the past year
- Two or more times in the past year
- Prefer not to say



What, if anything, do you think police or lawmakers in your state should do to **address aggressive driving and road rage?**

“Maybe a **special phone number** or instructions how to capture info and report the offender at the time the incident occurs.”

“Stiffer **penalties/fines.**”

“**Increase patrols** on high traffic roads, like freeways.”

“Make **tougher laws.**  
No warnings.”

“**Revoke their license** after two offenses.”

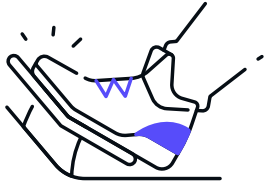
“**More police presence** during rush hours.”

“**More cameras** on the road and more tickets.”

**Triggers**



# Behaviors that cause frustration



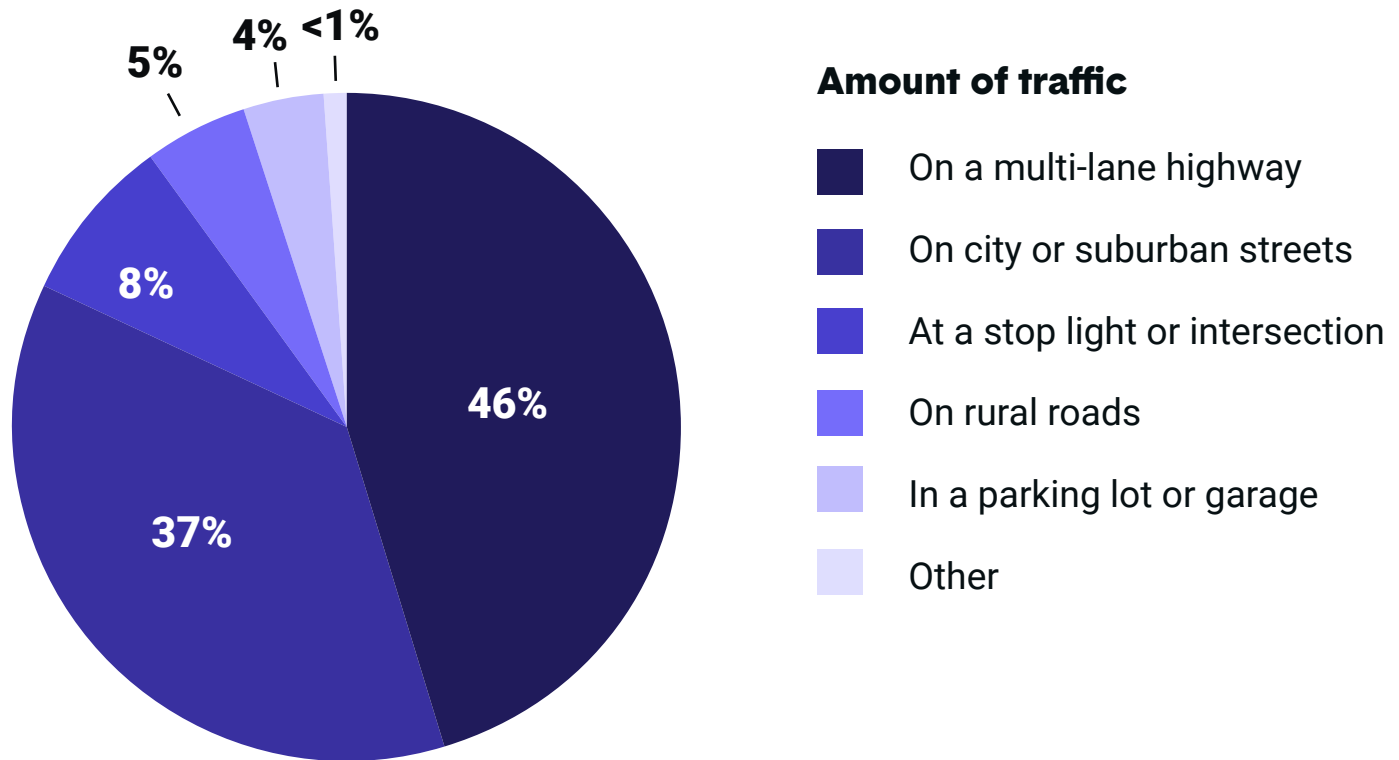
Which of the following **make you most frustrated** while driving?

Type of road aggression	Total
When another driver follows too close to my bumper (tailgating)	44%
When another driver is distracted by their phone or device	42%
When another driver cuts me off	33%
When a driver in front of me is going too slow	30%
When another driver fails to use their turn signal	28%
When I have to drive in heavy, slow-moving traffic (traffic jams)	26%
When I have to drive in bad weather	17%
When drivers around me are speeding	12%
When pedestrians or cyclists obstruct the roadway	10%
When I have to drive in a road construction zone	9%
When I see another driver yell or make angry gestures at me	9%
N/A - I don't get frustrated while driving	5%
Other	1%

# Where drivers experience frustration



Where are you most likely to **experience frustration while driving?**

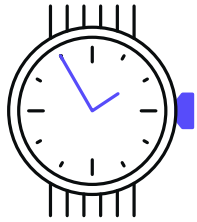


**Solutions  
and advice**

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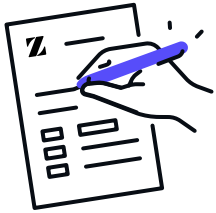


# Responding to frustration



**When you become frustrated while driving, do you typically do anything in response?**

Response	Total
I listen to music	62%
I distract myself by thinking about something else	23%
I vent my frustration by yelling or cursing	22%
Nothing - I stay frustrated until the feeling goes away on its own	18%
I navigate to a quieter, less busy road	14%
I listen to a podcast or radio talk show	13%
I call a friend or family member	6%
Other	4%



## What advice would you give someone **confronted by an aggressive driver?**

“Ignore them and **focus on driving.**”

“FIDO: **Forget It and Drive On.**”

“**Do not feed their aggression** by being aggressive yourself.”

“Pretend you don’t see/hear them. **Move out of their way or take another route if possible.**”

“**Stay calm and do not react.** Pull over or make a turn to avoid the driver, and let them get past you.”

“Play some **soothing music.**”

“**Switch roads or slow down** to get away from the driver.”

# About The Zebra

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The Zebra is the nation's leading insurance comparison site. With its dynamic, real-time comparison tool, drivers can identify insurance companies with the coverage, service level, and pricing to suit their unique needs. The Zebra compares over 200 car insurance companies and provides agent support and educational resources to ensure drivers are equipped to make the most informed decisions about their car insurance. Headquartered in Austin, Texas, The Zebra has sought to bring transparency and simplicity to insurance shopping since 2012 — it's "insurance in black and white."

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