

Auto Accident Checklist

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE BEEN IN A CAR CRASH

Determine If You Need to Call 9-1-1

The first thing you should do in any car accident is determine whether or not you need to call 911. Make sure you're okay and then make sure the other driver and any passengers in the car are okay as well. Only proceed through the accident checklist if you're certain that nobody involved in the accident needs immediate medical attention. If you or anyone else is seriously injured, or you suspect they might be, call 911 right away.

Take Pictures and Record Videos

If it's safe where you are to get out of your vehicle, begin photographing the accident. Don't just take pictures of the collision itself; make sure to get pictures and video footage of the location of the accident too. Make sure to include any traffic signs, or road features. Video footage can offer a more comprehensive view of the accident.

Move the Vehicles

If your car is still functioning, move it out of the road as soon as you possibly can. Leaving vehicles in the middle of the road can cause secondary accidents, so you'll want to move your vehicles out of the road as soon as it's possible and safe to do so. You do not need to wait for police officers to arrive at the scene to move your vehicles. If your car can't be moved, stay in the vehicle with your seatbelt on and your hazard lights on.

Contact Authorities

After you've moved the vehicles out of the road (if you were able), contact the police at the non-emergency number. The police will handle the exchange of information so you do not have to worry about getting the other person's information. Having police officers handle the information exchange ensures that the information each driver gives is accurate.

Document Injuries

Make sure to document any injuries you've suffered due to the accident with pictures and in writing. Write about how you're feeling for the first few days after the accident since some injuries can take a few days to show up.

See a Doctor

If you weren't seriously injured, and didn't call 911, or go to the hospital immediately after the crash but you're feeling pain after an accident, you may still need to see a doctor as soon as possible. Ideally, you will see a doctor within three days of the accident if you think you might be injured. Make sure to ask if you need X-rays or MRIs in order to accurately document your injuries. Though chiropractors can bring you relief, a family doctor or insta-care clinic will be the most helpful in initially diagnosing injuries in a personal injury case.

Get Treatment for Injuries

Once a doctor has established that you've been injured in an accident, you will need to get treatment for the injuries that you've sustained. If you need surgery for your injuries, make sure that you don't put it off or schedule the surgery too far out: it could make obtaining compensation for your injuries a more difficult process.

Contact Your Insurance Company

No matter who is at fault, you'll want to contact your insurance agent soon after the crash. Make sure to tell them about the accident and any injuries you've sustained because of the accident. You may also want to make sure they have all the photos and police reports.

Get Estimates

Get estimates for the damages done to your vehicle. Keep records of all the repairs that were done to your vehicle as a result of the accident. Additionally, keeping receipts of all your repairs will help you when you're filing a claim to the insurance companies.

Contact a Personal Injury Attorney

If you were injured in an accident, do not hesitate to contact a personal injury attorney. Medical bills can be overwhelmingly expensive and you may be eligible for compensation for medical expenses, loss of income, and other damages. Most personal injury attorneys offer free consultations so you have nothing to lose by consulting an attorney.