

Getting pulled over

Easy · 5 min to read · Free

Signal, pull all the way over to the right, stop somewhere well lit if you can, turn off the radio, roll down the window and keep your hands where the officer can see them. Have your license, registration and insurance ready. Stay calm, and save any argument for court.

YOU'LL NEED

- ☐ Your driver's license
- ☐ Your registration and proof of insurance, kept where you can reach them without digging

WHAT TO KNOW

- 1 **See lights or hear a siren behind you?** Pull to the right and stop. It's the law to yield to an emergency vehicle using a siren and red lights.
- 2 **Turn on your right turn signal so the officer knows you see them, and move completely onto the right shoulder.** Stop in a well-lit area when possible.
- 3 **Turn off the radio, stay in the car unless the officer tells you to get out, and roll down your window before the officer reaches you.**
- 4 **Put your hands in clear view, and have passengers do the same, before the officer walks up.** At night, turn on your interior lights so the officer can see inside, and keep your hands on the steering wheel.
- 5 **Hand over your license, registration and proof of insurance when asked.** The driver has to produce them. If they're out of reach, tell the officer where they are before you reach for them. If you have a weapon in the car, tell the officer at first contact.
- 6 **Follow directions to get out or stay in.** An officer can legally require the driver and passengers to do either.
- 7 **Know what you can say no to.** If an officer asks permission to search your car, you can say clearly that you don't consent. But don't resist or interfere, even if they search anyway.
- 8 **Get a ticket?** Take it calmly, and handle it later with Tickets and a towed car.

Watch out If you think your rights were violated, you can say so out loud, but don't physically resist. Write down the officer's name and badge number, the time and place afterward, and take it up later. Rules differ by state; the examples here are from California.

DAD NOTE *Your only job in a traffic stop is to get home safe. Be boring, be polite, keep your hands visible, and fight the ticket later if you need to.*

Full lesson: aptkeys.com/your-place/car-ownership/getting-pulled-over/

Checked October 3, 2026. Sources: California DMV; Oklahoma Department of Public Safety.