



What to do when you are in a car collision

1. **Try to calm down.** The worst that can happen; already has. Breathe deeply and gather yourself, your telephone, your registration and insurance before leaving the vehicle.
2. **Take pictures before the vehicles are moved.** If you have a camera, use it. Even cell phone pictures are good. Take several pictures of all vehicles from many angles, and try to take photos that show the street lanes and any stop signs or traffic signals.
3. **Determine if the vehicles need/can to be moved.** If you are not obstructing traffic in a major way, leave the cars alone. If traffic needs to move past the vehicles and they still run, drive them to the nearest possible location out of the way. The police may need to see where the vehicles were at the time of impact.
4. **Call the police.** Every accident should be reported to law enforcement, regardless of how bad the vehicle damage is. One of the primary jobs of law enforcement is reporting car crashes, and they have dedicated officers that do only that task.
5. While you are waiting for the police, try to **identify the driver of the other vehicle.** It should be no surprise that people who are at fault will try to flee an accident scene or blame someone else for driving. Drunk drivers often flee the scene of a crash. If a driver tries to flee a scene make sure you can identify who comes out of the driver's door.
6. **Try to remember the crash.** Be as specific as you can about what you remember about the crash to the police. How it happened, what you were doing at the time, if you saw it coming, etc. Insist that the officer give you the other driver's insurance information once information is exchanged. Most officers will leave everyone with a piece of paper listing the identity of everyone, insurance info, and the accident report number.
7. **Are you hurt?** Sometimes a rush of adrenaline can mask the signs of an injury after a crash. In fact, it is very common for people to only begin to experience pain and stiffness in their body several days after an accident. The best policy is to always go to the emergency room or clinic the moment you begin to experience any indication of pain or stiffness following an accident. The longer you wait, the more scar tissue may form and it may take you longer to heal.