

# CARPOOL ETIQUETTE

*A little commuter etiquette goes a long way in keeping your carpool running smoothly.*



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Most carpoolers agree that the good company of their fellow carpoolers is a benefit that they really enjoy and hadn't anticipated. Agreement on a few simple points will ensure that your carpool stays a happy one. Although these points seem to be common sense, there are a few items below that should be considered before entering into a carpool.

### THE BOTTOM LINE – HOW MUCH \$\$

Cash or barter? Decide up front if you'll have one driver who is reimbursed by the riders for gas and mileage, or if you'll share costs by rotating drivers. If it is the former, establish a firm payment schedule and stick to it. Agree when fares will be collected and stick to it.

### DON'T BE LATE

Nothing can disrupt a happy carpool as quickly as chronically late riders. Establish a time schedule and pick-up locations. Establish rules for latecomers, and decide how long to wait (5 minutes is standard).

### NO STOPPING – ANYTIME!

The golden rule of carpooling! Your commute together serves only one purpose – to travel to and from work. Save your trips to the grocery store and dry cleaning for the weekend, or consider only carpooling four days a week and driving yourself one day a week for errands. Carpooling can be flexible, but decide on a schedule and stick to it.

### CELL PHONE COURTESY COUNTS

Drivers should not use their cell phone while driving. Passengers should refrain from placing or accepting calls while carpooling unless it absolutely cannot wait. Text rather than call, if possible, when you are a passenger. When taking calls, inform the caller that you're in a carpool and would prefer to call back. Keep all calls as brief as possible.

### THE BACK UP PLAN...

This is particularly important if your carpool has more than one driver. Ensure everyone has a copy of home, work or cell phone numbers, and agree in advance what will happen in the event of illness or mechanical problems. It is best to expect the unexpected. An automobile association membership can be a great investment for those rare occasions when the keys are locked in the car or a jump-start is needed.

### THE LITTLE THINGS...

Sometimes it is the little things that make a big difference. Consider the close proximity of your carpool partners before applying perfume or cologne in the morning. Many people are highly sensitive to certain smells and can become extremely uncomfortable.

Use common sense when making seating arrangements. Smaller people have an easier time sitting in the back seats. Decide on radio use, smoking policies and other concerns before you start carpooling.