

The Perfect Car Trip

By Sarah Welch and Alicia Rockmore



Mothers and fathers, start your engines! Summer is fast approaching, which means more car time, be it going to the beach, going to the park, or taking a big road trip to a fun destination. Road trips can be a wonderful way to spend time together as a family, or they can turn into repeated choruses of “Are we there yet?” and “I’m turning the car around!” So, how do you get the car organized, prepared and safe for this trip, and how do you keep the kids entertained, while keeping yourself sane? Keep your eyes on the road and we’ll tell you how.

Alicia on “Sharing the Road”

“Wouldn’t it be nice to have the road to yourself? Unfortunately, the average commuter spends ten 40-hour weeks in their automobile each year – roughly 10 percent of their waking hours! The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimated more than 6 million automobile accidents in the US in 2005. Fatigue, weather conditions, technological distractions, holiday weekend traffic, or carelessness can all cause us to be in an accident.”

Sarah on “Being the Driver, Not the Entertainer”

“When you’re on the road, you have to understand your role. You are the driver. That’s it. As hard as it may be, no matter what is going on in the backseat, no matter what names people are calling each other, no matter what just got spilled, your only job is that of driver. There are so many bigger safety concerns on the road than in the backseat, that your attention should stay focused on what the car ahead of you is doing, and not what your son is doing behind you.”



Before you hit the road, keep these hints in mind.

1. Be Prepared for Everything

Just as you have your house stocked in case of an emergency, you’ll want to make sure you’re prepared should anything happen in your car as well. Your glove compartment should hold a pair of sunglasses, the trunk should have extra water and a blanket, and you should have a first aid kit under the passenger seat. In case of an accident, a helpful tool is something called Collision.kit by Buttoned Up which includes information cards and a camera to ensure you have everything you need to record the details of the incident (Available at www.getbuttonedup.com and Target stores; \$15).

2. Know Where You Are Going

“We’re lost.” The two words nobody wants to hear on a road trip. (That, and “I’m queasy.”) Fortunately, nowadays it’s easier than ever to know exactly where you’re going before you get into the car. For those of us lucky enough to have a GPS system, it will do the work for you. If you’re still on your own, use internet site like Google Maps, or MapQuest to plot your destination and print out the best route to get there. When you’re in the car, kill two birds with one stone by designating someone to be the navigator, keeping them busy and you informed.

3. Keep the Backseat Happy

And now for the hard part: the backseat. Don’t worry, though, since a little preparedness will go a long way in keeping kids (and adults) not just occupied, but genuinely entertained. Most importantly, always bring plenty of snacks, plus trash bags and wipes for the resulting mess. Fuller stomachs make happier kids. As far as keeping them entertained, DVD players are becoming ubiquitous in many of today’s cars, but try some of the classic games, such as the license plate game, or “I Spy”. Not only are these more interactive, but they tend to be the ones your kids will remember when they grow up and go on their own road trips.

We are the co-founders of Buttoned Up, inc., a company dedicated to helping stretched and stressed women get themselves organized (along with everybody else they’re responsible for too!). We welcome your thoughts! Please send ideas and questions to us at: yourlife@getbuttonedup.com or visit us at www.getbuttonedup.com