

P E R S P E C T I V E S

It's finally summer! I look forward to this time of year from sheer habit — from my schooldays.

This is a great time to do so many things and visit different places. It's also an opportune time to catch up on my reading. I enjoy humorous stories and adventure novels. On occasion, I'll stumble on a gripping drama that seems destined for the cinema. But the main event this summer seems to be "teaching 16 year old son to drive".

During this much-maligned, yet truly "enjoyable" experience, I've come up with a few pointers for those in our shoes.

1. *Never watch your child back out the driveway with your spouse, especially if your car is parked nearby. As my son veered out the driveway one day, I was sure he was inches from my car as he sent his into warp speed in reverse.*

2. *Whisper quietly as your child drives beside you. It is vital not to interfere with the rock channel he is listening to because it may break his concentration and make him use one hand on the wheel as the other starts searching for the volume.*

3. *Stress that "peeling away" is not considered safe driving. My chiropractor agrees.*

4. *If they do something like honking at another driver, it's because they've seen you do it and to them it's perfectly alright. If they honk even when you tell them not to, wear a hat, a wig and sunglasses to disguise yourself.*

5. *If you want your child to stop quicker than he is doing, don't scream or place your feet on the dashboard. Those actions are not internationally recognized ways to teach good stopping skills. Instead, continually repeat in a slow, quiet voice, "Brake...brake...brake...now...now...now..." until he does.*

6. *When he brings home car shopper magazines and highlights the Mustangs, El Caminos or other "interesting" cars, calmly tell him that he has to be 18, a proven (keyword) driver, and have driven with you in the car for at least six months before he can even dream about a used car driven only on Sundays by a little old lady.*

7. *Last, but not least, it really doesn't help when a spouse (in this case the husband) gets all excited about cars during this important time period and goes out and buys a dune buggy. Naturally, all the rules go out the window and the remaining spouse gets to wield the Driver's Education Handbook with both hands.*

This mind-bending, physically stimulating experience will continue until January of next year when he passes the driving test and holds his license in his hands. Having survived one, I think we'll make it with the other. So, to all you out there with similar situations at hand — good luck! To all you experienced drivers — we were there once and lived to tell the tale.

Have a safe and fun summer!

Rasa Ardys-Juška

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