How to Drive in City Traffic

Learning to drive on rural or suburban streets is one thing, but if your teen is not used to driving in a city, it is a skill you will need to practice with them.

If teens are strangers to heavy traffic, let them be a passenger the first time you drive in traffic together so they can spend more time observing all the distractions without needing to drive at the same time.

1. Practice driving in traffic
The first time teens are behind the wheel, have them drive into the city very early on a weekend. This will ensure there is a minimal amount of traffic for them to contend with. Pick a destination (maybe breakfast?) and have them drive you to that location. If they need to parallel park or pull into a parking lot, there should be little traffic to deal with.

2. Practice in heavier traffic
After several trips into the city early in the morning, they will probably be ready for heavier traffic and, eventually, rush hour. Special patience is required, as is intense scanning for pedestrians, bicycles and other obstacles and distractions teens likely wouldn’t encounter in rural or suburban areas.

Ask them to review a map so they can understand the general direction they will be travelling in, what the route might be beforehand and whether they will encounter one-way streets. The more familiar they are with city driving, the easier it will be over time.