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TEXTING WHILE DRIVING (HTTP://CONSUMERIST.COM/TAG/TEXTING-WHILE-DRIVING)

3 Cellphone Apps To Block Texting While Driving

By alexchasicck (http://consumerist.com/author/alexchasicck) on October 30, 2009 7:30 PM
Short URL: http://con.st/5393720 (http://con.st/5393720)

We've been talking about the dangers of [texting while driving](http://consumerist.com/tag/textingwhiledriving/) for a while, and if you've been paying attention, you know it's no joke: texting is 23 times more distracting than talking on a phone. In spite of this, most people [do it anyway](http://consumerist.com/5325982/). If you just can't help yourself, here are three apps that will limit your ability to text while driving.

Name: [Textecution](http://www.textecution.com/)

Price: \$1.99

Supported platforms: Android (Droid, CLIQ, G1, and G2 in the U.S.), although they are currently developing the app for other phones.

How it works: This program is marketed to parents of teenagers, who need as few distractions as possible while driving. Using the phone's GPS, Textecution disables texting if it detects that the phone is moving faster than 10 mph. If you want to override, like if you're a passenger or on a train, you can ask your phone's "administrator," usually a parent, to text "allow" to disable. This feature could also be useful for a company that gives phones to its drivers. It's unclear whether the owner of the phone can be its own administrator, so this app might not be great for autonomous grown-ups who frequently ride in trains.

Name: [DriveSafe.ly](http://www.drivesafe.ly/)

Price: Free for basic, \$13.95 for pro

Supported platforms: Android, Blackberry. Windows Mobile and iPhone support are coming soon.

How it works: DriveSafe.ly reads text messages and emails aloud on the phone's speaker. It also allows you to select several auto-reply messages to respond hands-free, although it's unclear if this is only available as a pro feature. It's also unclear whether the basic free model is a beta, as clicking on most of the site's links just prompt you to install the app.

Name: [TXTBlocker](http://www.txtblocker.com/)

Price: \$24.99 initially, then \$9.99/month

Supported platforms: Blackberry, and [some others](http://www.txtblocker.com/compatibility.aspx)

How it works: This is one of the most annoying websites I've ever seen, with a lady in the lower corner of the screen cheerfully telling me about the product, who disappears once you click a button to shut her up, only to have her audio come back, unblockable, when you go to any other page on the site. This, combined with the generic "sexy blonde" picture on the main page, as well as the ludicrous price, would have deterred me from becoming a customer even if they supported my phone.

That said, TXTBlocker allows you to set time and location restrictions for texting or talking on the phone. One suggested use of this is to prevent kids from texting at school. There is a safe list of numbers, like 911, that can always be dialed. You can also block texting or using the phone while the phone is traveling at certain speeds. So pretty much the same stuff that Textecution does, but for much more money.

Do any of these apps appeal to you? Are there any not on this list? If I knew I had a problem with texting while driving, I'd probably like the idea of someone else, like my spouse, having control over it. There's obviously a need for some kind of solution to the problem of texting while driving, as it seems like people aren't going to restrict themselves. On the other hand, couldn't you just put your phone in the backseat or trunk while you're driving, so you have no temptation?

(Photo: [frankieleon](http://www.flickr.com/photos/armydre2008/3799167422/))

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