



AGING DRIVERS: CONVERSATION STARTERS



Talking about driving can be tough. Here are some simple ways to start the conversation with empathy, understanding, and respect.

Talking About Driving Retirement

Offer reassurance and support.

Tips:

Use “we” instead of “you.”
Focus on safety and independence. Avoid language that feels like blame.

Talking About Evaluations

Acknowledge and validate.
Emphasize collaboration.
Reframe the evaluation.

Tips:

Compare it to a health check-up. It’s normal, preventive, and empowering. Highlight that it’s about keeping keys longer, safely.

Talking About Adaptive Equipment

Focus on independence and safety.

Tips:

Frame equipment as a way to increase control and confidence. Present equipment as empowering, not limiting. Involve them in exploring choices that may extend independence, not a sign of decline.

- “You won’t go through this alone—I’ll be with you, and we’ll take it one step at a time. This is just another way to make sure you’re supported.”
- “I know how important driving is for your independence. I’ve noticed some changes, and I’d like us to talk about options to help you stay safe and mobile.”
- “Would you be open to exploring a driving evaluation? It could give us both peace of mind and help plan for the future.”
- “I’d like us to talk about ways to help you stay safe and mobile.”
- “Would you be open to exploring other options so you can stay connected, even if driving becomes harder?”
- I know the idea of a driving evaluation can feel stressful. It makes sense to feel nervous—driving has been such an important part of your independence.”
- “The occupational therapist’s role is to work with you, not against you. They’ll look at your strengths and give suggestions that can help you feel more comfortable behind the wheel.”
- “This isn’t about taking away your keys. It’s about making sure you have the right tools, strategies, and support to keep driving as safely and confidently for as long as possible.”
- “An occupational therapist can check how driving is going—like a tune-up for your skills. Would you be willing to try it?”
- “We want you to stay independent and connected with the people and places you love.”
- “An OT evaluation can actually help you drive longer, by giving you the right resources and adaptations.”
- “There are tools, like hand controls or seat cushions, that can make driving easier and more comfortable. Want to look at some options together?”
- “Adaptive equipment could help you stay independent on the road longer.”

[Colorado’s Guide For Aging Drivers & Their Families](#)



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