Safe Driving

Familiarize yourself with Connecticut State traffic laws before heading out in your car. Rules are largely the same throughout the U.S., but there are laws that vary from state to state. The CT driver's manual can be found on the CT DMV website. Here are a few basics:

- Each driver of the vehicle must have an acceptable valid driver’s license.
- The driver and all front seat passengers are required by law to wear seat belts. Back seat passengers aged 4-16 are required to wear seat belts.
- Speed limits in the U.S. are strictly enforced. If you are caught and ticketed for speeding, you will be required to pay a very large fine.
- Handheld cell phones cannot legally be used while driving. Ask for a “hands free” device from your cell phone provider if you need to drive and use your phone.
- Drivers must yield the right-of-way at all times to pedestrians who are in a marked or unmarked crosswalk.
- "Right on Red": Turning right at a red light is permitted in Connecticut only after you have stopped completely to make sure it is safe to proceed. In the city of New Haven, however, many intersections will have signs that indicate "NO TURN ON RED."
- Infants and children must use approved child restraint seats in all vehicles until they are over six years of age AND 60 pounds. After children outgrow their car seat, they must ride in a booster seat using a lap and shoulder belt. The law also now requires that infants remain rear-facing until they are 1 year of age AND 20 pounds!
- Headlights must be turned on whenever the windshield wipers are in use — rain or snow, night or day.
- You must stop for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing whether it is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road, or at an intersection you are approaching.
- Do not leave children unattended in a parked car. This is a serious crime.

Information about Traffic Violations [1]

Parking

Parking is limited in New Haven and on or near the Yale campus. Be sure to inquire about parking options when apartment hunting and consider the cost of monthly parking if you plan to drive to campus every day. Detailed information about parking in New Haven, including downloadable maps, can be found at INFONewHaven [2]. Other options for parking include:

- There are a number of private garages and lots in Downtown New Haven that offer daily or monthly rates.
- You can pay for meters with coins, pre-purchased parking vouchers, Parkmobile [5] or the New Haven City Card [6].

Parking on City Streets

Be aware of the following when parking on New Haven city streets:

- Read signs carefully. Limitations vary in terms of length of stay, time of day, day of the week, etc, and you will be ticketed for violations.
- Heed parking bans, snow emergencies and street cleaning schedules or you will be ticketed and towed, even with a valid permit. Signs announcing bans will be posted on trees and poles along the street with as little as 12 hours notice.
- If you get a parking ticket, pay promptly or additional fines will be added.
Towing

If you believe your car was towed, call the New Haven Police Department at (203) 946-6316. The police will tell you if it was towed and why, as well as if you owe money for tickets or taxes. Ticketed and towed vehicles incur a $77 tow fee payable to the tow company. After the first 24 hours, storage charges are $20 per day for the first 5 days, and $24 per day thereafter. For more information, click here [7].

Broken Meter

If a parking meter is broken, New Haven City ordinance requires you to pay with a parking voucher [8] or move your car to another space. To report a malfunctioning meter, call (203) 946-8081 with the meter number, street name and type of problem encountered.

Information about Parking Violations [1]