

Ask your employer about carpooling assistance. For some employers, this may include flexibility regarding work hours to encourage carpooling, financial incentives/pre-tax programs for commute costs or preferred parking for carpool vehicles.

Cascades West Rideshare
Toll Free 1-877-826-4646
www.cwride.org

A free carpool matching service of Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments

Tips for Successful Carpooling

People who carpool together spend quite a bit of time together each day. It is therefore essential that all members of the carpool feel comfortable with their fellow carpoolers. Here are suggestions that should help to ensure a pleasant carpool experience for everyone.



Tips for Successful Carpooling

Get to know your fellow carpoolers.

Carpoolers who do not know each other sometimes feel more comfortable meeting prospective carpoolers before they place they drive together for the first time. They can talk on the phone or meet at a public place to discuss carpool specifics and decide whether or not they feel more comfortable sharing a ride. After the phone call or meeting, if a person feels uncomfortable she/he can simply choose not to pursue this specific rideshare arrangement. If the people feel comfortable enough to rideshare, they may decide that the first step is a trial rideshare of a few weeks.

Determine your carpool route and schedule. Establish meeting points and times for both the morning and returning trips. Also, be sure to designate agreed-upon drop-off location(s) for the carpoolers.

Draw up a schedule for driving responsibilities. If there are multiple drivers in the carpool, create a driving schedule so there is no confusion regarding driving responsibilities. Carpoolers sharing driving responsibilities may choose to alternate driving responsibilities. Carpoolers sharing driving responsibilities may choose to alternate driving responsibilities on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. If the carpool contains more than 2 people, make a schedule of pick-up times for the passengers.

Create a carpool information sheet.

Make sure carpoolers share their phone numbers (including cell phones) so people can be contacted with any changes in the carpooling schedule. All carpool members should be contacted as soon as possible about any changes (such as illness, family emergency, unexpected overtime, etc) in the carpool schedule. Scheduled disruptions to the carpool (such as vacation time, teleworking, out of office meetings, etc.) should be shared with all carpoolers ahead of time so that alternate commuting plans can be made. It is also a good idea for carpoolers to share their email addresses with each other so that a carpool schedule containing driving responsibilities, pick up times and location, and other important information can be distributed to all carpool members.

Reimburse driving expenses. If the members of your carpool do not share the driving equally, they should come to an understanding of how the costs will be shared and agree on payment dates. Make sure the reimbursement is agreed upon by all members of the carpool. Be courteous and make sure any payments are a paid on time. Some carpoolers establish a simple one page letter agreement that covers costs/reimbursements and sets out simple rules for items such as notification and waiting times. To adequately protect everyone, make sure everyone has insurance coverage including uninsured motorist protection.

Carry through with your commitments. Please be punctual. Decide how long the driver is expected to wait for passengers before leaving. Use the carpool contact information sheet to try and contact the missing passenger before leaving.

Try to limit changes to the agreed-upon schedule. Fellow carpoolers will understand the need to occasionally veer from the schedule or route to take care of an important errand. But it is polite to first ask your fellow carpoolers. Perhaps, for example, the errand can be completed on a Monday or a Tuesday and a fellow carpooler needs to be at work a few minutes early on Monday and would prefer that the errand be completed on Tuesday.

Respect your fellow carpoolers. Everyone in the carpool should come to an agreement regarding carpool etiquette. Common topics to discuss include smoking, music, food/drinks, use of cell phones, etc. Be mindful that some people prefer to be quiet in the morning.

Drive carefully and keep the vehicle clean. Speeding and aggressive driving may make other carpoolers feel nervous and unsafe. When carpooling, be sure to obey the rules of the road. Try to respect the driver's decision (for example if there is more than one route option to take on a segment of the trip). Also, keep a clean and tidy car as a courtesy to your passenger.