



L I F E S K I L L STM

H A N D B O O K S

Transportation and Travel

Commuting to School and Work

Traveling by Bus

Traveling by Train or Plane

Planning a Vacation



21st CENTURY

 **SADDLEBACK**
EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING



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SECTION 1

Commuting to School and Work

For most people, everyday travel means getting to school or work. Depending on where you live, you might have several choices of transportation. You can walk, ride your bike, or take a bus. Or maybe you can share a ride with fellow students or co-workers. In making your choice, you should consider not only convenience and cost but safety, too.



Making the Daily Commute

Andy had lived in the city all his life and never owned a car. He really didn't want to own a car, even though he could afford to now.

First of all, where would he park it? His neighbor, Sarah, owned a car. She had to run out and move it early every morning. Some mornings, Sarah drove around for 20 or 30 minutes. She spent a lot of time looking for new places to park. On weekends, she found it almost

impossible to find a spot within a block of the apartment. Sarah joked that moving her car was how she got her daily exercise. Not moving it meant getting an expensive ticket, though. The parking restrictions in the neighborhood were tough.





Second, where would Andy drive the car? He didn't want to drive to work every day. The plant where he worked was outside the city. It was a good hour's drive during rush hour—more during bad weather. Andy had found a ride share through his employer. One of his co-workers, Corey, lived only a few miles from his apartment. Corey picked Andy up and dropped him off every day for a reasonable fee. And along the way, they picked up another co-worker, Omar. The three had become pretty good friends over the year they had been sharing a ride.





CHAPTER 1

Dangerous Travel and the Law

A roller coaster zooms up and down the hills and flies around the sharp corners. The riders' hearts pound with excitement.

Amusement park rides are amusing, because the riders aren't facing actual danger. Another kind of ride, however, is very dangerous indeed. "Hitching" a ride on a public highway puts people in real jeopardy.





Hitchhiking

Standing by the roadside and trying to get a ride from a passing vehicle. The would-be rider usually sticks out his or her thumb or holds up a sign stating a destination.

Hitchhiking is not as common as it used to be. But some people still travel by “thumbing” a ride. Most hitchhikers are teens or young adults. They usually have little money to spend and a strong desire to get around. Online journals share stories of people hitchhiking all over the world.



Consequences

Do you think hitchhiking is a cheap and easy way to travel? Think again. The cost of accepting a ride from a stranger can be high. Sometimes, thumbing a lift can have very serious consequences:

Horrendous

Terrible or horrifying.

→ According to one public safety official, “Some of the most **horrendous** crimes begin with the victim accepting a ride with a stranger.”

Know the Laws!

Laws about hitchhiking vary from state to state. However, all of them are based on a national set of traffic rules called the *Uniform Vehicle Code (UVC)*. According to the UVC, the act of hitchhiking is not illegal. However, where it can be done is restricted:

- Hitchhikers can't stand or walk on the roadway. If the roadway doesn't have a sidewalk, they must stay far enough away from the edge to be safe from passing cars. For instance, standing on the shoulder is considered safe.
- Some roadways, such as interstate highways, have *controlled access*. This means pedestrians can't enter them at all.





[FACT]

Hitchhiking Loses Popularity

Hitchhiking reached its peak of popularity in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. Since then, its popularity has dropped for three main reasons:

1. Most long-distance travel today is done on interstate highways. Hitchhiking on these roads is against the law.
2. Law enforcement officials pay closer attention to hitchhikers than they used to.
3. Many stories have been told about hitchhikers being assaulted and murdered. These stories have convinced people that hitchhiking is dangerous.



- The danger starts even before the ride begins. Hitchhikers that stand near or along a roadway risk being struck by a moving vehicle.
- Hitchhikers are in more danger when they climb into a stranger's vehicle. They face the very real possibility of being kidnapped, robbed, assaulted, or even murdered.
- Another danger concerns the driver. Hitchhikers don't know whether the person that picks them up has been drinking alcohol or taking drugs. Is this motorist in control of the vehicle? Of course,



What Do We Really Know about Hitchhiking?

Much of the information about hitchhiking has come from personal reports of riders and drivers. But that information isn't considered reliable, for two reasons. First, there's no way to determine whether these individuals' stories are accurate or truthful. And second, it's impossible to know whether these individuals' experiences were typical of hitchhikers overall. In general, people who support hitchhiking downplay the dangers associated with it. But people in law enforcement point to the crimes that occur among drivers and riders.



everyone runs the risk of being in a traffic accident every time he or she gets in a car. But the risk is obviously much greater for someone who knows nothing at all about the driver.

Drivers that pick up hitchhikers are also at serious risk. They don't know whether the smiling stranger standing on the side of the road is a good person or a criminal looking for a victim.



Safe Alternatives

There are better ways to share a ride than hitchhiking. Travel groups and agencies organize ride share programs that match riders and drivers. Shared rides can also be found using ride boards. These boards are often available at colleges and large workplaces. Yet another low-cost option is public transportation, such as a bus and train.

You'll get more details about economical transportation ideas as you read this book. It's possible to find transportation that's both inexpensive and safe.

Hitchhiking as "Russian Roulette"

A film produced by the US Department of Justice compares hitchhiking to playing Russian roulette. In that deadly game, individuals take their chances putting a loaded gun to their heads. The similarity to hitchhiking is that it's possible to thumb a ride or to give a ride without running into trouble. But the danger is always there. And sooner or later, people who give and get rides will probably become victims.

