

# What to Do When You Are in an Accident

*Steps to take immediately following an accident to protect your rights*

Courtesy of the Law Office of Richard J. Banta, P.C.

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*For more specific information, contact the Law Office of Richard J. Banta, P.C. at 303-331-3415.*



This free report tells you what to do if you are in an accident, or if you see or come upon an accident. One of the most important steps to take right after an accident is to find a personal injury attorney who is right for you. Read our free report “How To Select The Right Personal

Injury Attorney For You” for some ideas on how to find the right attorney for you available at [www.richardbantalaw.com](http://www.richardbantalaw.com)

Here are important steps to do immediately following an accident. Obviously, the severity of the accident and injuries will impact whether you can personally accomplish these steps. If for medical reasons you are unable to do any of these things, hopefully someone acting on your behalf will still be able to get them done. There is normally a lot of confusion and chaos immediately following an accident. Accomplishing these steps will make it easier later on to reconstruct what happened.

Don't hesitate to enlist the assistance of any bystanders if they are available. Even if they did not witness the accident, they may be able to provide important information later on

when it is time to settle the case. Names and phone numbers of actual witnesses and others on the scene can prove to be invaluable.

### **Immediately following the accident you should:**

**1. License Plates:** Write down or photograph as many license numbers of as many vehicles around you as you can before anyone leaves the scene. The drivers may turn out to be valuable witnesses.

**2. Police:** Call the police and report the accident. This is very important. No matter how minor you think the accident is you (or someone else involved) may discover that you have been injured after you leave the scene. Don't let anyone talk you out of reporting the accident – for any reason.

**3. Other Parties:** It is important to obtain information at the scene.

- a. Be sure to obtain the following information on all involved parties, including possible witnesses: name; address; phone number; and vehicle information including the year, make, model, color and license plate number.
- b. Be sure to obtain the other parties insurance information - the company name, agents name, phone number and policy number. This information should be listed on their proof of insurance card which the law requires them to have in their vehicle – insist on seeing it.
- c. Be sure to note the date, time and location of the accident.

**4. Damages:** If you can, photograph the damage to the vehicles and the scene of the accident. If you are not able to photograph the damages, make notes.

**5. Injuries:** You may have been injured and not know it at the time.

- a. There is not always a correlation between the physical damage to the vehicle and your injuries. You may not think you are injured; however, you may

experience symptoms after you leave the scene. These symptoms may show up in a few hours or a few days. Therefore, don't assume you are not injured and if anyone asks - especially the investigating police - be honest and tell them that you are not sure.

- b. If the paramedics recommend that you go to the hospital, follow their advice even though you may not think you are injured. They are experienced professionals.

**6. Evidence:** Gather any physical evidence from the scene and don't let anything get lost. Things like bumpers, grilles, headrests, undercarriage, hubcaps, seatbelts, etc. may provide critical information regarding the accident. This is especially important if your vehicle is going to be repaired or totaled and taken to a salvage yard.

**7. Audio Recordings:** If you have a phone with a recording capability, take statements of the other party and any witnesses.

**8. Insurance Reporting:** Report the accident to your insurance agent as soon as practically possible.

**9. Find an Attorney:** There are many issues that come up immediately following an accident where an attorney can provide invaluable services. These areas include concerns regarding property damage, insurance coverage, a rental car, and access to medical treatment. Download the free report on [How to Select the Right Personal Injury Attorney](#).

As always, please feel free to contact us any time to schedule a free consultation or to discuss questions you may have regarding your rights and how to successfully process your claim.

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