

Young adults and driving: 'Ain't nobody got time for that'

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More than a third of young adults who don't drive say they are too busy to get a driver's license—and more than a fifth have no intention of ever learning to drive, say researchers at the University of Michigan.

Building on their recent series of studies showing that teens and [young adults](#) are increasingly forgoing driving, Brandon Schoettle and Michael Sivak of the U-M Transportation Research Institute surveyed 618 adults under 40 who do not have a driver's license to find out why.

They found that 37 percent are too busy or do not have enough time to get a driver's license, 32 percent said that owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive and 31 percent are able to get transportation from others.

"Being too busy to obtain a license is generally determined by an individual's personal priorities," Schoettle said. "The frequency of this response decreased, however, as age increased."

The researchers say that the inability to afford a vehicle and the ability to get transportation from others are generally supported by the underlying [demographics](#) of the [respondents](#).

"When compared with the general population 18-to-39 years old, respondents had much higher levels of [unemployment](#) and a smaller proportion had completed an associate degree or higher," Schoettle said. "The ability to get transportation from others is likely aided by the fact that the majority of spouses or partners have a valid driver's license, and it is likely that most parents of younger adults living at home also possess valid driver's licenses."

Other top reasons (primary and secondary) for not having a driver's license: 22 percent prefer to bike or walk, 17 percent prefer public transportation, 9 percent are concerned about how driving impacts the environment, 8 percent communicate or conduct [business online](#), and 7 percent have medical/[vision problems](#) or [disabilities](#).

Schoettle and Sivak also examined trends based on the gender and age of nondrivers. They found that women are more likely than men to find transportation from others, have not yet learned to drive, have a fear of driving or have some legal issue preventing them from obtaining a license. Men are more likely to report being able to communicate or conduct business online.

Drivers aged 18 and 19 are less likely than those in their 20s or 30s to find the time to get a license or to use public transportation and more likely to find rides from others. Concern about the environment, ability to communicate or conduct business online, having a medical problem or disability, and legal issues all increased in frequency as the age of the study's respondents increased.

While more than three-fourths of the respondents said they plan to someday get their driver's license, the likelihood decreases with time—from 93 percent of 18-to-19-year-olds to 79 percent of those in their 20s to 65 percent of those in their 30s.

Overall, 22 percent have no [intention](#) of ever driving—27 percent of men and 19 percent of women.

More information: deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/99124

Provided by University of Michigan

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