

Drill Bits

SOUTH DAKOTA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



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Who are you trying to impress, anyway?

Recently at a drill, one of the younger Soldiers was openly discussing the prowess of his abilities behind the wheel of his muscle car. He bragged up the fact that he was traveling at well over 100 mph and that he did not fear law enforcement as he could quickly run away and leave them behind. Once, the young Soldier even admitted to losing control of his vehicle at a high rate of speed.



This type of activity may just be an exaggeration of the truth, but it is apparent that there is a mentality of invincibility especially among the younger males. And just as concerning, there were NCOs around, laughing about this, egging the young soldier on to tell more, not one statement of trying to teach to the Soldier.

After all we have been told, shown, lived and survived, we still openly accept the reckless and dangerous activities our Soldiers commit by condoning and, through inaction, encourage the soldier not to change. Only after a tragedy do we say, I should have said or done something.

And for what is this type of hazard accepted? Bragging rights, a few laughs, popularity. Who are you trying to impress? Your parents, spouse, children or siblings won't be as they stand at your grave. The cop who

is writing the accident investigation or citations won't be either. Your friends who might be impressed by the stories? Will they be the friends to drop by on prison visiting day if you kill someone else?

In all reality, driving is the biggest responsibility we undertake, yet take for granted each day. The number of lives that can be affected by us each time we are behind the wheel is unbelievable. Yet most drivers don't take it seriously. As you drive home or to work, take just a second to realize that the other drivers can change your life just as easily as you can change theirs with one mistake. Stay alert and focused.

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Distracted driving: GR8 4 UNDERTAKERS

Driving is work. Your mind has to be on the task at hand, and there is little to no room for error behind the wheel. Can you imagine if a surgeon was operating while playing "Angry Birds"? What if an electrician was wiring a breaker panel and talking to his significant other? Or how about a group of Soldiers on patrol, in the dark and one was texting his girlfriend? Do you think these examples are far-fetched? The fact is you're

doing the same thing when you're behind the wheel using a cell phone for talk or text.

Want proof? Did you ever play the hand slap game where you and another person stand face to face, them with palms up, your hands lying on top of theirs and you pull away when you feel that they are going to slap your hands? Even with hands free, try to play the game while

you are talking to someone. Chances are you will lose and lose big time. You do the same thing talking behind the wheel and worse when texting. Save your life and someone else's. Save it for L&R



Push, Don't Pull! Safe Material Moving

How Pulling Affects Your Body

Ankle. The heel becomes a high target while pulling an object behind you.

Hip. The hip is subject to a large amount of torque when you pull from the rear, making the joint prone to injury.

Hamstring. The hamstrings are not very useful in propelling the body forward. Pulling can lead to chronic hamstring injuries.

Lower Back. Notice the curve in your lower back as you pull a heavy load while walking.

Neck. When you pull an object, you tend to use more of your neck muscles. This can also lead to pinched nerves that ultimately affect the entire arm. Since your cervical spine is home to eight pairs of nerves that run down your arms, a pinch can lead to a lot of problems all the way down to the fingertips.

Elbow. This is the forgotten joint, small and vulnerable to strain. Pulling places a large strain on the elbow and can lead to future injuries. Pain associated with this type of injury is much like carpal tunnel but in the elbow. If you have ever had "tennis elbow" or "golfer's elbow," you can understand the pain.

Shoulder. Pulling a load like this sets you up for failure down the road—you are asking for injury by asking your body to perform this way. Anyone who has ever pinched a nerve in their shoulder or torn a rotator cuff knows this pain.

Why Pushing is the Way to GO

- Pushing gives you more control over the object being moved—exerting higher push forces than pulling, with less effort.
- You have the ability to use larger muscle groups for leverage, versus smaller muscle groups such as arms and shoulders.
- You have better visibility when you push. When you pull, you tend to turn to look back at your load, making it possible to be blindsided to possible hazards.

But not everything can be pushed so:

- Ask for assistance—use teamwork.
- Turn the pulling motion into a guiding motion; have someone push from the rear when possible, to divide the heavy workload.
- Lighten the load.

Sizing Up a Load

- Always size up the load. Even a small box can hide a large amount of weight.
- Never push a piece of equipment you cannot safely stop or maneuver.
- If you cannot see around the item or cannot easily push it, two or more people may be required for the move.

