

No matter how good your driving is, accidents on the road do happen. We have put together a guide to what you should do after an accident, which can help minimise the additional stress of sorting everything out following the incident.

1. Accidents happen. Try to stay calm and don't lose your temper. Don't admit blame at the scene of the accident or offer any form of settlement.
2. Stop at the scene if you think your accident has caused injuries or damage to vehicles or property. It is an offence not to stop.
3. If your car hits a dog or farm animal, you are required by law to report the incident to the police. If you hit a cat or wild animal, there is no obligation to report it, but you must ensure that the animal is not injured or suffering.
4. Ensure the scene is safe. Switch off all engines, turn on hazard warning lights and alert oncoming traffic about the accident.
5. Call 999 (or 112 from a mobile) immediately if anyone involved in the accident is injured, the collision has caused a hazardous situation, or someone leaves the scene without exchanging details. If you're unsure about whether you should call the police - make the call. The police don't usually attend road traffic accidents where there are no injuries but it is still worth reporting the incident.
6. Always keep an accident pack in the car. This should consist of a notebook, pen and disposable camera or your mobile phone if this takes pictures. In the event of an accident, make a sketch at the scene. Remember to note as many details as you can such as street names, vehicle locations and direction of travel, skid marks, collision points and vehicle damage. Use the camera to take photos showing the road layout, position of vehicles and their damage (take care near busy roads).
7. Get the names, addresses and vehicle registrations of any witnesses (including passengers in the other vehicles involved).
8. Take down the registration number, make, model and colour of all other vehicles involved in the accident. All drivers involved must exchange details by law. Ask them for their name, address, telephone numbers (don't just get a mobile number but a home number too) and insurance details. You must also provide this information about yourself.

9. Record any other details you think may be important eg use of mobile phone, if you think the driver of the other vehicle has been drinking, weather conditions etc.
10. We would suggest that you contact ourselves Berrys Solicitors, Telephone: 01253 620022, Email: berrys.mail@btconnect.com to run through the details.
11. You must notify your insurance company immediately of any collision you are involved in, regardless of whether or not a claim is to be made or whose fault it was. Give them all the details, notes, photographs etc. Advise the Insurance Company you have instructed us hopefully this will then stop your Insurance Company passing on your details and you being bombarded by a torrent of calls and correspondence trying to deal with your claim.

Unfortunately, car accidents happen but there are steps motorists can take afterwards to ease the hassle of sorting it all out. Motorists should read through their insurance policies carefully to check what is covered in an accident, things such as replacement vehicles or personal injury cover, so that no eventuality is overlooked. Don't forget you could print out a copy of this article and put it in your glove compartment to remind you if needed.