

# Safety Concerns

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**When you take a taxi, you are being driven by a person who has been screened and trained to drive passengers. At ride hailing companies, the drivers are not as well trained and are not screened as thoroughly.**

At ride hailing companies like Uber and Lyft, drivers are not employees—they're "independent contractors." The company wants this designation so that they don't have to pay taxes and other benefits to drivers. This also means that drivers undergo less training, have less insurance, and do not go through as thorough a background check.

One recent tragedy involving ride hailing is the story of a girl using Lyft: *A 13-year-old Florida girl riding Lyft alone in the middle of the night was killed when her 17-year-old driver drove off a wet highway into some trees. The 17-year-old driver only had a learner's permit and was using his mother's Lyft account to make money.*

There have also been a number of stories regarding assaults by ride hailing drivers on their passengers. While this happens in taxis as well, it seems to be a more common problem with ride hailing services. This is because the background check done on ride hailing drivers is more limited than the ones done by taxi companies.

Additionally, if there is ever an accident involving an injury or death, there is a much greater chance of legal recourse—action that can be taken to fix the problem—with a taxi company than ride hailing companies. Ride hailing drivers are usually able to use their existing personal auto insurance policy, not a commercial one, so if they get into an accident, the insurance company may not help.

While ride hailing companies have insurance, they often say that the driver is responsible for an accident, not themselves. When you request an Uber ride, you agree to this term: *You understand, therefore, that by using the application and the service, you may be exposed to transportation that is potentially dangerous, harmful to minors, unsafe, or otherwise objectionable, and that you use the application and the service at your own risk.*










Uber does offer a service called UberBlack, in which drivers must have commercial licensing and registration. However, the cost is twice as much as the cost for a regular Uber, so it is comparable or even higher than taxi fares.

Until ride hailing companies update their terms and conditions—or switch the classification of its drivers to employees, instead of “independent contractors”—taxis are generally safer.

**[Scroll down to see a safety comparison chart](#)**

# How do the driving requirements differ between taxis, Uber, and Lyft?

## BEHIND THE WHEEL

	SAN FRAN	CHICAGO	DC	NYC	UBER	LYFT
 <b>CRIMINAL HISTORY</b>	NO CRIMINAL HISTORY	CRIME-FREE FOR 5 YEARS	CRIME-FREE FOR 10 YEARS	DISCLOSURE OF ANY FELONIES OR MISDEMEANORS	CRIME-FREE FOR 7 YEARS	PASS A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER TRACE
 <b>FINGER-PRINTS</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
 <b>DRIVING HISTORY</b>	4+ HOURS, 10-YEAR PRINT OUT OF DRIVING RECORD	NO	12 CONSECUTIVE MONTHS OF DRIVING IN DC AREA	NO	3+ YEARS OF DRIVING EXPERIENCE	1+ YEAR DRIVING, LESS THAN 3 AUTO VIOLATIONS
 <b>MEDICAL EXAM</b>	NO	MEDICAL AND EYE EXAM	NO	MEDICAL EXAM	NO	NO
 <b>DRUG TEST</b>	CHEMICAL DETECTION TEST	CHEMICAL DETECTION TEST	NO	ANNUAL DRUG TEST	NO	NO
 <b>CREDIT CHECK</b>	NO	NO	NO	INTERVIEW WITH TLC ATTORNEY TO PROVE ELIGIBILITY	YES	DMV CHECK
 <b>AGE</b>	21+	21+	ANY	ANY	21+	21+
 <b>LICENSE</b>	VALID LICENSE	VALID, UNREVOKED LICENSE	DRIVER'S RECORD WITH 8 POINTS OR LESS	VALID LICENSE	CURRENT AND VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE + INSURANCE	CURRENT AND VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE
 <b>TRAINING</b>	TAKE A TAXI CLASS AND PASS A TEST	COMPLETE PUBLIC CHAUFFEUR TRAINING COURSE	NO	COMPLETE DMV DEFENSIVE DRIVING TEST	NO	NO