



CEASING TO DRIVE

Adapting Today to the Lifestyle of Tomorrow

Use alternatives to the car for your needs.

Are you aged 55 or over and use your car for most of your trips in and around Montreal? Did you know that you can start preparing now to use means of transportation other than your car, such as walking, cycling and public transportation?

It is easier to develop new transportation habits in your daily life when you are physically and cognitively fit.

The many health benefits of active transportation

- **Increase** your level of physical activity on a daily basis. For example, by travelling on foot or by bike.
- **Reduce your stress** and the inconveniences associated with driving. For example, traffic jams, detours due to roadblocks, travelling in bad weather conditions, difficulties finding parking and associated costs.
- **Eliminate the hassle and responsibilities** associated with vehicle maintenance and repair costs.
- **Free up time** when you are walking or taking public transportation: listen to music, catch up on news with podcasts, read, call your loved ones.
- **Enjoy getting around** in a relaxed way, while observing your surroundings and the life around you.
- **Keep your brain healthy** by taking new routes. This will help to stimulate your memory, sense of direction and learning abilities.

In addition to these numerous health benefits, you participate in **protecting the environment and fighting climate change**.



Words of an elder

Jacques, 95 years old: "When I got divorced, I decided to leave the car to my ex-wife, who had taken the apartment. At the same time, I decided to get rid of all the hassle of owning a car: trips to the garage to get the tires, brakes, oil, etc. changed. In winter, snow removal, de-icing and other problems. Since then, I call a taxi to get around. For longer trips, on vacation for example, I let my new spouse drive, even if it means paying for gas and other expenses. It has been very worthwhile. And relaxing."

If you do not choose to stop driving yourself, it can be stressful for you and your loved ones to have your driver's licence revoked by the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ).

Negative consequences of having your driver's licence REVOKED

Difficult emotions to handle by elderly:

- The shock of suddenly losing your driver's licence.
- Anger at a situation perceived as unfair.
- The frustration of having to rely on others for transportation.
- Anxiety about using new means of transportation.
- Loss of freedom and the pleasure of driving.

In short, it means losing one's identity as a driver and part of one's independence.

A real impact on the daily lives of loved ones:

- The concerns and tensions associated with unsafe driving by the elderly person before the driver's licence is revoked.
- Facing strong reactions from the elderly person who has lost their driver's licence, especially if they have cognitive impairments.
- The burden of suddenly having to plan or provide transportation for the elderly person. This can be particularly difficult when this person is themselves elderly or not accustomed to driving.



A Few Figures

22% of Montrealers aged 55 and over use public transportation. The closer people live to the central districts, the more they are likely to use public transportation or to walk. **If you are thinking of moving**, consider doing so near public transportation services to make it easier to stop driving, maintain your activities and prevent social isolation.

The number of cyclists aged 65 to 74 tripled between 1995 and 2020, rising from 12% to 34%.

In Montreal, you have several alternatives to driving at your disposal.



Walking

Beneficial for overall health, walking is also the most economical option.



Public transportation

Take the bus, metro, train or the REM. Since July 1, 2023, public transportation has been free for people aged 65 and over residing in Montreal. For more information, have a look at [Free 65+](#).

→ Useful resources from the Société des transports de Montréal (STM):

- Between stops
- Inclusive Mobility: our public transit training program
- Paratransit



Carpooling

Share a ride with a friend, family member or carpooling community to reduce costs and your ecological footprint.



Carsharing

Fewer cars on the road, more space and friendliness in urban areas! Discover car-sharing services such as [Communauto](#).



Bicycles and others (tricycles, electric bikes)

Practical and good for your health!

→ Refer to the following resources:

- [Bixi Montréal](#): a bike-sharing system
- [Velocaravane](#): cycling lessons for all ages.



Three- or four-wheeled scooter

An ideal solution for people with reduced mobility who wish to remain independent.



Local shuttles

Some towns or retirement homes offer free or low-cost shuttle services.



Taxi

A practical option for occasional trips.

Before using a new means of transportation, you need to plan ahead and get organized.

- Find the location of bus, metro, train and REM stations.
- Check whether there are any public benches or other street furniture where you can take a break.
- If you have a smartphone, use apps to plan your route (e.g., Chrono and Transit).
- If necessary, ask a friend or relative to accompany you on a new route or when using a new means of transportation.

→ **For more information**, see the following toolkit: [Trousse sur la capacité à conduire de la personne aînée](#)



Dominique, 66 years old: "A few years ago, we moved to an apartment located close to a metro station and bus stops, and essential services (grocery store, pharmacy), which makes it easy for us to get around! Since then, we got rid of our car, which was expensive to maintain and difficult to park in the streets of Montreal in winter. We've subscribed to **Communauto**, which we use to visit family on the South Shore or to go on short trips. Although it requires planning and can at times be more complicated, we appreciate these more ecological and economical choices."