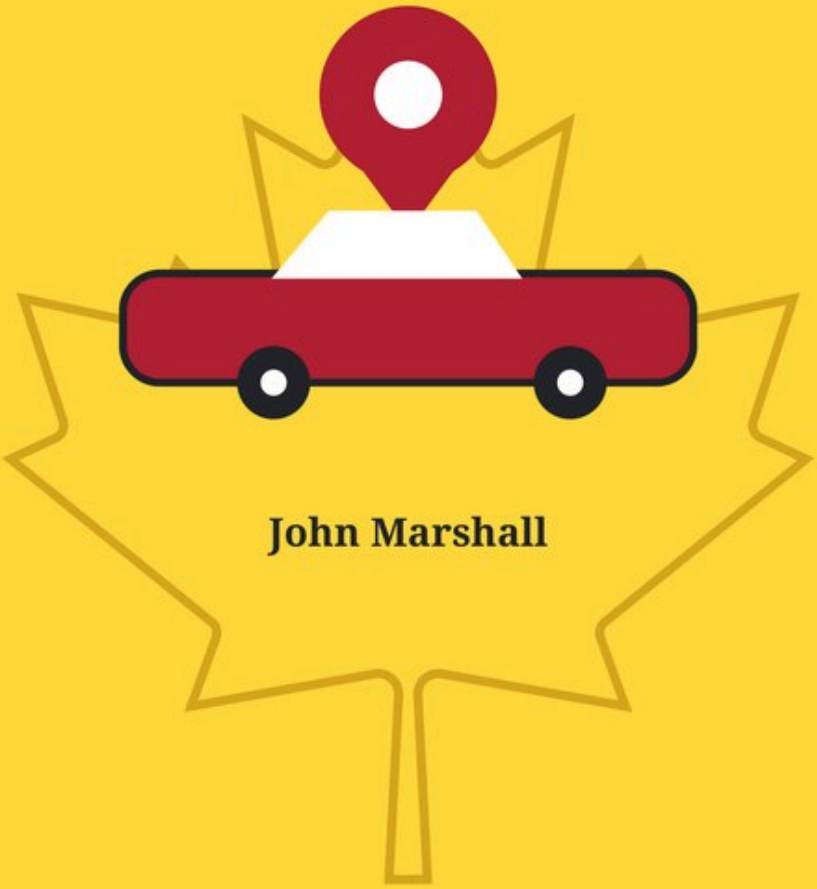
THE PROOF SERIES

A PLAYFUL GUIDE TO RIDES WITHOUT DRIVING

Ride Proof

Uber, Lyft, and life without the car keys — in plain language, with big type and a few laughs.



John Marshall

PROUDLY CANADIAN



PROUDLY CANADIAN

FREE SAMPLE CHAPTER

By John Marshall

www.buyproof.ca

A NEW CHAPTER

A New Kind of Independence

Nobody wakes up one morning feeling finished with driving. It creeps up: the night glare, the crowded parking lots, the little voice that says “this is getting to be work.” This book is for that moment — and for everything after it.

Notice the signs › Talk it over › Try one ride › Keep your freedom

1. Name what changed — Write down, honestly, what bothers you about driving now. Night vision? Reaction time? Merging? A short list turns a vague worry into a practical decision.

2. Separate identity from ignition — You have been a driver for fifty years. Being a driver is something you did, not someone you are. The freedom was never the steering wheel; it was the going.

3. Ask what freedom costs — Add up a year of driving: insurance, gas, maintenance, parking. Many seniors are startled to learn rides cost less than the car they barely use.

4. Take one test ride — Before deciding anything, take one ride in a ride app to somewhere pleasant. Notice how it feels to arrive relaxed, with no parking hunt at the end.

TALE

E STORY

Ruth, 76, from Winnipeg, kept her car keys on the hook by the door for three months after she stopped driving. One morning she moved them to a drawer and said out loud, “I am not the keys. I am the person who goes places.” She has been everywhere since.

! Independence is not a car; it is the ability to get where you want, when you want. A ride app can deliver that as reliably as a set of keys.

Take care: Do not let anyone rush this decision — not a worried child, not a well-meaning friend, and not this book. It is yours to make, at your pace.

READING THE SIGNS

The Signs It Might Be Time

The signs are rarely dramatic. More often they are small, repeatable moments: gripping the wheel tighter on the highway, avoiding left turns, declining evening invitations. Here is how to read them honestly.

Night driving › Near misses › Passenger feedback › Gut feeling

1. The night test — If you now avoid driving after dark, that is meaningful information, not weakness. Night driving is the first skill to fade for most of us, and the glare only gets worse.

2. The near-miss count — Everyone has an occasional scare. If you are having them monthly — or you notice them only because a passenger gasped — your instincts are sending mail. Open it.

3. The shrinking map — Notice if your driving world is getting smaller: no more highway, no more downtown, no more rain. A shrinking map is your brain's quiet way of self-protecting.

4. The passenger poll — Ask one honest person: "Do you feel safe when I drive?" Then — and this is the hard part — listen to the whole answer without defending yourself.

TALE

E STORY

Earl, 81, from Halifax, failed his own private test: he could not read a licence plate at the distance his grandson could.

"My eyes did the voting," he said, "and I respect the result."

! Aging Canada and provincial motor vehicle branches offer mature-driver assessments that are supportive, not punitive — a professional second opinion, not a trap.

Take care: One bad drive does not mean you must quit tomorrow. Patterns matter more than moments. Look at the last six months, not the last six minutes.

THE MONEY MATH

The Money Math of Keeping the Car

A car sitting in the driveway is not free — it is a subscription you forgot you signed up for. Insurance, plates, maintenance, and depreciation tick along whether you drive or not. Let us do the honest math.

Add up costs › Price a ride › Compare weekly › Decide calmly

1. List the fixed costs — Write down your yearly insurance, registration, and the last two years of repairs averaged out. Do not forget the oil changes and the winter tires.

2. Add the invisible costs — Depreciation is real money: your car loses value every year it sits. Parking fees, car washes, and that second set of keys add up too.

3. Price your real week — Count your actual trips in a normal week — say, six. Multiply by a typical local ride fare of $12–$20. Most seniors land between $150 and $400 a month.

4. Compare and breathe — For many people, rides cost half of car ownership — with zero surprise repair bills. If the numbers work, the decision gets much easier to say out loud.

TALE

E STORY

When Priya, 74, from Surrey, added up her car costs, she found she was paying over six thousand dollars a year to drive mostly to the grocery store.

“My car was the most expensive appliance I owned,” she laughed, “and I barely plugged it in.”

!

The Canadian Automobile Association estimates owning a small car costs roughly $9,000–$12,000 a year all-in. Even a few rides a week rarely approaches that.

Take care: Ride prices surge during rush hours and storms, and small towns have fewer drivers. Budget a little above your estimate and keep a taxi number as backup.

FAMILY MATTERS

Talking It Over With Family

"I think I am done driving" is a sentence that can silence a dinner table. It does not have to. Handled well, this conversation brings your family onto your team instead of into your business.

Choose the moment › Say it plainly › Invite ideas › Stay in charge

1. Pick a calm moment — Not after a scary drive, not during a holiday. A quiet afternoon coffee works best. You want a conversation, not a crisis meeting.

2. Lead with the plan — Say what you are moving toward, not just what you are leaving: "I am switching to ride apps and transit." A plan invites help; a worry invites argument.

3. Ask for specifics — Invite family to help with concrete things: setting up the app, a practice ride together, learning the senior bus pass. Jobs beat opinions.

4. Keep the final word — Thank them for caring, and be clear: the decision is yours. "I have thought this through, and I need you to trust me" is a complete sentence.

TALE

E STORY

Doug told his daughter he was thinking of giving up driving, and she cried — with relief.

"Dad," she said, "I have been rehearsing this conversation for two years." They had both been waiting for the other to go first.

!

Adult children often worry more than they say. Opening the conversation yourself turns it from an intervention into a plan — and plans feel much better.

Take care: If family pushes back with "you are fine, keep driving," remember that their comfort is not the same as your safety. You are the one behind the wheel.

DIP A TOE IN

Your First Try

You do not have to sell the car to try the alternative. One low-stakes ride — somewhere pleasant, in daylight, with nowhere to be in a hurry — will teach you more than ten chapters. Here is how to make it count.

Pick an easy trip › Bring a friend › Ride relaxed › Notice the feeling

1. Choose a treat, not a test — Make the first ride somewhere fun: lunch with a friend, the garden centre, a matinee. If the ride is delightful, the lesson lands. A dentist trip teaches nothing but dentistry.

2. Go in daylight — Mid-morning on a weekday is the sweet spot: plenty of drivers, calm traffic, good light. Save the rainy Friday night for month three.

3. Bring a co-pilot — Invite a friend who has used ride apps, or a grandchild who lives on their phone. They handle the taps; you handle the observing.

4. Debrief over coffee — Afterwards, ask yourself: was I comfortable? Was it on time? Was it affordable? If yes, yes, and yes — you have your answer.

TALE

E STORY

Marjorie, 79, took her first Uber to her book club while her car still sat in the driveway.

The driver helped with her tote bag, the ride cost eleven dollars, and she arrived “relaxed, like a duchess,” she reported. The car stayed home the next week too.

!

Many seniors take their first ride-app trip with a friend or family member along. There is no rule that says your first ride must be solo.

Take care: Do not judge the whole idea by one bad ride. Even taxis have off days. Two or three trips make a fair sample.

YOUR POCKET TAXI STAND

The Phone You Already Have

Ride apps live on smartphones, and that is the whole price of admission. The good news: the phone you already carry is probably ready, and the few settings that matter take five minutes.

Any smartphone works › Charged and ready › Big text on › Ringer up

1. Check what you have — If your phone has a touch screen and can install apps, you are equipped. iPhones and Androids both work; the apps look slightly different but do the same job.

2. Keep it charged — A dead phone is a missed ride. Charge it overnight like your toothbrush charges — same spot, same habit. A $15 portable charger in your bag is cheap insurance.

3. Turn the ringer up — Drivers call or text when they arrive. If your phone is always on silent, you will miss them. Set the ringer loud and the vibration on.

4. Know your number — The app texts you through your phone number, so make sure you know it by heart — or save it in your contacts under “Me.” Drivers occasionally need to reach you.

TALE

When Harold, 82, from Regina, finally admitted his flip phone could not run ride apps, his grandson handed him a used smartphone and said, “Grandpa, this is your new taxi stand, and it fits in your pocket.” He was requesting rides by supper.

! You do not need the newest phone. Any iPhone or Android from the last five or six years runs Uber and Lyft perfectly well.

Take care: Never hand your unlocked phone to a stranger, even a friendly driver. If they need to see something, hold the phone and show them yourself.

STAYING CONNECTED

Data or Wi-Fi: Staying Connected

Your phone needs the internet to talk to drivers, and outside your house that means mobile data. Here is the sixty-second version of how it works, minus the jargon.

Wi-Fi at home › Data on the road › Maps need signal › Step outside

1. Wi-Fi is for home — At home, your phone uses your home Wi-Fi — free and fast. The app works fine on it for booking ahead and checking prices.

2. Data is for everywhere else — On the street, your phone switches to mobile data automatically. If you pay a monthly phone bill, you almost certainly have data included. Ask your provider if unsure.

3. Check the bars — Those little bars at the top of your screen are your signal. No bars, no ride request. Step outside or near a window and they usually appear.

4. GPS does the pointing — Your phone's location finder tells the app exactly where you are. Keep Location turned on for the ride app — it is what lets the driver find your door.

TALE

STORY

Jean-Guy, 77, from Quebec City, tried to request a ride from his kitchen using Wi-Fi and watched the little car drive around his house on the map.

"The driver is looking for me," he chuckled, "and I am looking at him, and neither of us is moving." He stepped onto the porch, and the pin snapped to attention.

! Ride apps use very little data — a few megabytes per trip. Even the smallest, cheapest data plan handles them easily.

Take care: Public Wi-Fi in malls and cafés is fine for browsing, but request rides on your mobile data when possible — it is more private and it follows you to the curb.

GETTING THE APP

The App Store, Simply Explained

Getting the app is like picking up a free brochure that happens to summon cars. It takes two minutes, costs nothing, and the store handles all the technical bits.

Open the store › Search the name › Tap install › Open the app

1. Open your app store — On iPhone, tap the blue App Store icon. On Android, tap the colourful Play Store triangle. This is the official shop for phone programs.

2. Search for Uber — Tap the search bar, type “Uber,” and look for the black icon with the white U. Check that the maker says “Uber Technologies” — that is the real one.

3. Tap Get or Install — The app downloads in under a minute on Wi-Fi. It is free. Repeat the search for “Lyft” (pink icon) if you want both — most riders keep both.

4. Find it on your home screen — The new icon appears with your other apps. Drag it somewhere easy to find, like the first screen. You will be tapping it a lot, so give it a good parking spot.

TALE

THE STORY

Betty, 80, from St.

John's, stared at the app store for a full minute before whispering, “It says Uber is free. That can not be right.” It was right. The app is free; you only pay for the rides.

!

The Apple App Store (iPhone) and Google Play Store (Android) are the only safe places to get Uber and Lyft. Never install them from a text message link.

Take care: If an app asks for payment to download, it is the wrong app. The real Uber and Lyft are always free to install.

JOINING UP

Making an Account

An account is just the app's way of knowing it is you: your phone number, your name, and a way to pay. Setup takes about five minutes, and you only do it once.

Open the app › Enter your number › Type the code › Add your name

1. Enter your phone number — Open the app and type your mobile number. The app texts you a short code — a one-time passcode — to prove the phone is really yours.

2. Type the code — The code usually arrives within seconds and sometimes fills itself in like magic. If it does not, read it from your text messages and type it carefully.

3. Add your name — Use the name you actually answer to. Drivers see this name and call it out at the curb, so “Mike” beats “Michael Bartholomew Worthington III.”

4. Add an email — Receipts and trip summaries go to your email. Use an address you actually check — those receipts are handy for medical travel records.

TALE

E STORY

When Agnes, 78, from Victoria, created her Uber account, she typed her name as “Agnes” and her driver spent the whole ride calling her “Ag-neese.” She now introduces herself to every driver with a smile: “It is Agnes — like the saint, but funnier.”

! Your account works on any phone. If you get a new phone someday, just sign in again — your history, saved places, and payment method come along.

Take care: The app will never phone you to ask for the code. If someone calls asking for your verification code, hang up — that is a scam, every time.

SEE AND HEAR IT

Big Text, Loud Ringtones

Ride apps were designed by twenty-somethings with the eyesight of hawks. Fortunately your phone has a control panel for exactly this, and four small tweaks make the app genuinely senior-friendly.

Bigger text › Bolder text › Louder ringer › Brighter screen

1. Enlarge the text — Open Settings, then Display (iPhone) or Display > Font size (Android), and drag the text-size slider up two notches. The app's buttons and prices get bigger instantly.

2. Bold the text — In the same settings area, turn on Bold Text. Headings and prices become easier to scan at a glance — especially in bright sunlight at the curb.

3. Crank the ringer — In Settings > Sounds, push the ringer volume to maximum and turn vibration on. You want to hear the driver calling, even with the phone in a deep coat pocket.

4. Brighten the screen — Turn off auto-brightness dips or just nudge brightness up before a ride. A bright screen is readable outdoors, where you will be standing when the car arrives.

TALE

E STORY

Stan, 83, from Thunder Bay, could not read the tiny grey text in the ride app until his daughter turned on Larger Text in his phone settings.

"It is like someone cleaned my glasses from the inside," he said.

! Both iPhone and Android have a "Display & Text Size" (or Display Size) setting. One slider there enlarges text in every app at once — including Uber and Lyft.

Take care: Do not enlarge the text to the absolute maximum — at the largest setting, some app buttons can overlap. Two or three notches is the sweet spot.

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