



Virginia Rules of Driver's the Road! Manual

Welcome to driving in Virginia. In this manual, you'll find all the information you need to obtain your driver's license.

- Qualifying for Your Driver's License
- Your License and the Law
- Good Driving Practices
- Rules of the Road
- Reading the Road
- Virginia Traffic Laws at a Glance

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Testing Times

No tickets for testing
will be issued
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Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process . . . and Obtaining a Photo ID Card

Qualifying for your Virginia Driver's License	
First-time Drivers.....	1
Learner's Permit.....	2
Driver Education Requirements.....	2
Getting Your First License.....	3
Restrictions	
Special Restrictions.....	3
Curfew Restrictions.....	3
Passenger Restrictions.....	3
Cellular Telephone/Wireless Device Restrictions...	3
New Residents	
Military Personnel.....	4
Out-of-State Students.....	4
Non-Residents.....	4
Exchanging Your Out-of-State License.....	5
If You're a New Virginia Resident.....	5
Organ/Tissue Donation.....	5
Types of Virginia Driver's Licenses	
Commercial Driver's License.....	6
School Bus Driver's License.....	6
Motorcycle Driver's License.....	6
Motorcycle Learner's Permit.....	6
International Driver's License.....	7
Steps to Obtaining Your Driver's License or Photo ID Card	
Complete the Application Process.....	7
Take the Required Tests.....	10
Vision Standards.....	11
Make Your Payment.....	11
Receiving Your License.....	12
Replacing, Renewing or Updating Your Driver's License or ID Card	
Renewing Your Driver's License.....	12
Military, Diplomatic and Civilian Employee/Contractor Extensions.....	13
Replacing Your Driver's License.....	13
Changing Your Address or Name.....	13
Obtaining Your Driving Record.....	14
Services for Persons With Disabilities.....	15
Your License and the Law	
License Suspension and Revocation.....	17

Section 2: Behind the Wheel

Before You Get Behind the Wheel.....	19
8 o'clock, 4 o'clock.....	20
Virginia Insurance Laws.....	20
Your Best Protection: Safety Belts, Air Bags and Child Safety Seats.....	20
Tips for Traveling With Children.....	21
Good Driving Practices	
Scanning.....	22
Sharing the Road.....	23
Trucks, Tractor-Trailers and RVs.....	25
Maintaining a Space Cushion.....	25
Changing Lanes.....	26
Backing.....	27
Visibility.....	27
Hazardous Conditions.....	27
Communicating With Other Motorists	
Lights.....	28
Turn Signals.....	29
Dangerous Driving Behaviors	
Aggressive Driving.....	29
Distracted Driving.....	29
Drinking and Driving.....	30
Alcohol and You.....	31
Avoiding the Risks.....	32
Rules of the Road	
Speed Limits.....	32
Stopping.....	33
Right-of-Way.....	34
Circular Intersections.....	36
U-Turns.....	36
Parking.....	36
Traffic Crashes.....	37
Reading the Road	
Pavement Markings.....	37
Traffic Signals.....	40
Traffic Signs.....	41
Work Zone Devices.....	45
Railroad Crossings.....	46
Message Boards.....	46
Slow Moving Vehicle.....	46

A Message from the Governor

Every year, motor vehicle crashes claim nearly 42,000 lives, cause millions of injuries and cost Americans more than \$150 billion. Motor vehicle crashes, however, aren't accidents. They result from faulty decisions made by drivers.

You make some of the most important decisions before you turn the ignition key. For example, make the decision to buckle up on every ride. And make sure that everyone else in the vehicle is buckled up. Be sure that children are securely placed in a child safety seat, booster seat or safety belt, depending on their age and size.

Choose not to drink or use drugs and drive. And never ride with someone who has been drinking or using drugs. Decisions like these can literally be life savers, reducing the risk of death and serious injury if you are involved in a crash.

I am committed to reducing the number of highway fatalities in Virginia. But, I need your help. Join the Department of Motor Vehicles, Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia State Police, and local law enforcement agencies as well as many non-profit traffic safety partners in making Virginia's roads safe for everyone. Drive smart and arrive alive.

Timothy M. Kaine
Governor



A Message from the Commissioner

Welcome to driving in Virginia. In this manual, you'll find all the information you need to obtain your driver's license.

There are a few things you can do to ensure a smooth transaction when you apply for your driver's license at one of our customer service centers (CSCs) throughout the state. First, take the time to study this manual. Everything you need to know to pass the two-part knowledge exam is presented in this manual. Next, you can test your knowledge online by taking a sample knowledge exam at www.dmvNOW.com.

Pay special attention to Section I of the manual, describing the documents that you will need to prove your identity and Virginia residency. If you have questions about which documents to present, contact DMV before you visit.

www.dmvNOW.com
Toll Free: 1-866-DMV-LINE (368-5463)
or 1-800-435-5137
TDD: 1-800-272-9268

As you prepare to obtain your driver's license, remember that driving is a privilege that requires you to operate your vehicle in a safe and lawful manner. This manual will help you gain the knowledge necessary to fulfill that responsibility.

As the Governor's highway safety representative, I urge you to buckle up on every trip, make sure everyone in your vehicle is buckled-up, never drink and drive, and always obey the motor vehicle laws.

D.B. Smit
DMV Commissioner



Alternative Formats for Virginians With Special Needs

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offers the Virginia Driver's Manual in alternate formats for Virginians with special needs in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act. Contact DMV toll free at 1-866-DMV-LINE (368-5463).

A DMV-issued Personal Identification Number (PIN)

A DMV-issued PIN allows you to access your records and conduct transactions on DMV's website and automated telephone system. Apply for your PIN at www.dmvNOW.com or by telephone (1-888-337-4782).

The Driver Licensing Process... and Obtaining a Photo ID Card

The Department of Motor Vehicles, Virginia's Highway Safety Office, wants to ensure your safety when operating a motor vehicle. One way to keep Virginia's highways safe is through the careful licensing of drivers. The following sections explain the steps that you will follow to obtain your Virginia driver's license, learner's permit or photo ID card.



Qualifying for Your Virginia Driver's License

First-time Drivers

At least 16 years and 3 months

You must be a resident of the Commonwealth of Virginia and at least 16 years and 3 months of age to obtain a Virginia driver's license. To obtain a learner's permit, you must be at least 15 years and 6 months of age. No exceptions will be made to these age requirements.

Under age 18

If you are under age 18, you must provide written consent from one of your parents or your legal guardian unless you are married or emancipated.

If you are under age 18 and attend a public school, your parent must give consent for your principal or his designee to report 10 or more unexcused absences on consecutive school days to your local juvenile and domestic relations court. The court may elect to suspend your license for any period of time until you turn 18.

Under age 19

If you are under age 19, you must complete a state-approved driver education program.

19 years of age or older

If you are 19 years of age or older, and you have never held a driver's license issued by Virginia, another state, or foreign country,

or cannot show proof that you previously held such a license, you must show proof that:

- ▶ you passed a state-approved driver education course; or,
- ▶ you held a learner's permit at least 30 days before taking the DMV road skills test.

If you are under age 18, your parent, guardian or spouse over age 18 must sign your learner's permit or driver's license application. If your parents are deceased or do not have legal custody of you, your application must be signed by your custodial parent, legal guardian or the judge of the juvenile and domestic relations court in your locality. A court order showing that you are an emancipated minor is acceptable in lieu of written consent. If you are a foreign exchange student, your host parents are not eligible to sign your application.

If you previously have been found not innocent of any offense by a juvenile and domestic relations court in Virginia or any other state, you must obtain approval to be licensed from that court or a court in the city or county where you live.

Under age 18

Section 1

Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

15 years and 6 months

Learner's Permit

You may get your learner's permit when you reach 15 years and 6 months of age. It allows you to operate a motor vehicle when a licensed driver at least 21 years of age is seated beside you. The driver accompanying you may be 18 years of age if he or she is your legal guardian, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, step-brother or step-sister. The driver accompanying you must hold a valid driver's license, be alert and able to assist you and be legally permitted to drive.

When you apply for a learner's permit, you will also complete the application process for your driver's license and pay the fees for both the permit and license. You will be required to pass the two-part knowledge exam and a vision screening.

Under age 18

If you are under age 18, your parent/guardian or foster parent must also certify that you have driven at least 45 hours. Fifteen of the 45 hours must be completed after sunset. The certification must include the parent/guardian's signature and driver's license or identification card number.

Beginning January 1, 2010, students living in Planning District 8 must complete an additional component to their driver education program. This component must include at a minimum, 90 minutes of parent or guardian and student instruction emphasizing parental responsibilities regarding juvenile driver behavior, juvenile driving restrictions and the dangers of driving while intoxicated and underage consumption of alcohol.

Upon completion of driver's education/training and the practice driving requirement, your driver's education/training instructor will submit your certificate of completion to DMV. If your certificate does not include the signature and driver's license number or DMV-issued identification card number, DMV will not be able to process your application for a permanent driver's license.

Under age 19

If you are under age 19, you must hold the permit for at least nine months or until you turn age 19 before you can receive a driver's license. You will receive a certificate when you complete a required state-approved driver education program. You will not be required to take a road skills test at DMV to get your driver's license.

If you are a home schooler, refer to the "Home-Schooled In-Car Driver Education Information Sheet," HS-3, for the criteria you must satisfy to meet your driver education requirements. This publication is available at www.dmvNOW.com or at any DMV customer service center.

Home schooler

Driver Education Requirements

If you are a Virginia resident under age 19, you must complete a state-approved driver education program and hold your Virginia learner's permit for at least nine months.

Under age 19

If you are a Virginia resident 19 years of age or older, you must hold a learner's permit for at least 30 days or show proof of completion of a state-approved driver education program.

19 years of age or older

Driver education programs are available statewide to students, adults and out-of-school youths. Public and private school programs are approved by the Department of Education. Driver's training schools follow the same course content and are licensed by DMV.

Driver education programs are available statewide

The program must present 36 classroom periods. It must include components about alcohol safety, drug abuse awareness, aggressive driving, distracted driving, motorcycle awareness and organ and tissue donation awareness. It must also include 14 in-car instruction periods—7 periods of driving and 7 periods of observation.

If you are a home schooler, the classroom and/or behind-the-wheel portions can be taught at home. Visit the DMV web site for suppliers of approved courses. Refer to the "Home-Schooled In-Car Driver Education Information Sheet," HS-3, for additional information.

You will receive a driver education completion certificate when you successfully complete a state-approved driver education program. A copy of your certificate will be sent by your school instructor to DMV for issuance of a permanent driver's license. If you are a home schooler, you must visit a DMV office and successfully complete the road skills test. Refer to the "Home-Schooled In-Car Driver Education Information Sheet," HS-3, for additional information.



If you currently hold a valid out-of-state license but do not have proof of driver education, you may be issued a Virginia six-month temporary license. This will give you time to obtain proof or to complete a state-approved driver education program.

Getting your First License

Your first license!

If you are under 18 years of age, your parent or legal guardian must sign the certificate to verify your academic standing and to authorize issuance of your driver's license. If you are between ages 16 years and 3 months and age 18, your driver education certificate (signed by your parent or legal guardian) and your valid learner's permit (held for at least nine months) allow you to drive without a licensed driver beside you.

Licensing ceremony

After you have held your permit nine months, turned age 16 and 3 months and completed driver education, you will receive a notice that tells you when to appear in court for a licensing ceremony. You will receive your permanent driver's license at the licensing ceremony.

Selective Service registration

Generally, males under age 26 must register with the Selective Service. If you are required by federal law to register with Selective Service, you must authorize DMV to send your personal information to Selective Service unless you have already registered. If you are under age 18, your parent or guardian must sign your application authorizing the Selective Service to register you when you turn 18. Law prohibits DMV from issuing any type of driver's license or photo ID card to an applicant who is required by federal law to register with the Selective Service but who refuses to authorize DMV to send his information to the Selective Service. If you have questions about Selective Service registration, visit the Selective Service web site at www.sss.gov, or call 847-688-6888, TTY: 847-688-2567.

Restrictions

Special Restrictions

Mental or physical conditions

If you have a mental or physical condition that may impair your ability to safely

operate a motor vehicle, even temporarily, you must provide DMV with a medical statement from your doctor. Some of these conditions include loss of consciousness, seizures, vision changes, impairment of judgement or loss of motor functions. DMV will evaluate the medical information to determine if a driver's license may be issued or restricted.

Cellular Telephone/Wireless Device Restrictions

Virginia law prohibits drivers under age 18 who hold a learner's permit or driver's license from using cell phones or wireless communications devices including text-messaging while driving, regardless of hand-held or hands-free, except in a driver emergency and the vehicle is lawfully parked or stopped. Text-messaging or reading of text messages while driving is also prohibited.

Curfew Restrictions

Virginia's curfew laws prohibit drivers under age 18 who hold a learner's permit or driver's license from driving midnight to 4 AM. If you hold a driver's license you may drive during these hours:

- ▶ in case of an emergency;
- ▶ when traveling to and from work or a school-sponsored event;
- ▶ when accompanied by a parent or other adult acting in place of a parent;
- ▶ when responding to an emergency call as a volunteer firefighter or rescue squad member.

Midnight to 4 AM curfew



Passenger Restrictions

If you are under age 18, you may carry only one passenger under age 18 during the first year that you hold your driver's license. After you have held your license for one year or until you reach age 18, you may carry only three passengers under age 18. Learner's permit holders may not carry more than one passenger under age 18. Passenger restrictions do not apply to family members. Violation of either the passenger or curfew restrictions can result in the suspension of your driver's license.

Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

Cancellation of permit or license

While you are a minor and if you are unmarried or unemancipated, your father, mother, custodial parent, legal guardian or the judge of the juvenile and domestic relations court in your locality may ask DMV to cancel your permit or license. If cancelled, you cannot reapply for six months.

Deny or suspend driving privileges

A court can deny or suspend driving privileges for persons under age 18 if the juvenile is found delinquent by a court, in need of supervision, involved in an alcohol or drug-related offense, or needs court-assigned services or programs such as counseling. If you are under age 18 and have ten or more unapproved absences from school on consecutive school days, a court may suspend your driving privileges for any period of time, or until you reach age 18.

New Residents

Already have a license from someplace else?

If you are age 19 or older and you hold a valid driver's license issued by a U.S. state, territory, a Canadian province, France or Germany, you may not be required to

- ▶ take the two-part knowledge exam or the road skills test;
- ▶ hold a learner's permit for 30 days; or
- ▶ show proof of successful completion of driver education.

However, you must pass a vision screening.

If you are age 19 or older and hold a valid driver's license issued by a country other than Canada, France or Germany, you may not be required to hold a learner's permit or show proof of successful completion of driver education. However, you must pass the two-part knowledge exam, road skills test and a vision screening.

Canadian or U.S. licenses must be surrendered when you apply for a Virginia driver's license. Be sure to photocopy your out-of-state driver's license—you may need it for insurance or licensing purposes.

If your license has been suspended or revoked by another state, a Virginia license may not be issued until your driving record in that state is cleared and you meet Virginia requirements.

Military Personnel

If you are an active-duty member of the Armed Forces stationed in Virginia, you, your spouse and dependent children 16 years and 3 months of age or older may drive with a valid driver's license issued by your home state or country. If you are a non-Virginia active duty military service member, activated reserve or national guard member, or mobilized reserve or national guard member living in Virginia and the sole owner of a vehicle that is titled and registered in another state, you are not required to title or register your vehicle in Virginia.

Active-duty members of the Armed Forces

Out-of-State Students

If you are enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited school in Virginia and not employed, you may drive in Virginia with a valid out-of-state (or another country) driver's license and valid out-of-state license plates on your vehicle. If you are a full-time student and employed, you are considered a resident of Virginia for the purposes of motor vehicle laws only. This does not necessarily qualify you for in-state tuition rates. Therefore, you must apply for a Virginia driver's license and register your vehicle in Virginia. You must register the vehicle in Virginia even if it is owned by someone else.

Enrolled as a full-time student

Non-residents

If you are a non-resident temporarily living in Virginia, you may drive with your home state or country driver's license and license plates for no more than six months. If you become gainfully employed, you are required to hold a Virginia driver's license. This does not apply to commercial vehicle drivers. Contact your local DMV customer service center for more information or call toll free 1-866-DMV-LINE (1-866-368-5463) or 1-800-435-5137.

Temporarily living in Virginia

Exchanging Your Out-of-State License (Juvenile Applicants Only)

Exchanging your license

DMV may exchange your out-of-state license for a Virginia license if you meet the following conditions:

- ▶ You are at least age 16 and three months but under age 19 and hold a valid license; and
- ▶ You have successfully completed a driver education program while residing in another state and the program meets the minimum of 30 classroom hours and six in-car instruction hours and;
- ▶ You can present proof of identity, Virginia residency, and your social security number. You will also need to show proof of legal presence.

If you hold a current out-of-state driver's license but do not have proof of driver education, you may be issued a Virginia six-month temporary license. This will give you time to obtain proof or complete a state-approved driver education program.

New Virginia residents

If you're a new Virginia resident,

Within **60** days of moving here, you must obtain a Virginia driver's license.

Within **30** days of moving here, you must:

- ▶ Title your vehicle in Virginia.
- ▶ Register your vehicle and obtain Virginia license plates.

Safety inspection

To ensure that your vehicle is mechanically safe to operate on the highways of the Commonwealth, it must pass an annual vehicle safety inspection. Any vehicle registered in Virginia must display a valid safety inspection sticker. In certain localities, your vehicle also must pass an emissions inspection.

Insurance

Prior to registering your vehicle, you must:

- ▶ Insure your vehicle with a company authorized to do business in Virginia. At a

minimum, your insurance policy must provide the following liability insurance coverage:

- ▶ \$25,000 for injury or death of one person;
 - ▶ \$50,000 for injury or death of two or more people; and
 - ▶ \$20,000 for property damage.
- ▶ Insure your Virginia-registered vehicle during the entire registration period even if it is not driven or is inoperable. If the vehicle is not insured, you must immediately return the license plates to DMV and cancel the registration.
 - ▶ Failure to maintain insurance on a vehicle at all times will result in suspension of your driver's license and vehicle registration(s).

If your vehicle is not insured, you must pay a \$500 uninsured motor vehicle fee. This does not provide insurance coverage, but allows you to register and operate the vehicle in Virginia for a one-year period.

- ▶ You must also obtain a local sticker or decal if required by the city or county in which you live. Contact the commissioner of the revenue, treasurer or director of finance for the city, county or town in which you live for more information. Some localities partner with DMV and you will pay your local registration fee at the same time you obtain your state registration and license plates.

Local sticker or decal

Organ/Tissue Donation

- ▶ When you apply for your driver's license, learner's permit or photo ID card, you will be asked if you wish to become an organ donor. If you decide to become a donor, your choice will be noted on the

front of your driver's license or photo ID card. If you wish to change your decision later, you must notify DMV and pay a \$10.00 fee. You may also complete this transaction on the Internet with a DMV-issued PIN number. Or, you may have the change made free of charge at your next renewal. The decision to become an organ/tissue donor is yours. Your decision will not affect your driving privileges.

- ▶ If you wish to become an organ/tissue donor, you must be at least 18 years of age. If you are under age 18, you must obtain your parent's or legal guardian's written consent.

Applying to Register to Vote

Changing your voter registration mailing address

You may apply to register to vote or to change your voter registration mailing address at any DMV office. Just indicate your intentions on the voter registration section of the driver's license application or ask your DMV representative for assistance.

To apply to register to vote in Virginia, you must be a United States citizen, a resident of Virginia, and be 18 years old by the next general election. You must have had your voting rights restored if you have been convicted of a felony or if you have been declared mentally incompetent and had your competency declared restored by a circuit court.

Check your registration status online

To check your voter registration status, visit DMV's web site at www.dmvNOW.com. To protect your privacy, you must first obtain a DMV-issued Personal Identification Number (PIN). You may also call your local registrar or contact the State Board of Elections at 1-800-552-9745 or TDD 1-800-260-3466.

Types of Virginia Driver's Licenses

Commercial Driver's License

In addition to the driver's license and photo ID card, Virginia issues a commercial driver's license (CDL) which allows you to operate tractor-trailers, passenger buses, tank vehicles, school buses for 16 or more occupants (including the driver), or vehicles carrying hazardous materials. For more information about obtaining a CDL, refer to the *Virginia Commercial Driver's Manual*, available at any DMV customer service center and at www.dmvNOW.com.

School Bus Driver's License

If you wish to operate a school bus designed to carry 15 occupants (including the driver), you do not need to obtain a commercial driver's license.

However, you will need to take the commercial driver and school bus tests to obtain the school bus endorsement on your driver's license. You will be restricted to driving a bus designed to carry 15 occupants (including the driver). This restriction will be printed on your license. For information about licensing requirements to operate larger school buses, refer to the *Virginia Commercial Driver's Manual*.

Motorcycle Driver's License

If you wish to operate a motorcycle in Virginia, you must pass the driver's license two-part knowledge exam, the motorcycle knowledge exam and the motorcycle road skills test. If you already hold a driver's license, you may add a Class M to your license. If you do not hold a driver's license, you may obtain a driver's license with a class M that only allows you to operate a motorcycle. For more information refer to the *Virginia Motorcycle Operator Manual*, available at any DMV customer service center or at www.dmvNOW.com.

Motorcycle Learner's Permit

- ▶ You must pass the motorcycle knowledge exam.
- ▶ If you do not currently hold a valid learner's permit or driver's license,

Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

Always wear an approved safety helmet

you must also pass the driver's license two-part knowledge exam.

- ▶ If you are under age 19, you must hold the motorcycle learner's permit for at least nine months.
- ▶ You must wear an approved safety helmet.
- ▶ You must be supervised by a person at least 21 years of age who is licensed to operate a motorcycle, alert and able to assist you and supervising from a separate accompanying motorcycle or motor vehicle. No one, other than the operator, can be on the motorcycle.
- ▶ If you pass the Virginia Rider Training Program, the motorcycle skills test and motorcycle knowledge exam may be waived. If you are age 19 or older, the learner's permit holding period may also be waived.

International Driver's License

Foreign translation

An international driver's license is a foreign translation of your existing DMV driver's license for use when driving a vehicle outside the United States. It is invalid alone and must be used along with your valid DMV license in order to operate vehicles when you are out of the country. These licenses are issued by your local AAA but are not issued to persons whose driving privilege is under suspension or revoked.

If you are visiting in the U.S. from a foreign country, you may drive using your driver's license issued by your home country. This license should be accompanied by an international driver's license which provides a translation of your license. International driver's licenses marketed by private sector businesses do not allow you to legally operate a motor vehicle. Sale of any document purporting to be a driver's license is a Class 1 misdemeanor.

You cannot hold an ID card if you hold any type of driver's license

Obtaining a Photo ID Card

- ▶ You must be a resident of Virginia to obtain a photo ID card.
- ▶ You cannot hold an ID card if you hold any type of driver's license.

- ▶ ID cards are available to adults and children.
- ▶ Your first Virginia ID card will generally expire when you reach an age divisible by five—20, 25, 30, 35, etc.
- ▶ Your ID card expires at the end of the month in which you were born.
- ▶ When you renew your ID card, it will generally be valid for five years.
- ▶ Children under age 15 may apply for a child ID card. The child ID card is valid until the child's 16th birthday.
- ▶ An ID card costs \$10.00.
- ▶ You may exchange your valid Virginia driver's license for an ID card. If you are age 70 or older, there is no charge for the exchange for your first ID card.
- ▶ If you are authorized to be in the U.S. temporarily, you will be issued an ID card valid only for the amount of time that you are legally permitted to stay in the U.S. The expiration of the ID card will be the same as the expiration date shown on the document used to prove legal presence.

Steps to Obtaining Your Driver's License or Photo ID Card

Complete the Application Process

When applying for an original learner's permit, driver's license or photo ID card, you must complete an application for a Virginia license/ID card. For a child ID card (under age 15) complete the DL 5, Identification Card for Minors Application.

You may complete these forms before or after coming to DMV. Use your full legal name. Abbreviations and nicknames will not be accepted.

Application forms

Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

You cannot hold a driver's license and a photo ID card

You cannot hold any type of driver's license while simultaneously holding a photo ID card. If you hold a learner's permit, driver's license, or commercial driver's license (CDL), you may not hold a photo ID card.

Learner's permit or driver's license

To apply for a learner's permit or driver's license, you must show

- ▶ Two proofs of identity;
- ▶ One proof of Virginia residency;
- ▶ Proof of your social security number (SSN);
- ▶ You will also be required to show proof of legal presence.

To apply for a photo ID card, you must show

- ▶ Two proofs of identity;
- ▶ One proof of Virginia residency;
- ▶ You will also be required to show proof of legal presence, unless you were born in 1937 or before and have had a valid Virginia driver's license or ID card within the last five years.

Photocopies will not be accepted

Photocopies will not be accepted. All documents must be originals and all documents may be subject to verification with the issuing authority prior to acceptance.

Acceptable documents

Be sure to refer to "Acceptable Documents for Obtaining a Driver's License or Photo ID Card" (DMV 141) for a list of acceptable documents.

Name and address

All documents must show your name and the address of your principal residence as it appears on your application. A post office box or business address is not acceptable. However, if you do not want your residence address to appear on your driver's license or photo ID card, you may provide DMV with an alternate address in addition to your residence address. This alternate address must also be in Virginia.

Outside of Virginia

If you change your residence or alternate address to a location outside Virginia, your driver's license or photo ID card will be cancelled.

Exceptions may be made for some individuals such as active duty military personnel and Virginia residents employed outside the U.S. Refer to "Re-establishing Your Virginia Residency or Qualifying for a Virginia Address Requirement Exception," (DMV 143), for information about the exception process. This publication is available at www.dmvNOW.com or at any DMV office.

Proof of Identity: Documents submitted as primary proof of identity must show your full legal name and date of birth. Nicknames and abbreviations will not be accepted. You must present at least one document from the primary list of documents. The second proof of identity may come from either the primary list or the secondary list. If two of your proofs of identity are issued by the same entity, such as the same state agency, DMV may require additional proof of identity documents. If you are under age 19, you will need only one proof of identity but it must come from the primary list of identity documents.

A U.S. birth certificate or unexpired U.S. passport will serve as a primary proof of identity. These documents will also serve as proof of your legal presence in the U.S.

Social security number: If you are applying for a learner's permit or driver's license, you will be required to provide proof of your social security number (SSN) if you have one. If you are applying for a photo ID card, you do not have to provide an SSN.

DMV will immediately verify all SSNs with the Social Security Administration. If the SSN you present does not match the SSN on file at the Social Security Administration, DMV will not issue you a driver's license or learner's permit.

DMV will assign you a customer number which will display on your driver's license or learner's permit. If you wish to change your DMV-assigned number in the future, you may be required to present documentation from law enforcement or the courts indicating that you may be a victim of identity theft.

Proof of identity

Social security number

DMV-assigned customer number

Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

Proof of Virginia residency

Proof of Virginia residency: You must provide one proof of Virginia residency and you must provide DMV with the street address of your principal Virginia residence. If you are under age 19, your parent or legal guardian may certify your Virginia residency.

Proof of legal presence

Proof of legal presence: Applicants for a first-time Virginia driver's license or photo ID card must show proof of legal presence in the United States. A U.S. birth certificate or unexpired U.S. passport will serve as both proof of identity and proof of legal presence. For a list of other documents that you can use to prove your legal presence in the United States, refer to "Acceptable Documents for Obtaining a Driver's License or Photo ID Card" (DMV 141). This form is available at any DMV customer service center and also online at www.dmvNOW.com.

Legal presence

Proof of Legal Presence

A proof of legal presence document shows that you are in the United States legally. Applicants for a first-time Virginia driver's license or photo ID card must show proof of legal presence, including individuals born in the United States.

People who were born outside of the U.S. and who are not U.S. citizens can prove their legal presence in the U.S. with a wide array of documents. Refer to "Acceptable Documents for Obtaining a Driver's License or Photo ID Card" (DMV 141) for additional information about the documents you can use to prove your legal presence. This publication is available at www.dmvNOW.com and at any DMV customer service center.

Acceptable Documents

Information about documents that DMV will accept as proof of identity, residency, legal presence and social security number is presented in "Acceptable Documents for Obtaining a Driver's License or Photo ID Card" (DMV 141). This form is available at any DMV customer service center and www.dmvNOW.com.

Photocopies will not be accepted. All documents must be originals. All documents will be subject to verification which may delay issuance of your driver's license, learner's permit or photo ID card.

DMV will not accept any document when there is reason to believe it has been altered, fraudulently obtained or is fake, forged, counterfeit or otherwise non-genuine or illegitimate. DMV may require additional documents. Altering, manufacturing, selling, or possessing a fraudulent birth certificate, driver's license, or ID card is a criminal offense.

Falsifying information on a driver's license, learner's permit or photo identification card application is a criminal offense. Assisting a person with improperly or fraudulently obtaining a driver's license, learner's permit or photo ID card is a criminal offense.

Documents accepted by DMV as proof of identity, social security number and Virginia residency and legal presence may change without prior notice.

**Be prepared.
Bring
acceptable
documents
with you
when you
visit DMV**

Take the Required Tests

Tests will include a vision screening and may include a two-part knowledge exam and a road skills test. A DMV representative will tell you which tests you need to take.

To screen your vision, you will be asked to look into a machine and read the lines of letters or numbers to the DMV representative. This screening determines whether your eyesight and peripheral vision meet Virginia's standards to safely operate a motor vehicle.

**Vision
screening,
two-part
knowledge
exam and
road skills
test**

Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

Two-part knowledge exam

The *two-part knowledge exam* is given on a computer and tests your knowledge of traffic signs, motor vehicle laws, and safe driving techniques. Exam questions are taken from information in this manual.

All ten traffic sign questions in Part One must be answered correctly before you can take the 25-question general knowledge exam in Part Two. Part Two consists of 25 multiple choice questions. You must score at least 80 percent on these questions to pass Part Two.

If you fail

If you fail the exam:

- ▶ Under age 18 – by law you must wait a full 15 days before you can retake the exam. For example, if you fail the test on January 1, the earliest you would be eligible to take the test again is January 17.
- ▶ Age 18 or older – you must pay a \$2.00 re-examination fee if you retake the exam within 15 days.

Once per business day

The exam may be taken only once per business day. An audio version of the exam is available and the exam is also offered in Spanish. If necessary, you may request to have the exam translated.

If you fail the driver's license knowledge examination administered by DMV three times, you will not be permitted to take it a fourth time until you successfully complete the classroom component of driver instruction at a driver training school approved by DMV or a comparable course approved by the Department of Education. The completion date for the classroom component must be after the date you failed the knowledge test the third time. Upon completion of the classroom component and presentation of your certificate of completion, DMV will allow you to take the knowledge test again.

Don't!

It is unlawful to:

- ▶ receive assistance or to assist anyone while taking the knowledge exam;

- ▶ to attempt to secure or provide answers to any parts of the exam;
- ▶ to have unauthorized possession of an exam or exam answers; or
- ▶ to use a cell phone during the exam.

Go online at www.dmvNOW.com to take a sample knowledge exam.

You will need to take the road skills test if you do not hold a valid out-of-state, Canadian, German or French driver's license. You must provide a vehicle for the road skills test. The vehicle must have a valid inspection sticker, license plates, registration card, and working brakes, safety belts, horn, lights, turn signals, mirrors and speedometer.

For applicants under 19, the road skills test will be given as part of the driver education course taken at a public, private or commercial driving school. If you are a home schooler, refer to the "Home-Schooled In-Car Driver Education Information Sheet," HS-3, for more information about taking the road skills test.

The road skills test will be administered by a DMV representative. Only the applicant and the DMV representative are allowed in the vehicle during the road skills test. The test may be taken only once per business day. You may only take the road skills test three times during a three-month period.

If you fail the driver's license road skills test administered by the Department three times, you will not be permitted to take it a fourth time until you successfully complete the in-vehicle component of driver instruction at a driver training school approved by DMV or a comparable course approved by the Department of Education. The completion date for the classroom component must be after the date you failed the road test the third time. Upon completion of the in-vehicle component and presentation of your certificate of completion, DMV will allow you to take the road skills test again.

Road skills test

Applicants under 19

Once per business day

Vision Standards

The vision screening determines if you meet Virginia's vision standards for operating a motor vehicle safely. It is not a medical exam. If you fail the vision screening, you may be asked to see an eye care professional.

If you need to wear glasses or contact lenses to pass the vision screening, you must wear them when you drive. Your license will show this restriction. To have this restriction removed after having laser surgery to correct your vision, you must visit a DMV customer service center and pass the vision screening without wearing glasses or contact lenses or submit a Vision Screening Report (MED4).



DMV's vision screening is not an eye exam and is not intended to be an indicator of the health of your eyes. We strongly encourage all drivers to visit their eye care professional on a regular basis.

Driver's license:

- ▶ 20/40 or better vision in one or both eyes, and
- ▶ 100 degrees, or better, horizontal vision in one or both eyes.

Driving restricted to daylight hours only:

- ▶ 20/70 or better vision in one or both eyes, and
- ▶ 70 degrees, or better, horizontal vision. If only one eye, 40 degrees or better temporal and 30 degrees or better nasal are required.

A restricted license permits you to drive only during the period of time beginning one-half hour after sunrise and ending one-half hour before sunset.

Bioptic Telescopic Lenses: If you wear bioptic telescopic lenses, contact DMV toll-free at 1-866-368-5463 (DMV-LINE) to find out about vision requirements.

Make Your Payment

**Cash,
money
order,
check or
credit card**

You may pay the licensing fee with cash, money order, check, check card or credit card. Your Virginia driver's license and learner's permit always expire on your birthday and generally will expire eight years from the issue date. The length of time that a driver's license is valid may be affected by your legal presence status.

The licensing fee is \$4.00 per year; so your fee will range from \$4.00 to \$32.00, depending on the validity period of your license. A learner's permit costs \$3.00 plus the yearly cost of a driver's license.

Driver's license.....	\$4.00 per year
Motorcycle class	\$2.00 per year
Learner's permit	\$3.00 plus \$4.00 per year
Motorcycle learner's permit	\$3.00
Replacement license.....	\$10.00
90-day temporary driver's license.....	\$10.00
Re-examination fee.....	\$2.00 (if taken within 15 days)
You may pay your fees with cash, money order, check, check card or credit card (American Express, Discover, MasterCard, or VISA).	



Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

You will receive your driver's license by mail

First-time driver's licenses

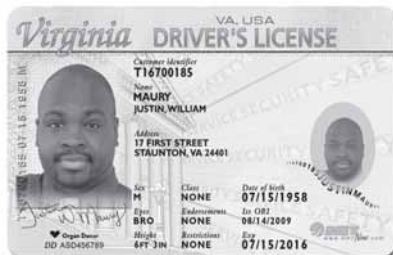
Receiving Your License

You will not receive your driver's license during your visit. You will receive your driver's license by mail. Ensure DMV has your correct address.

At the end of your transaction, DMV will give you a temporary driving permit that allows you to drive until you receive your new license in the mail. The temporary driving permit cannot be used for identification purposes.

All first time driver's licenses issued to persons under age 18 are sent to the judge of your local juvenile and domestic relations court. The court will notify you by mail about when and where you and your parent, custodial parent or legal guardian must appear to receive your new license.

Licenses for adults are horizontal and include an outline of the state capitol building. Licenses for individuals under age 21 are vertical and feature images of Virginia's state flower, the dogwood.



Replacing, Renewing or Updating Your Driver's License or ID Card

Renewing Your Driver's License

Your Virginia driver's license and learner's permit always expire on your birthday. Beginning July 1, 2008, driver's licenses and commercial driver's licenses issued by DMV will be valid for eight years. CDL holders with a hazardous materials endorsement must continue to follow the federal

guidelines and renew their hazmat endorsement every five years. The length of time that a driver's license is valid may be affected by your legal presence status.

Driver's licenses issued to persons age 16 and 17 will continue to expire at age 20.

The validity period for driver's licenses issued to persons registered as sex offenders will be no more than five years.

You may be able to renew your driver's license every other renewal cycle at www.dmvNOW.com, by telephone 1-888-337-4782, or mail.

However, you must complete your driver's license renewal at a DMV customer service center if any of the following conditions exist:

- ▶ you are under age 21 and you have received one or more traffic convictions;
- ▶ your license has expired (you will be required to show proof of legal presence and you may be required to show other documents);
- ▶ you are age 80 or older (you must take a vision screening exam);
- ▶ you hold a CDL;
- ▶ you are under medical review; or
- ▶ other conditions may apply.

You must also renew in person if your social security number (SSN), name or date of birth on file at DMV does not match your information on file with the Social Security Administration or if you do not have an SSN on file. Your SSN, name and date of birth

Renew online, by mail or phone

SSN verification

on file with DMV must match the information on file with the Social Security Administration before DMV will renew your driver's license.

Eligibility requirements

For a complete list of eligibility requirements, including social security number requirements, refer to "Acceptable Documents for Obtaining a Driver's License or Photo ID Card" (DMV 141), available online, or call 1-866-DMV-LINE (368-5463). Your renewal notice will indicate if you are eligible to use an alternative renewal method.

You cannot hold a photo ID card if you hold any type of driver's license. If you currently hold both a driver's license and a photo ID card, you will be required to surrender your photo ID card before you can renew your driver's license.

If you hold a valid Virginia driver's license, you may exchange it for a photo ID card. If you are age 70 or older, there is no charge for the exchange for your first ID card. Your ID card will expire at the end of your birth month.

If you are under age 70, your ID card will cost \$10. Your first ID card will be valid for between three and seven years depending on your age when the ID card is issued. Your ID card will expire on the last day of your birth month when you reach an age divisible by five—20, 25, 30, 35, etc.

Military and Diplomatic Extensions

Active duty members of the U.S. military serving outside of Virginia, members of the U.S. Diplomatic Service who are serving outside of the U.S., and civilian employees of a contractor or agency of the U.S. government acting on behalf of the U.S. government who are serving outside of the U.S. may request an extension of their driver's license. Their spouses and dependents may also request an extension. Extensions may be granted for a maximum of three years from the driver's license expiration date. For more information, visit www.dmvNOW.com.

Replacing Your Driver's License

To obtain a replacement driver's license you must present two forms of identification (one primary and one secondary or two primary documents). Refer to "Acceptable Documents for Obtaining a Driver's License or Photo ID Card" (DMV 141) for a list of acceptable documents. Photocopies will not be accepted. DMV may verify any document with the issuing entity prior to replacing your driver's license.

You may also complete this transaction online at www.dmvNOW.com using a DMV-issued PIN, unless you are under age 18, your license is suspended or revoked, you hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), or you are under medical review. Other conditions may affect your eligibility to replace your license online. The cost is \$10.00.

If you currently hold both a driver's license and a photo ID card, you will be required to surrender your photo ID card before you can receive a replacement license.

Changing Your Address or Name

You must notify DMV within 30 days if you change your address. You must provide DMV with the street address of your principal Virginia residence. A post office box or business address is not acceptable and your principal address must be in Virginia.

However, if you do not want your residence address to appear on your driver's license or photo ID card, you may provide DMV with an alternate address in addition to your residence address. This alternate address must also be in Virginia.

If you change your residence address or alternate address to a location outside Virginia, your driver's license or photo ID card will be cancelled. Exceptions may be made for some individuals such as active duty military personnel and Virginia residents employed outside Virginia.

Section 1: The Driver's Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

Address change

Address change: You may visit any DMV customer service center to change your address and obtain a new vehicle registration card. You may purchase a new driver's license or photo ID card showing the address change for \$10.00, or a free change of address card (for your driver's license or photo ID card) will be mailed to you.

You may also change your address by calling DMV toll-free at 1-866-DMV-LINE (368-5463), 1-800-435-5137 or by using the Internet (www.dmvNOW.com). Each time you change your address with DMV, you will have an opportunity to apply to register to vote or to change your voter registration address with the State Board of Elections.

Name change

Name change: You may change your name on your driver's license or photo ID card at any DMV customer service center. Bring the following documents, as applicable. Photocopies will not be accepted.

- ▶ Marriage certificate, license or register
- ▶ Divorce decree if the decree states the change from married name to maiden name
- ▶ Original or teste copy of the court order granting the name change



If you are applying for a driver's license or learner's permit for the first time and your name has changed, you must present two proofs of identification, one proof of

residency and your social security number (if you have one) in addition to one of the documents listed above for proof of your name change. You will also be required to show proof of legal presence.

If you are applying for a photo ID card, you must show two proofs of identification and one proof of residency. You will also be required to show legal presence, unless you were born in 1937 or before and have had a valid Virginia driver's license or identification card within the past five years.

If your name has changed and you currently hold a valid Virginia-issued driver's license, learner's permit or photo ID card, you must present your Virginia driver's license, learner's permit or photo ID card in addition to one of the name change documents for proof of your name change.

If you cannot present your Virginia driver's license, learner's permit, or photo ID card, you must present one proof of identity from the primary document list (refer to "Acceptable Documents for Obtaining a Driver's License or Photo ID Card," (DMV 141) in addition to one of the name change documents listed above for proof of name change.

Obtaining Your Driving Record

With proper identification, you may obtain a copy of your driving record by mail, by Internet using a DMV-issued PIN number or in person. Driving records cost \$8. A certified record costs \$13.

The information on DMV records is maintained and released based on federal and state laws. Law enforcement may obtain your complete driving record; employers receive seven years of data and insurance companies receive five years. DMV will not release your license photograph without your signed release except to law enforcement.

Your driving record

Release of DMV information

Services for Persons With Disabilities

Customers with special needs

Customers with special needs or who require special assistance with applications or testing should notify a DMV staff member or manager upon arrival at any DMV location.

DMV offers parking permits for citizens with temporary or permanent disabilities that limit or impair their mobility. We also offer license plates for persons with permanent disabilities. These permits and plates entitle the holder to park in special parking spaces reserved for individuals with disabilities. Institutions and organizations who operate special vehicles equipped to carry persons with disabilities may also obtain parking permits entitling them to special parking privileges.

Parking permits, issued in the form of removable windshield placards and license plates, displaying the international symbol of access, provide authorization for special parking in all 50 states.

Temporary parking placards

Temporary parking placards are valid for up to six months. Your licensed physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, podiatrist or chiropractor must indicate the expected length of your disability. A podiatrist or chiropractor may only certify certain conditions that limit or impair your ability to walk. For more information, visit www.dmvNOW.com.

Permanent placards

Permanent placards are issued to citizens with a disability that

- ▶ limits or impairs movement from one place to another, the ability to walk, or that creates a concern for safety while walking, as defined in Va. Code §46.2-1240, and
- ▶ has reached the maximum level of improvement and is not expected to change even with additional treatment.

Applications for permanent parking placards must be certified by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, podiatrist, or chiropractor. A podiatrist or chiropractor may only certify for certain conditions that limit or impair your ability to walk. Permanent placards are valid for five years and may be renewed without a physician's, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, podiatrist, or chiropractor's certification. They may be renewed by Internet (www.dmvNOW.com), mail, or at a DMV customer service center.

Institutional and organizational placards are valid for five years and may be renewed. No physician certification is required.

Placards should be hung from the rearview mirror while the vehicle is parked in spaces authorized for the disabled. The side that shows the placard holder's identifying information must face the rear of the vehicle. Placard holders may use removable tape to cover their name and date of birth on the placard. The placard holder will have to remove the tape if requested by law enforcement for verification. Placards must be removed from the rearview mirror while the vehicle is in motion.

License plates must bear the International Symbol of Access (ISA) in order to entitle the holder to special parking privileges. When disabled license plates are issued to a vehicle registered to multiple owners, the registration card for that vehicle will indicate which owner is disabled. When disabled plates are issued to the parent or legal guardian of a person with a disability, this will be noted on the vehicle registration card. Disabled license plates may be renewed without a physician's, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, podiatrist, or chiropractor's certification. A podiatrist or chiropractor may only certify for certain conditions that limit or impair your ability to walk.

License plates for hearing impaired drivers are available from any DMV office. No special privileges are given, but the plates help law enforcement officers recognize

Institutions and organizations

Placards

License plates

License plates for hearing impaired drivers

Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

Driver's license indicator

drivers who are hearing impaired. Hearing impaired citizens may contact DMV by teletypewriter at 1-800-272-9268.

A *driver's license indicator* is available for drivers who are hearing and speech impaired or who are insulin-dependant. One of these indicators is placed on the driver's license in order to identify the disability to law enforcement personnel.

Disabled Parking Privileges

Disabled parking privileges entitle the holder to:

- ▶ park in any parking space designated for a disabled person;
- ▶ park for up to four hours without paying a fee in any time-restricted parking space during the hours allowed for general parking (unless prohibited by the locality).

Disabled parking privileges DO NOT entitle the holder to stop, stand or park in the following areas:

- ▶ where parking is prohibited;
- ▶ in spaces reserved for other special types of vehicles;
- ▶ where it would clearly present a traffic hazard.

Parking privileges for persons with disabilities vary by state and Virginia jurisdiction. Additionally, private parking facilities, such as parking lots at airports, also may restrict the time and free parking provisions for vehicles displaying disabled parking permits or plates.

Disabled Placard and Plate Holders May Not:

- ▶ allow a non-disabled individual to use his or her placard or plate unless they are transporting the disabled individual.
- ▶ park in a space reserved for disabled individuals without displaying a placard or plate bearing the International Symbol of Access.

Persons convicted of these violations may be fined up to \$500 and, in some cases, may have their disabled parking privileges revoked for up to six months.

It is also illegal to:

- ▶ create or use a counterfeit replica of a disabled license plate or placard;
- ▶ alter a disabled license plate or placard;
- ▶ use another person's disabled license plate or placard;
- ▶ make a false statement about a disability in order to obtain or assist someone else in obtaining a disabled license plate or placard.

Convictions resulting from these offenses could result in fines up to \$1,000, up to six months in jail, and revocation of disabled parking privileges.

To report expired placards, suspected misuse or alteration of placards or plates, call (804) 367-6602.

Your License and the Law

Whenever you drive, you must carry your driver's license with you. Any misuse of your driver's license is a misdemeanor. You could be fined, sentenced to jail, or your license may be suspended.

For your own protection, do not:

- ▶ allow an unlicensed driver to operate your vehicle;
- ▶ lend anyone your driver's license;
- ▶ use anyone else's driver's license;
- ▶ display or possess a fraudulent driver's license;
- ▶ use a suspended or revoked driver's license.

If you are underage, it is against the law to use a falsified or non-genuine license to obtain alcoholic beverages or tobacco products. Also, it is unlawful to knowingly allow anyone to get a driver's license in your name.

Misuse of your driver's license

For your protection

If you are underage

License Suspension and Revocation

When you receive a driver's license, you accept responsibility for obeying Virginia's traffic and safety laws. If you repeatedly violate them, DMV is authorized to suspend or revoke your driver's license.

If you are convicted of any of the following offenses, your license will be revoked or suspended.

- ▶ Making a false statement to DMV
- ▶ Failing to stop and identify yourself at the scene of a crash if someone has been injured or killed
- ▶ Operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- ▶ Voluntary or involuntary manslaughter resulting from driving a motor vehicle
- ▶ Committing a drug offense, regardless of whether or not a motor vehicle is involved
- ▶ Committing a felony involving the use of a motor vehicle
- ▶ Taking a driver's license examination for another person, or appearing for another person to renew a license. If convicted of this offense, your license will be revoked for ten years.
- ▶ Eluding police

If you are convicted of a safety belt, child safety seat or demerit-point traffic violation committed when you were under age 18, you will be required to satisfactorily complete a driver improvement clinic. No safe driving points will be awarded for attending the clinic. If you do not satisfactorily complete the clinic within 90 days, DMV will suspend your permit or license until the clinic is completed.

After your second demerit point conviction, DMV will suspend your permit or license for 90 days. The court may grant you restricted driving privileges so you can drive



between your home, workplace, or to and from home and an institution of higher learning (college, university, technical or business school offering post-secondary instructions). The court may grant these restrictions provided there is no other means of transportation.

If you are under age 18 and have ten or more unapproved absences from school on consecutive school days, a court may suspend your driving privileges for any period of time, or until you reach age 18.

**School
absences**

After a third demerit point conviction, DMV will revoke your permit or license for one year or until you reach age 18, whichever is longer. The court cannot grant restricted driving privileges.

**Third
conviction**

If you are age 18 or 19, you will be required to complete a driver improvement clinic after your first demerit point conviction (including safety belt and child restraint violations).

If you are age 18 or older and you accumulate eight demerit points in 12 months (or 12 points in 24 months), you will receive an advisory letter that cautions you about the consequences of violating the law.

Section 1: The Driver Licensing Process... And Obtaining a Photo ID Card

If you accumulate 12 demerit points in 12 months (or 18 points in 24 months), you will be required to complete a clinic. You must enroll in and satisfactorily complete the driver improvement clinic within 90 days or your driver's license will be suspended.

Demerit points

If you accumulate 18 demerit points in 12 months (or 24 points in 24 months), your driving privilege will be suspended for 90 days. Additionally, you must complete a driver improvement clinic before your privilege will be restored. Once your privilege is restored, you will be placed on a six month probation. You will not be granted restricted driving privileges.

If you are under age 20, a computer-based driver improvement clinic will not satisfy a driver improvement requirement. You must satisfactorily complete a clinic that provides classroom instruction.

Your license also may be suspended or revoked if you:

- ▶ Become delinquent in your child support payments by 90 days or \$5,000
- ▶ Fail to pay court fines, costs and fees for traffic or criminal convictions within 15 days
- ▶ Fail to satisfactorily complete a required driver improvement clinic within the specified time
- ▶ Are convicted of making a bomb threat
- ▶ Are convicted of failing to pay for gasoline purchases
- ▶ Become physically or mentally unable to drive safely
- ▶ Give false information on a driver's license application
- ▶ Receive 18 or more demerit points in a 12-month period or 24 demerit points in a 24-month period
- ▶ Register an uninsured motor vehicle without paying the uninsured motor vehicle fee
- ▶ Operate or permit operation of your uninsured vehicle
- ▶ Operate a motor vehicle without a valid driver's license. If you are convicted of driving without a license, the court may suspend your driving privilege or privilege to obtain a license for up to 90 days.

If you are unable to pay court fines and costs or enter into an installment payment plan for full driving privileges and the court suspends your driving privilege, you may petition the court for restricted driving privileges for a period of six months.

If you are convicted of driving while your license is revoked or suspended, the court may revoke or suspend your license for the same amount of time for which it had previously been revoked or suspended. This will be in addition to any other penalties, possibly including jail time.

If you receive a second conviction of driving while your license is suspended or revoked because of non-DUI-related offenses, DMV will require that you complete an intervention interview with the Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program.

A third conviction within ten years for driving on a license suspended because of a DUI-related offense is a class 6 felony and carries a mandatory term of one to five years or a fine of \$2,500 or both.

If your license is **suspended**, your privilege to drive has been withdrawn temporarily. You may pay the required fees and reinstate your license at the end of the suspension period unless your license expires during that period. You must also show proof of legal presence.

Revocation, on the other hand, means that your privilege to drive has been terminated. Your driving privilege may be restored if you reapply for a driver's license **after** the revocation period has passed. You must also show proof of legal presence. You must successfully complete the vision screening, two-part knowledge exam and road skills tests and pay the required fees when you reapply.

Behind the wheel...

Before You Get Behind the Wheel

It's your responsibility to ensure that the vehicle you are driving is:

Properly registered

- ▶ **Properly registered.** If the vehicle is registered in Virginia, plates must be displayed on the front and rear of the vehicle. Decals indicating the month and year that the registration expires must be placed in the designated areas on the plates (except for vehicles displaying permanent plates). You must have the vehicle registration card with you when operating the vehicle. You must also register your vehicle in your locality if required.

Insured

- ▶ **Insured** by a company authorized to do business in Virginia. If the vehicle is not insured, verify that the owner has paid the Uninsured Motor Vehicle Fee (UMVF). Vehicles registered in Virginia must remain insured during the entire registration period even if the vehicle is not driven or is inoperable.

If not insured and you have not paid the UMVF

If the vehicle is not insured and you have not paid the UMVF, you must cancel the registration and return the license plates to DMV immediately. Failure to cancel the registration will result in suspension of your driver's license.



If you purchase plates for a vehicle that is inoperable, you must have liability insurance at the time you purchase the plates or pay the UMVF. You must maintain insurance on the vehicle during the entire registration period even though it remains inoperable.

Inoperable vehicle

- ▶ **In good working order.** The vehicle must have a valid safety inspection sticker, license plates, and working brakes, safety belts, horn, lights, turn signals, mirrors and speedometer.

Section 2

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

Tinted windows

If your vehicle has tinted windows check with the Virginia State Police to make sure it is in compliance with Virginia's sunshading specifications. DMV is authorized to issue waivers to individuals with medical conditions that require protection from sunlight or bright artificial light.

How you hold the wheel is important

8 o'clock, 4 o'clock

Sit straight but relaxed. Place your hands on the steering wheel at the 8 o'clock and 4 o'clock positions. Hold the wheel with your fingers and thumbs. Avoid gripping it with your palms.



Virginia Insurance Laws

If you drive in Virginia without liability coverage on your vehicle, you face a \$500 fine, suspension of your driver's license and vehicle registration, plus higher insurance premiums for the next three years.

Insure while inoperable

During the entire registration period, your vehicle must be covered by a liability policy issued by a company licensed to do business in Virginia - even if the vehicle is inoperable or not being used. Insurance companies notify DMV electronically when coverage is started or canceled.

If insurance is not an option, you must pay the \$500 uninsured motor vehicle fee. It allows you to register your vehicle but does not provide insurance coverage.

If your vehicle becomes uninsured and you do not reinsure it or pay DMV the \$500 uninsured motor vehicle fee, you must cancel the registration and return the valid license plates to DMV immediately.

Your Best Protection: Safety Belts, Air Bags and Child Safety Seats

Wearing safety belts can double your chances of surviving a crash and more than double your chances of avoiding serious injury. Virginia's safety belt law requires drivers and front seat passengers to use safety belts when traveling in a motor vehicle that is equipped with or required to be equipped with safety belts.

Safety belts save lives and help to avoid serious injury

Under Virginia law, the driver and all front seat passengers must wear a safety belt. A driver transporting anyone through age 15 must ensure that the child is properly secured in a safety belt, booster seat or child safety seat no matter where the child is seated in the vehicle.

Remember to wear your lap belt low on your lap and against your thighs. Wear your shoulder belt over your shoulder and across your chest. Never wear your shoulder belt behind your back or under your arm. Your shoulder and lap belts should be snug without any slack. Pregnant women are much safer if buckled up by wearing the belt as low on the pelvis as possible.

Wear them correctly

Air bags when used properly with safety belts, cushion occupants as they move forward in a front-end crash. By providing a cushion, the air bag keeps the occupant's head, neck and chest from hitting the steering column or dashboard.

If your vehicle is equipped with air bags,

- ▶ Always buckle up and have all passengers in the vehicle buckle up.
- ▶ Move your seat back so that you are at least ten inches from the steering wheel.
- ▶ If your steering wheel is adjustable, tilt it downward. This points the air bag toward your chest instead of your head and neck.
- ▶ Children ages 12 and under are safer buckled up in the back seat.
- ▶ Never place a rear-facing infant seat in the front seat if the air bag is turned on.

For more information about air bags, including applying for an on/off switch, contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) on the web at www.nhtsa.dot.gov or toll-free hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

Secure all children

Child Safety Seats: Securing a child in a correctly installed child safety seat can significantly reduce the possibility of death or injury.

All children under age eight must be properly secured in a child safety seat or booster seat when riding in vehicles manufactured after January 1, 1968. If the vehicle does not have a back seat, a rear facing child seat may be placed in the front passenger seat only if the vehicle is not equipped with a passenger side airbag or the passenger air bag is deactivated. An exemption of this law may be granted by a licensed physician if the use of a child restraint would be unreasonable due to the child's weight, physical fitness or other medical reasons. The person responsible for transporting this child must have in his possession or in the vehicle transporting the child the signed written statement by the physician identifying the child and stating the grounds for the exemption.

The driver is responsible for making sure that children are properly secured. If you are convicted of violating the child restraint law, you will be fined \$50.00.

Tips for Traveling With Children

- ▶ Children from birth to age 12 months ride facing the rear.
- ▶ Children ages one through seven ride facing forward in a child safety seat or booster seat.
- ▶ The safest place to install a child safety seat is in the center of the back seat. NEVER place a rear-facing infant seat in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger-side air bag.
- ▶ Numerous child safety seat checks are held in localities across Virginia. Attend one of these checks to make sure that your child's safety seat is installed correctly.
- ▶ Never hold a child in your lap. In a crash, the child may be crushed between your body and the dashboard.
- ▶ Make sure that all car doors are securely closed and locked before driving. Don't allow children to play with door handles or locks. If you must open a door, pull the vehicle off the road and come to a complete stop.
- ▶ Never allow children to ride in the luggage area of hatchbacks, station wagons or vans.
- ▶ Never leave a hatchback open when a child is riding in the back seat.
- ▶ It is illegal to transport children under age 16 in the bed of a pick-up truck, even if equipped with a camper shell.

Good Driving Practices

Use the three-second rule to determine if you are far enough behind the vehicle ahead of you.

Here's how it works.

- ▶ Watch the vehicle ahead pass a fixed point, such as an overpass, sign, fence, corner or other marker.
- ▶ Begin counting off the seconds it takes you to reach the same place in the road.
- ▶ If you reach the mark before you have counted off three seconds, you're following too closely. Slow down and increase your following distance.
- ▶ Remember, the three-second rule applies only in good weather and depends on the condition of your vehicle and the road. In bad weather conditions, heavy traffic, poor pavement or if your vehicle is in poor condition, add extra seconds to the three-second rule.

Scanning

When driving, we gather 90 percent of the information about the road and our surroundings through our eyes. Scanning means looking at the entire scene for anything that might come into your path. As you scan the road, avoid a fixed stare. Keep your eyes moving and learn to read the road. Look ahead, to the sides and behind you.

Scan ahead and to the sides

Scan ahead and to the sides. Looking ahead will help you see things early and will allow you more time to react. Expert drivers try to focus their eyes 20 to 30 seconds ahead. In the city, that equals approximately one block. Avoid staring at the middle of the road, however. Scan from side to side, checking for directional signs, cars or people that might be in the road by the time you reach them.

Watch for clues

Watch for clues in the road. Look for exhaust smoke, brake or back-up lights and turned wheels on vehicles. Clues like these indicate that the vehicles may pull into your path. Watch for pedestrians, bicyclists and other slow moving vehicles that may be in the road ahead.

When driving in rural areas, watch for hidden intersections and driveways, curves, hills and different road conditions. Watch for other vehicles, especially trucks, oversize and slow-moving farm vehicles and bicycles.

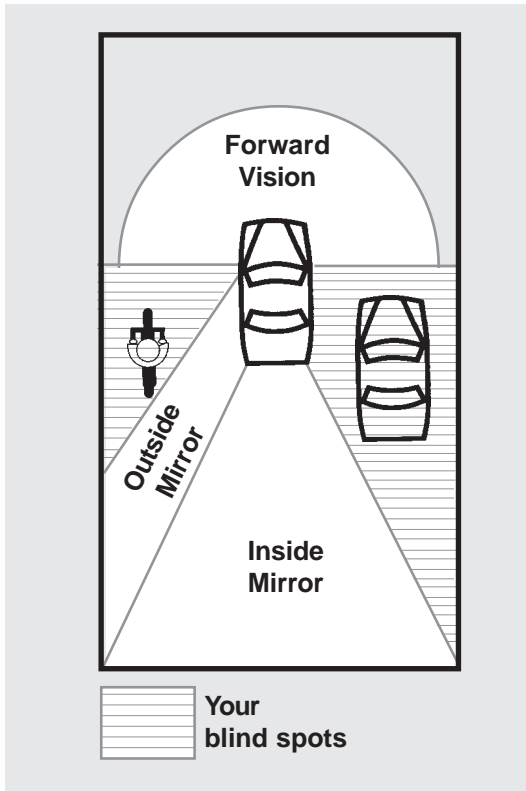
Check from left to right before entering an intersection. Whenever you reach a place in the road where other cars, people or animals may cross your path, look to both sides to be sure that the way is clear. These include intersections, crosswalks, shopping centers, construction areas and playgrounds. At any intersection, look to the left first, since cars coming from the left will be closer to you. Then look to the right and take one more quick look to the left before you drive through.

Check from left to right

Look behind. Use your rear-view mirror to check the traffic behind you frequently, about every 10 seconds. This will alert you if someone is moving up too quickly or tailgating you. Check the traffic behind you when changing lanes, backing up, slowing down quickly or driving down a long, steep hill. But, don't take your eyes off the road for more than an instant.

Look behind

Blind spots



Blind spots are danger areas which cannot be seen in the mirrors on either or both sides of the vehicle.

Quickly turn your head to check for other vehicles in your blind spots before making any sideways movement, such as changing lanes or passing another vehicle.

Avoid driving in someone else's blind spot. This can be just as dangerous as not checking your own. Speed up or drop back; but, don't stay in the other driver's blind spot.

Sharing the Road

Drivers of passenger vehicles share the road with many other users: pedestrians, bicyclists, moped and motorcycle riders, trucks and buses, recreational vehicles and other passenger vehicles of all shapes and sizes. It is your responsibility to adjust your driving to avoid other drivers' mistakes and assure everyone's safety.

Pedestrians: Generally, there are three types of pedestrians most often involved in accidents: children, the elderly and adults under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

- ▶ Be careful around schools, playgrounds and in residential areas where small children may be playing or crossing the street.
- ▶ Look out for the elderly, who may have poor vision and hearing. Remember that they and people with disabilities will move slowly. Be aware of blind pedestrians crossing the street. Blind pedestrians usually carry a white cane or use a guide dog.
- ▶ Be especially aware of pedestrians when making a right or left turn on red. They have the right-of-way. Allow pedestrians to completely cross the street before beginning your turn.
- ▶ Be alert for pedestrians at all times. Slow down and be prepared to stop. Always yield the right-of-way.

Bicyclists: Bicycles are considered vehicles and have the same rights-of-way as motor vehicles. Bicyclists are also expected to obey the same traffic rules and regulations as vehicle drivers; however, many are children who may not know or obey the rules. Slow down when you approach bicyclists. Give them plenty of room when passing and be prepared to stop suddenly. Look for bicycles on all public roads except where prohibited by a sign.

It is a violation of the law to operate electric power assistive mobility devices, electrically powered toy vehicles, bicycles and electric power assisted bicycles on any interstate highway. The only exception is if the operation is limited to bicycle or pedestrian facilities that meet federal and state safety regulations that are separated from the roadway and automobile traffic.

Mopeds: Under Virginia law, a moped is a bicycle-like device with pedals and a helper motor. The motor cannot be rated at more than two horsepower or enable the moped to travel more than 30 MPH. It is a violation of the law to operate a moped faster than 35 MPH or on an interstate highway. In addition, any person who operates a moped faster than 35 MPH is considered to be operating a motorcycle, which requires that the driver hold a valid driver's license with a motorcycle classification or a driver's

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

license restricted to operating motorcycles only. Moped riders must be at least 16 years old and must obey all rules of the road. Moped riders must carry some form of identification that includes name, address and date of birth.

As a driver, treat moped riders with the same care given to any other vehicle driver.

Although you do not need a driver's license to operate a moped, you may not operate a moped if you have been declared a habitual offender and your license is suspended or revoked for driving while intoxicated.

When overtaking a bicycle, moped, or power-assisted bicycle or other device, you must be at least two feet to the left of the vehicle when you pass. You must also pass at a reasonable speed.

Motorcycles: Approximately half of all fatal motorcycle crashes involve automobiles. Most of these crashes are caused by the motorist's failure to see a motorcycle in traffic.

- ▶ Look for motorcyclists. In more than half of all crashes involving motorcycles and automobiles, the other driver didn't see the motorcycle until it was too late. Motorists are conditioned to look for four-wheeled vehicles; but they don't expect to see two-wheeled vehicles. A motorcycle's small size also makes it difficult to see.
- ▶ Check your blind spots. A motorcycle's small size allows it to slip into your blind spot easily. Always check for motorcycles before you pull out, change lanes, turn, back up or proceed through an intersection.
- ▶ Never tailgate a motorcycle (or any other vehicle). Allow yourself plenty of braking distance by adding an extra second to the three-second rule. In inclement weather, double this distance.

- ▶ Anticipate the motorcyclist's movements. Although a motorcycle occupies only four feet of the lane, the rider will use the entire lane as traffic situations and road conditions change. A slight change or debris on the road surface can be a major obstacle for a motorcyclist. Expect the motorcycle to make sudden moves within the lane. Never drive in the motorcyclist's lane.
- ▶ Yield to motorcycles. The small size of a motorcycle can cause you to misjudge the motorcycle's speed and distance. Before pulling out into traffic, check twice for motorcycles and use extra caution before you pull out in front of one.

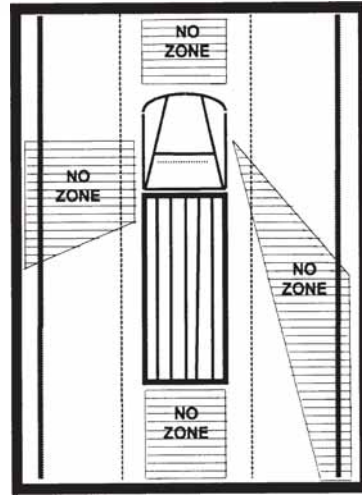


Low Speed Vehicles: These electrically powered four-wheel vehicles have a maximum speed ranging from 21 to 25 MPH. Low speed vehicles may be operated on public highways with speed limits of 35 MPH or less by licensed drivers or learner's permit holders accompanied by a licensed driver.

Low speed vehicles must comply with all federal safety standards and must meet Virginia's requirements for passenger vehicle registration and insurance coverage. Golf carts are not classified as low speed vehicles.

Trucks, Tractor-Trailers and RVs:

Trucks, tractor-trailers, buses and recreational vehicles (RVs)-- including motor homes, campers and travel trailers--are longer, higher and wider than other vehicles. They accelerate slowly and require greater stopping and turning distances. Plus, there are danger areas around these vehicles where crashes are more likely to occur. These areas are called No-Zones. No-Zones on the side, front and rear also include blind spots where your car disappears from the driver's view. Learning the No-Zones can save your life!



- ▶ **Side No-Zones:** Trucks, tractor-trailers, buses and RVs have big No-Zones on both sides which are dangerous because these vehicles must make wide turns. These No-Zones or blind spots are much larger than your car's blind spots. If you can't see the driver's face in his side view mirror, then he can't see you.
- ▶ **Rear No-Zone:** Trucks, tractor-trailers, buses and RVs have huge No-Zones directly behind them. The driver can't see your car behind his vehicle and you can't see what's happening in traffic ahead of his vehicle. If the truck, bus or RV brakes or stops suddenly, you have no place to go and could crash into the vehicle's rear-end. Always maintain a safe following distance.
- ▶ **Front No-Zone:** You could get rear-ended by a truck, bus or RV if you cut in front too soon after passing the vehicle. If you cut in front and then suddenly slow down, truck, bus and RV drivers are forced to slam on their brakes. These vehicles need nearly twice the time and room to stop as cars. A truck and its tow vehicle may be as long as 65 feet and it may take you more than half a mile of clear road to pass. When passing, look

for the entire front of the truck in your rearview mirror before pulling in front. And then, don't slow down!

- ▶ **Wide Turns:** Trucks, buses and RVs sometimes need to swing wide to the left or right in order to safely make a turn. They can't see the cars directly behind or beside them. In fact, their blind spots may stretch up to 20 feet in front of the cab and approximately 200 feet behind the truck. Trying to squeeze between a truck, bus or RV and the curb or another vehicle is an invitation to disaster.

Maintaining a Space Cushion

Space around your vehicle gives you time to react in emergencies and avoid a collision. Create a space cushion around your vehicle by staying in the middle of your lane. Make sure there is enough room ahead of your vehicle and behind it for other vehicles to pass or stop safely.

- ▶ **Help the driver behind you** maintain a safe following distance by maintaining a steady speed. Use a hand signal or tap your brakes to let the driver behind you know in advance when you plan to slow down or stop.

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

- ▶ **If the driver behind you** is following too closely, do not brake suddenly. If possible, move over to another lane. Or, when the way ahead is clear, flash your brake lights and slow down. This should encourage the tailgater to pass you.
- ▶ **In city traffic**, increase the amount of space between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead.
- ▶ **Avoid driving** in another driver's blind spot.
- ▶ **Once you've established** a space cushion, if a vehicle cuts into the space ahead of you, just slow down and re-establish a safe following distance.
- ▶ **Increase your following distance** when driving behind a large vehicle that blocks your vision. You should also increase your following distance when driving in bad weather, heavy traffic or when exiting an expressway. Increase your following distance if you are following a motorcycle or being tailgated.

If you are traveling slower than the traffic around you on a multi-lane highway, drive in the right-hand lane.

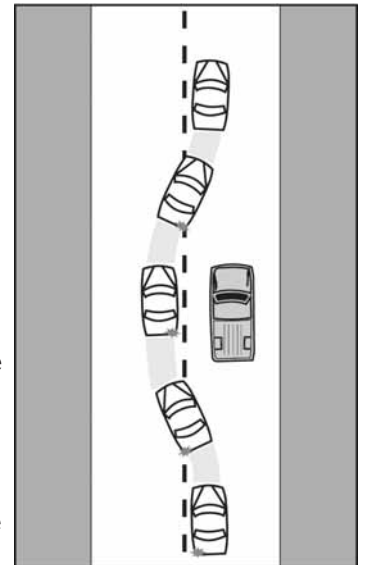
Changing Lanes

Before changing lanes, check your side and rearview mirrors for traffic approaching you from behind. Then, give a turn signal to communicate your intention to change lanes. Check for other drivers who also may be moving into the same lane. Just before you begin moving into the other lane, quickly glance over your shoulder and check for any vehicles that may be in your blind spot.

Whether you are changing lanes, passing, entering or exiting an expressway, always use your turn signals and check traffic to the rear and sides. When driving on a multi-lane highway, stay in the right-hand lane if you are driving slower than the traffic around you.

When passing another vehicle:

- ▶ Check the traffic ahead of you, behind you and in your blind spot before you attempt to pass. Signal and then accelerate to pass. Return to the right lane as soon as you can see the front of the passed vehicle in your rearview mirror.
- ▶ It is against the law to exceed the speed limit as you pass.
- ▶ Complete the pass before you reach a No Passing zone. If you're still in the left lane when you reach the zone, you're breaking the law.
- ▶ You may pass on the right if the vehicle you are passing has signaled and is making a left turn. Be cautious because the vehicle you are passing may be blocking your view or blocking the view of other drivers. You may not pass on the right if you must drive off the pavement or main portion of the roadway to get around the other vehicle.



- ▶ When approaching or passing a person riding a bicycle, moped, or power-assisted bicycle or other device, pass at least two feet to the left of the vehicle and at a reasonable speed.

When being passed,

- ▶ don't speed up. Maintain a steady speed or slow down.

Passing is prohibited:

- ▶ on hills, curves, at intersections or railroad crossings, except on roads with two or more lanes of traffic moving in the same direction;
- ▶ off the pavement or shoulder of the road;
- ▶ when a school bus is stopped to load or unload passengers on a public road (unless a physical barrier or unpaved median separates traffic going in either direction) or on a private road; and,
- ▶ whenever a solid line marks the left side of your lane.

Backing

The most common mistake that drivers make when backing is failing to look both ways behind them. Mirrors do not give you a full view. To see as much as possible, turn your body and head to the right and look out through the rear window. Back up slowly and check for pedestrians and approaching traffic by glancing quickly to either side.

Visibility

On a dry road, with good tires and brakes, it takes about 265 feet for a passenger vehicle traveling at 55 MPH to stop. If you can't see that far ahead, then you cannot drive safely at that speed. Adjust your speed for hills, curves, intersections or anywhere that visibility may be limited. In other words, slow down. Night driving is especially dangerous. Under normal conditions, your headlights let you see only about 350 feet ahead.

You will also need to adjust your speed when driving in the rain, fog or snow. If you cannot see more than 100 feet ahead, you cannot drive safely at any speed. Consider getting off the road until the weather breaks.

Hazardous Conditions

Driving becomes hazardous when visibility is reduced or when the road surface is covered with rain, snow or ice. Reducing your speed should be your first response to decreased visibility and dangerous road conditions. Increase your space cushion by doubling your normal following distance from three seconds to six seconds (refer to Maintaining a Space Cushion for more information). Turn on your headlights.

Night Driving

At sunset, as soon as light begins to fade, turn on your headlights to make your vehicle more visible to others. You must use headlights from sunset to sunrise. In inclement weather such as rain, fog and snow, you must use your headlights whenever you use your wipers.

Use low beams when driving in cities and towns, except on streets where there is no lighting. Switch to low beams whenever you meet oncoming traffic to avoid blinding the other driver. When following, use low beams whenever you are within 200 feet of the vehicle ahead.

Use high-beam headlights on highways when no other vehicle is approaching within 500 feet. If the high beams of an oncoming car are not dimmed, avoid looking directly at the bright lights. Glance toward the side of the road, then look quickly ahead to determine the other vehicle's position. Keep doing this until you have passed the other vehicle. Even though the other driver does not dim his headlights, do not retaliate by turning on your high-beam headlights.

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

Fog

Fog reflects light and can reflect your own headlights back into your eyes. Use low beam headlights only and look for road edge markings to guide you. Even light fog reduces visibility and your ability to judge distances, so slow down.

Rain

Driving in heavy rain can be as hazardous as driving in fog, especially if the wind is blowing. Other vehicles to the rear and in blind spot areas are especially difficult to see through rain-spattered windows.

Use your low-beam headlights to see and be seen. Wait a short time after the rain begins before using your windshield wipers because the blades may smear.

Be extra careful during the first half hour after rain begins. Grime and oil on the road surface mix with water to make the road slippery.

Snow

Before you start driving, remove snow and ice from your entire car, including the roof, hood and rear of the vehicle. Be sure to clear all your windows, side view mirrors and front and rear lights of snow or ice so you can see and communicate with other drivers.

Equip your car with all-weather snow tires or chains to help prevent skidding and reduce stopping distance.

Slow down before stopping or turning. Driving on packed snow is similar to driving on ice. When you brake, apply the brakes gently.

On slippery surfaces, you have the most traction and control when the front tires are rolling. Therefore, your vehicle will respond more effectively to steering than braking.

Watch for ice on bridges and in shady areas. Bridges freeze before other road surfaces.

How many feet does that equal?

Sometimes it's difficult to judge distance. Here are a few comparisons to help you.

- ▶ 100 feet roughly equals the length of two tractor-trailers parked one behind the other.
- ▶ 250 feet roughly equals the height of a 25-story building.
- ▶ 350 feet is slightly longer than the playing area of a football field.

Communicating With Other Motorists

Lights

Virginia law requires motorists to use headlights during inclement weather such as rain, fog, snow or sleet when visibility is reduced to 500 feet. You must use your headlights whenever you use your windshield wipers as a result of bad weather. Refer to Hazardous Conditions for more information.

Be seen in inclement weather

Turn Signals

When you plan to make a turn or to enter or exit a highway, first give the proper turn signal, which is required by law. Develop a good habit and use turn signals or hand signals even if no other traffic is on the road. Signal when making turns, changing lanes, entering or exiting highways and always let the other driver know what you intend to do.

Develop a good habit

Signal three or four seconds before you change direction so other drivers will have time to react. If you plan to turn after clearing an intersection, don't signal until you reach the intersection; otherwise, drivers on the road ahead may pull out in front of you. After you complete your move, be sure the turn signal stops flashing. Remember, always signal before changing lanes.

3 or 4 seconds

If the speed limit is more than 35 MPH, signal at least 100 feet before you reach the turning point.

For speeds less than 35 MPH, signal at least 50 feet in advance.

Hand signals



Left Turn

Left hand and arm pointed straight out.



Right Turn

Left hand and arm pointing upward.



Slow or Stop

Left hand and arm pointed downward.

Dangerous Driving Behaviors

Aggressive Driving

This dangerous driving behavior is defined by Virginia law as the intent to harass, intimidate, injure or obstruct another person while committing one or more traffic offenses such as failure to stop or yield the right-of-way, evasion of a traffic control device or failure to give way to an overtaking vehicle.

When they're behind the wheel of their vehicles, these high-risk drivers take out their frustrations on other motorists. Their frustration level runs high while their concern for fellow motorists runs low. They run stop signs and red lights, speed, tailgate, weave in and out of traffic, pass on the right (including on the shoulder and unpaved portions of the road), make improper and unsafe lane changes, make hand and facial gestures, scream, honk and flash their lights.

Protect yourself. If you see an aggressive driver, stay out of the way. Don't challenge the aggressive driver by speeding up or trying to out-maneuver him. Avoid eye contact and ignore his gestures and shouting.

Remember, if you are convicted of aggressive driving, your license could be suspended for ten days or for as long as six months.

Distracted Driving

Driving requires full attention to limit the chance of error. There are many distractions that may prevent drivers from focusing on the complex task of driving: changing the radio or CD, talking to passengers, observing outside surroundings, eating, using a cell phone and more. When on the road, drivers should not use cell phones, faxes, computers or other distracting devices except to report a crash or emergency. When engaging in distracting behavior, pull over and stop the vehicle in a safe location.

In April 2006, research from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute concluded that driver inattention is the leading factor in most crashes and near-crashes. The study reports that nearly 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes involved some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the incident.

Young drivers have higher crash rates than more mature drivers and are particularly vulnerable to fatal crashes. Department of Motor Vehicles and the Virginia Commonwealth University Transportation Safety Research Center statistics for 2006 report more than 150 crashes involving drivers ages 16 and 17 using cell phones.

Effective July 1, 2007, Virginia law prohibits drivers under age 18 from using cell phones or any other wireless communication device while driving except in a driver emergency and the vehicle is lawfully parked or stopped. Text-messaging or reading of text messages while driving is also prohibited.

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

Annually, driver distraction accounts for roughly 20 percent of all traffic crashes in Virginia. Why is distracted driving so deadly? Because while the driver is distracted, the vehicle moves into a high-risk situation. The driver loses precious seconds before recognizing the situation and making an emergency maneuver. Young drivers are even more susceptible because they often over-correct and because they lack experience in controlling a vehicle during an emergency situation. Don't let this happen to you. Take the following precautions.

- ▶ Keep your eyes on the road and your hands on the wheel at all times.
- ▶ Set or adjust the controls on the vehicle and other devices as soon as you get in the car and before you begin driving.
- ▶ Keep your body alert; sit straight, but relaxed. Look in the direction that you want to go.
- ▶ Avoid using a cell phone.
- ▶ Anticipate the traffic and environment around you by scanning ahead and checking your rearview mirrors.
- ▶ Maintain the speed limit; but, reduce your speed and increase your following distance in bad weather and heavy traffic.
- ▶ Always fasten your safety belt and make sure everyone in your vehicle is securely buckled up.

Drinking and Driving

Driving Under the Influence (DUI):

Legally, you are considered to be driving under the influence if your blood alcohol content (BAC) is 0.08 percent or higher. If your driving is impaired, you can be convicted of driving under the influence with a BAC lower than 0.08 percent. If your driving is impaired because you are under the influence of any drug, you may face the same penalties as driving under the influence of alcohol.

Ignition Interlock:

If the court or DMV restricts you to operating a motor vehicle equipped with the ignition interlock device and you drive in violation of that requirement, DMV will revoke your driving privileges for one year for the first offense or three years for the second or subsequent offense.

Administrative License Suspension (ALS):

For a first DUI offense and/or breath test refusal, your driver's license will be automatically suspended for seven days if your BAC is 0.08 percent or higher. For a second DUI offense and/or breath test refusal, your license will be automatically suspended for 60 days or until you go to trial, whichever comes first. For a third DUI offense and/or breath test refusal, your license will be automatically suspended until you go to trial. Conviction of a DUI offense will result in suspension of your driver's license and other penalties in addition to the administrative suspension.

Open Container:

You may be charged with drinking while operating a motor vehicle if you are stopped by law enforcement and you have an open container of alcohol in the passenger area and the contents have been partially removed, and you exhibit signs that you have been drinking. The passenger area means the area designed to seat the driver and passengers and any area within the driver's reach, including an unlocked glove compartment.

Transporting Children While Under the Influence:

Conviction of any DUI offense involving a juvenile passenger (age 17 or younger) in the vehicle at the time of the offense carries an additional mandatory five-day jail term in addition to all other fines and jail sentences. You may also be assessed an additional fine of at least \$500 and up to \$1,000. A second DUI offense with a juvenile (age 17 or younger) in the vehicle carries an additional 80-hour community service requirement in addition to all other fines and jail sentences.

Vehicle Impoundment:

Your vehicle will be impounded immediately for 30 days if you are caught driving after your license has been suspended for an alcohol-related offense. The court can impound the vehicle for an additional 90 days if you are convicted.

Restitution:

Depending on local ordinances, you may be liable (for up to \$1,000) for the cost of law enforcement, emergency medical service, fire fighting and rescue personnel who respond to a crash or incident resulting from your DUI violation.

Zero Tolerance — Penalties for Persons Under Age 21 Possessing and Consuming Alcohol:

If you are under age 21, you cannot purchase, possess or consume alcohol. If you are convicted of driving after illegally consuming alcohol, and your BAC was at least 0.02 percent and less than 0.08, the court penalty will include a suspension of your driving privilege for one year from the date of conviction; and a minimum mandatory fine of \$500, or the requirement that you complete at least 50 hours of community service.

Penalties for Possessing Alcoholic Beverages at Public Schools:

Drinking or possessing alcoholic beverages on public school grounds can result in a fine of up to \$1,000 and up to six months in jail regardless of your age.

Penalties for Providing Alcoholic Beverages:

If you provide or sell alcoholic beverages to a person under age 21 or someone who is intoxicated or ordered by a court to refrain from drinking alcohol, you are subject to a fine up to \$2,500, 12 months in jail, and mandatory suspension of your driver's license for up to one year.

Misrepresentation of Age:

If you are under age 21 and you use or attempt to use an altered, fictitious or simulated document or student ID to establish a false age in an attempt to consume alcohol or purchase alcoholic beverages, you will

- ▶ be fined at least \$500;
- ▶ be required to perform at least 50 hours of community service;
- ▶ face up to 12 months in jail; and,
- ▶ face mandatory suspension of your driver's license for at least six months but not more than one year.

If The Police Stop You

If the police have probable cause to stop you and suspect that you have been drinking or using drugs, they will ask you to take a breath test. This test analyzes the amount of alcohol in your body. Under implied consent laws, if you operate a motor vehicle on Virginia's public roads, you agree to take a chemical test upon request.

If you are involved in a motor vehicle crash and a law enforcement officer has probable cause, you can be arrested for DUI within three hours of the crash without a warrant and at any location.

Alcohol and You

Researchers estimate that between the hours of 10 PM and 2 AM three out of every ten drivers is intoxicated. More than one-third of these drivers have been drinking at someone else's home. Nearly 50 percent of the drivers arrested for driving under the influence (DUI) are social to moderate drinkers. Don't think that it won't happen to you. In your lifetime, there's a 50-50 chance that you'll be involved in an alcohol-related crash.

Just one alcoholic drink can affect your driving ability because even a small amount of alcohol affects the brain's higher functions - particularly vision, judgment, and coordination.

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

Because alcohol affects your judgment and driving ability, your chances of being in a crash are seven times greater if you drive after drinking than if you drive sober.

A 12-ounce glass of beer, a five-ounce glass of wine and a shot of liquor have similar amounts of alcohol.

Only time can decrease intoxication. Coffee, cold showers or exercise will not have a sobering effect.

Avoiding the Risks

Alcohol-related crashes are not accidents. They can be prevented! If you are planning a night on the town, decide before you start drinking that you are not going to drive. Remember, alcohol affects judgment. It's a lot more difficult to make the decision not to drive after one or two drinks.

Drive to social events in groups of two or more and have the driver agree not to drink.

Alcohol and drugs: Combining alcohol with other drugs usually multiplies the effects of both and can have a disastrous effect on your ability to drive. One drink taken when you are taking another drug—even an aspirin, simple allergy or cold remedy—could have the same effect on your driving ability as consuming several alcoholic beverages.

Almost any drug can reduce your ability to drive safely. It's not just illegal drugs that cause problems. Many over-the-counter medications and prescription drugs for headaches, hay fever, colds, allergies or nervous conditions can cause drowsiness and dizziness. This includes syrups, drops, sprays, pills and tablets. They often affect driver alertness and slow reaction time.

Read the label before taking any drug or medicine. Look for warnings about side effects. If you're uncertain about the effects of a drug, ask your pharmacist or doctor for advice. Remember that, while the effects may vary among users, no drug is harmless. Taking any drug against medical direction or without a doctor's supervision is dangerous.

Rules of the Road

Speed Limits

A speed limit is the maximum legal speed you can travel on a road under ideal conditions. You may drive slower than the posted speed, but it is illegal to drive any

faster. By law, you must drive slower if conditions make the posted speed unsafe.

It is illegal to use a radar detector in Virginia. However, you may legally possess one if the device has no power source and no one in the car can access it.

Maximum speed limit for passenger vehicles and motorcycles (unless posted otherwise)	
Type of highway or zone	Limit
Interstate highways in designated rural areas	65 MPH
Interstate highways in areas not designated as rural	55 MPH
Limited access and non-limited access highways	55 MPH
Secondary routes which include all public roads and streets not designated as part of the interstate or primary system	55 MPH
Highways designated a rural rustic road	35 MPH
School, business and residential zones (You are required to travel 25 MPH in a school zone only when indicated by a sign or signal. Otherwise, maintain the posted speed.)	25 MPH

Stopping

You must always stop your vehicle:

when approaching from any direction on a public or private road a stopped school bus with flashing red lights and extended stop sign. Stop and remain stopped until all children are clear and the bus moves again. If you are traveling on the opposite side of a divided highway separated by a physical barrier or unpaved median area, you are not required to stop.

before the crosswalk at all stop signs, red traffic lights and flashing red signals.

when entering a street or crossing over a sidewalk from a driveway, alley, building or parking lot.

at railroad crossings with flashing signals or flaggers.

when signaled by flaggers at construction sites.

for blind persons attempting to cross a street.

at the direction of a police officer. If you disregard a law enforcement officer's signal to stop and the officer pursues you due to this violation and is killed as a direct result of the pursuit, you will be guilty of a Class 4 felony. If you may be prosecuted for multiple violations if you violate another law in the process of disregarding an officer's signal to stop.

at the scene of a crash in which you are involved.

Both **reaction distance** and **braking distance** are affected by weather, visibility and your mental and physical condition. Braking distance is further affected by the speed at which your vehicle is traveling, the condition of your brakes and tires and the pavement condition. For example, wet pavement can double your braking distance.

When driving on wet roads, reduce your speed by one-third. For example, slow down from 55 MPH to 35 MPH. When driving on packed snow, reduce your speed by one-half.

No matter how quickly you react, on the average, it takes 344 feet — more than the length of a football field — to stop an automobile going 65 MPH on a dry, level,

Two factors determine the distance that it takes to stop your vehicle:

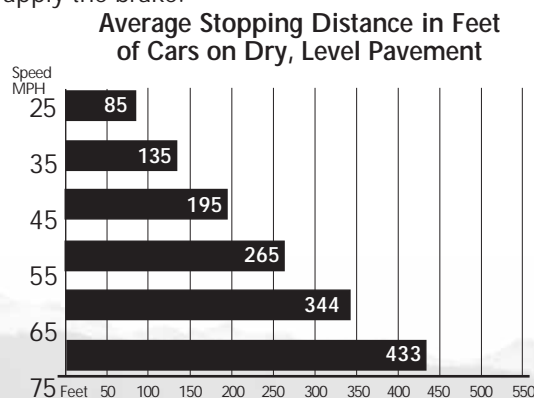
Reaction distance:

The distance your vehicle travels between the time you recognize a problem and the time you apply the brake.

Plus

Braking distance:

The distance your car travels after you apply the brakes and



Source: Code of Virginia § 46.2-880

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

hard-surface highway. It's not a matter of luck or skill; it's a law of physics. The chart on the preceding page gives you average stopping distances for automobiles on dry level pavement.

If your vehicle is equipped with antilock brakes, be sure that you understand how they work. Check your owner's manual and practice braking before you go out on the road. Remember, never pump antilock brakes.

Right-of-Way

When two vehicles approach an intersection not controlled by traffic lights or signs, neither vehicle has the right-of-way. Generally, Virginia law states that when two or more vehicles approach an uncontrolled intersection from different directions at the same time, the driver on the LEFT must yield to the driver on the right.

If the traffic lights at an intersection are not functioning, all vehicles approaching the intersection must stop. The driver on the left must yield to the driver on the right.

The law does not give the right-of-way to anyone. It only states which driver must yield to another.

Yield also means to stop if you cannot merge safely into the flow of traffic.

Emergency Vehicles

When approaching a stopped emergency vehicle, you must change lanes, where reasonable. If changing lanes is unreasonable or unsafe, you must proceed with caution.

Violations can result in court suspension of your driver's license and demerit points on your driving record.

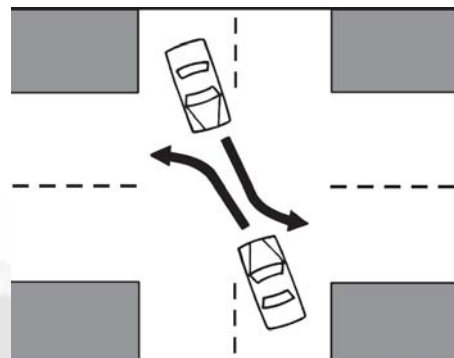
Additionally,

- ▶ You may not park within 500 feet of where fire trucks or equipment are stopped answering an alarm.

- ▶ You must yield the right-of-way to police, fire, rescue vehicles and ambulances using a siren, flashing lights or both.
- ▶ Never follow any emergency vehicle closer than 500 feet.
- ▶ When police, fire and rescue vehicles or ambulances approach you using a siren, flashing light or both, you must immediately yield the right-of-way. Pull over to the right edge of the road and stop until the emergency vehicle has passed. Don't follow any emergency vehicle any closer than 500 feet.
- ▶ Regardless of your direction, on an undivided highway, you must pull over to the edge of the road and allow an emergency vehicle to pass.

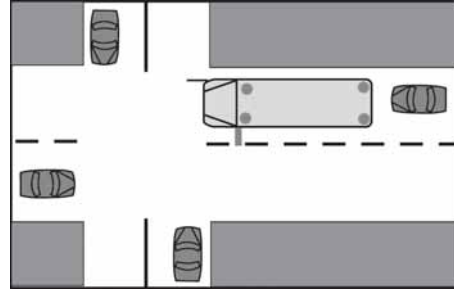
At uncontrolled intersections:

- ▶ Drivers entering an interstate from an entrance ramp must yield the right-of-way to traffic already on the highway.
- ▶ Drivers entering any intersection or traffic circle must yield to traffic already in it.
- ▶ From a private road or driveway, you must stop before crossing a sidewalk or entering a public street. You must yield to all oncoming traffic and pedestrians.
- ▶ When two vehicles are approaching each other and signaling to turn left, both vehicles should take the inside path, the lane closest to the center. They will complete the turn by turning in front of each other.

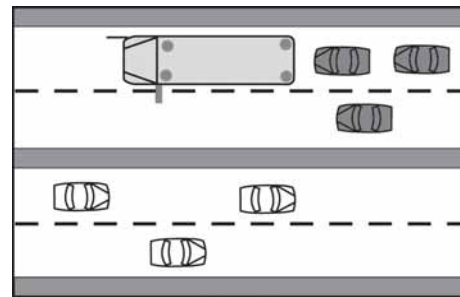


- ▶ You must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians who are crossing a street within a clearly marked crosswalk or at an intersection.
- ▶ You must always yield to visually handicapped pedestrians who are crossing a public street or highway. Visually handicapped pedestrians usually carry a white cane or are aided by a guide dog.
- ▶ You must yield to funeral processions. Do not cut through, join or interfere with a funeral procession. Unless accompanied or led by a police escort, the lead vehicle in a funeral procession must obey all traffic signs and signals. Other drivers in the procession may follow carefully without stopping and may use hazard lights (flashers) to indicate they are in the procession.
- ▶ You must yield to all military convoys. Never cut through or join a military convoy.
- ▶ Police officers directing traffic should be obeyed over all other signs or signals.

- ▶ You must also stop if the bus is loading or unloading children and the signal devices are not functioning properly.



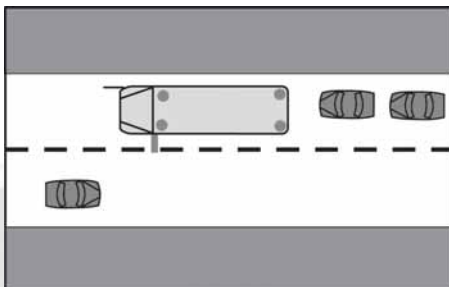
- ▶ You do not have to stop, however, if you are traveling in the opposite direction on roadways separated by a physical barrier or unpaved median area.



In illustration, the shaded vehicle must stop and remain stopped until all children are clear of the roadway and the bus moves again.

Remember that turns on red are especially hazardous to pedestrians. Regardless of who has the right-of-way, avoid conflict with pedestrians and permit them to cross the street safely.

- ▶ When approaching a school bus with flashing signals or flashing signals and an extended stop sign on a public or private road, you must stop and remain stopped until all children are clear of the roadway and the bus moves again.



Circular Intersections

Roundabouts, rotaries, and traffic circles are intersections that are controlled by a circular island in the center. Circular intersections may have one or more lanes. Entering traffic must yield the right-of-way to circulating traffic. Each road approaching the circular intersection is marked with a yield sign and may also have yield line markings on the pavement. However, rotaries and other circles may have stop signs. Drivers must be attentive and obey message signs.

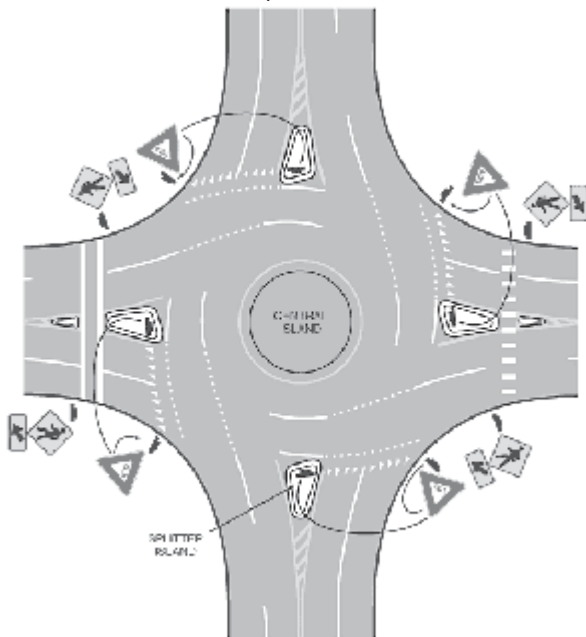
Circular intersections are easy to use. Simply position your vehicle correctly and use your turn signals to indicate where you want to go.

When approaching a circular intersection, slow down. You must yield to traffic

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

already in the circulatory roadway. If you plan to turn right, stay to the right as you enter the circular intersection. If you plan to go straight, you may stay in either lane (if it is a dual lane circular intersection). If you plan to turn left, stay to the left as you enter the circular intersection.

Studies show a roundabout can reduce the number and severity of crashes at an intersection, compared to intersections controlled by stop signs or traffic signals. Modern roundabouts are widely used in Europe and Australia, and are becoming more common in Virginia. More information about driving safely through a roundabout is available at the Virginia Department of Transportation web site at <http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/info/faq-roundabouts.asp>.



Tips for driving safely through a roundabout:

- ▶ As you approach the roundabout, slow down; look for the street and direction signs. This will help you know which exit to take. These signs should be posted along the roadside before you reach the roundabout.
- ▶ When you arrive at the roundabout, yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and bicyclists. You also must yield to any drivers already in the roundabout. Sometimes you

entry point will be controlled by a stop sign or traffic signal. When the traffic level allows enough space and time, you may enter the roundabout.

- ▶ While inside the roundabout, stay in your lane until you are ready to exit. Use your vehicle's right turn signal to let the other users know what you want to do, whether you want to move from the "inside path" to the "outside path" before exiting, or are already in position to exit.
- ▶ Do not change lanes or take an exit before checking for vehicles that may be continuing through the roundabout in the lane next to you or behind you. Expect vehicles to be in "blind spots" you cannot see in your rearview mirrors.

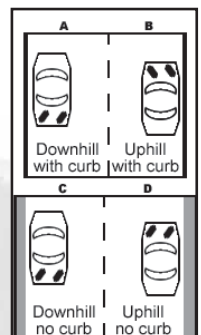
U-Turns

U-turns are not legal everywhere. So before you make a U-turn, check for signs prohibiting them. In business districts, cities and towns, U-turns are allowed only at intersections. Never make a U-turn on an expressway. When making a U-turn, give a left-turn signal, stop, check for approaching traffic. Proceed into the outside or right hand lane traveling in the opposite direction.

Parking

When parking on a public road, move as far from traffic as possible. If you park on a road-side shoulder, pull as far on to it as possible. If you park next to a curb, pull close to it. You may not park more than one foot from the curb. Always park on the right side of the roadway unless it is a one-way street.

Parking on hills — When parking on a hill with a curb, turn the front wheels of your vehicle to prevent it from rolling into the street. Refer to illustrations A and B. If there is no curb, turn the front wheels so that if the vehicle rolls, the rear of the vehicle will roll away from traffic. Refer to illustrations C and D.



You may not park:

- ▶ beside another parked vehicle (double parking);
- ▶ on crosswalks or sidewalks;
- ▶ in front of driveways;
- ▶ within areas where parking is prohibited by curbs painted yellow or No Parking signs; in a parking space reserved for disabled persons;
- ▶ on the hard surface of a road when no curb is present;
- ▶ within 15 feet of a fire hydrant;
- ▶ within 20 feet of an intersection;
- ▶ within 15 feet of the entrance to a fire, ambulance or rescue squad station;
- ▶ within 500 feet of where fire trucks or equipment are stopped answering an alarm;
- ▶ within 50 feet of a railroad crossing; or,
- ▶ in such a way that you block or create a hazard for other vehicles in a designated traffic lane.

Traffic Crashes

If you are involved in a traffic crash, you must:

- ▶ **Stop** at the scene of the crash or as close to the scene as possible without blocking traffic. You may move the vehicles before the police arrive if the vehicles create a traffic hazard.
- ▶ **Give any help** you can if someone is injured. Do not attempt to move an injured person from a wrecked vehicle unless you have the necessary medical training or there is an immediate danger such as fire.
- ▶ **Report the crash** to the police as quickly as possible. Motor vehicle crashes involving property damage, personal injury or death must be reported to the police.

- ▶ **Exchange information** with other people involved in the crash as soon as possible. Be sure to get the following information:
 - ▶ name, address and driver's license number of other drivers;
 - ▶ license plate numbers of other vehicles;
 - ▶ name and address of anyone who was injured;
 - ▶ name and address of each witness;
 - ▶ name, address and insurance policy number of other vehicle owners.
- ▶ **Notify** your insurance company immediately.

Law enforcement officers are required to forward a written crash report to DMV when a traffic crash results in injury or the death of any person or total property damage in excess of \$1,000. All crash information will be recorded on the DMV records of each driver involved in the crash.

You must make a reasonable effort to find the owner of an unattended vehicle or other property damaged in a crash. If you cannot locate anyone, leave a note that can be found easily at the scene of the crash. Include your name, address, telephone number, driver's license number, the date and time of the crash and an estimate of the damage. You must also report the crash to the police within 24 hours.

Reading the Road

Pavement Markings

Road markings guide and warn drivers as well as regulate traffic. Markings may be either red, blue, yellow or white. They may be used alone or in combinations. Each has a different meaning.

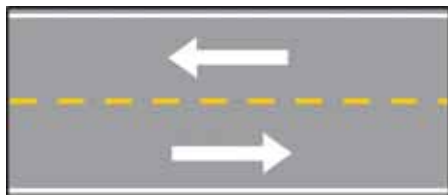
Red markings designate roadways that shall not be entered or used.

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

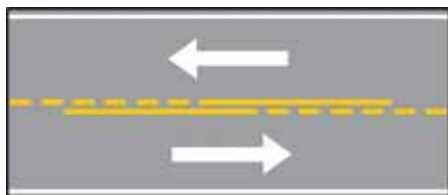
Blue markings designate parking spaces for persons with disabilities.

Yellow center lines indicate two-way traffic, flowing in opposite directions.

Broken yellow center lines indicate that passing on the left is permitted in either direction when the way ahead is clear.

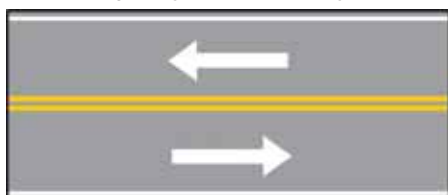


A broken yellow line alongside a solid yellow line indicates that passing is permitted on the side of the broken line, but not on the side of the solid line.

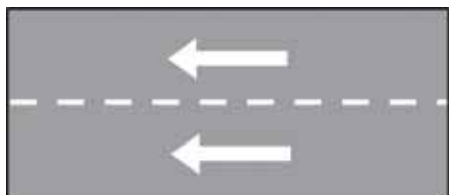


Double solid yellow lines mark the center of the road and separate oncoming traffic. Passing is not allowed in either direction. You may not cross the lines unless you are making a left turn.

Yellow lines also mark the left edge of divided highways and one-way roads.



Broken white lines separate lanes of traffic going in the same direction. You may cross with caution.



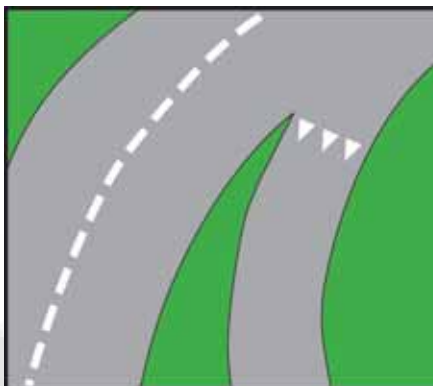
Many two-lane roads in Virginia do not have lane markings to separate the lanes. You may pass a slow moving vehicle on the left if there are no signs prohibiting passing. Make sure that the way is clear and observe the laws pertaining to passing. Refer to the passing information in this manual.

Solid white lines designate turn lanes and discourage lane changes near intersections and at other locations where lane changes might be dangerous. Solid white lines also mark the right edge of pavement. Arrows used with white lines indicate which turn may be made from the lane. Stop lines, crosswalks and parking spaces also are marked by white lines.



Yield ahead symbol is an outline of a triangle painted in the lane approaching a place where you must yield.

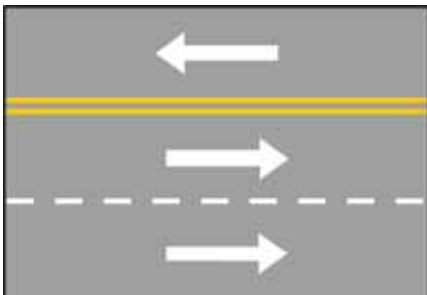
Yield line is a line of triangles extending across the roadway that may be used with a yield sign to show the point at which you must stop, if necessary, to yield to other traffic.



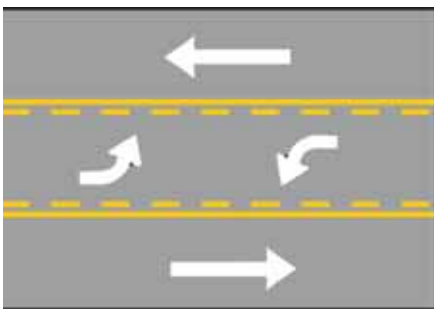
On three-lane roads with traffic moving in both directions, road markings indicate when drivers may use the center lane for making left turns or for passing.

If the center lane is marked by a single broken yellow line on both sides, motorists traveling in either direction may use the lane for passing.

If one side of the center lane is bounded by double solid yellow lines, drivers traveling next to the double yellow lines in either direction may not cross them except to make a left turn.



If both sides of the center lane are marked by a solid yellow line and a broken yellow line, drivers traveling in either direction may use the lane for making left turns. However, they may not travel further than 150 feet in this lane.



If you are in a lane marked with a curved arrow or a curved arrow and the word ONLY, you must turn in the direction of the arrow. If your lane is marked with both a curved and straight arrow, you may either turn or go straight.



High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes are designated on highways by a diamond-shaped marking

in the center of the lane. HOV lanes may also be special lanes separated by a barrier. During heavy traffic periods, HOV lanes are reserved for buses, vanpools, carpools, motorcycles, other high occupancy vehicles, and certain alternative fuel vehicles. Road signs indicate the minimum number of passengers a vehicle must carry (excluding motorcycles and alternative fuel vehicles) to use the HOV lanes and the times that HOV restrictions are in effect. If the lanes are separated by a barrier, they are reversible. This means that during certain times of the day, traffic flows one way. During other times of the day, traffic flows in the opposite direction. This diamond-shaped marking may also indicate that the lane is reserved for use as a bike lane or bus lane.

Painted Curbs

A painted curb means that you must follow special rules to park there. Check with the local jurisdiction for specific meanings. Generally, the colors on the curb mean:

White

Stop only long enough to pick up or drop off passengers.

Yellow

Stop only long enough to load or unload. Stay with your car.

Red

Do not stop, stand or park.

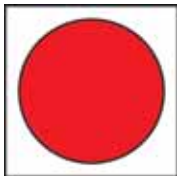
Blue

Parking is reserved for persons with disabilities.

Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

Traffic Signals

Traffic signals apply to drivers, motorcycle riders, bicyclists, moped-riders and pedestrians. You must obey the signals unless a police officer is directing traffic. It is unlawful to avoid a traffic signal, sign or control device by driving off the roadway and onto or across public or private property.



Stop—At a steady red light, come to a complete stop before you reach the intersection, stop line or crosswalk. Remain stopped as long as the light is red unless turns are allowed on red.

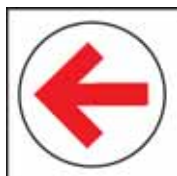


At a flashing red light, you must come to a complete stop and yield to oncoming traffic and/or pedestrians. You may go when the way is clear. At a railroad crossing, you must come to a complete stop even though the train is not present.

Right turn on red: At some intersections you may turn right while the traffic light is red. Before turning, you must come to a complete stop. Look both ways and yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and other traffic. Be sure to check for less visible vehicles such as bicycles and mopeds. Regardless of traffic conditions, you may not turn right if signs are posted at the intersection which read "No Turn on Red."

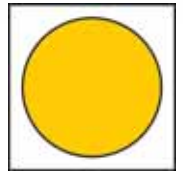
Left turn on red: You may turn left at a red light if you are on a one-way street and turning left onto another one-way street. Come to a complete stop and proceed with caution. You may not turn while the light is red if a sign prohibits it. You must yield to all oncoming traffic and pedestrians.

Note: If you are traveling in another state, make sure you know its laws for right turns and left turns at red and red arrow lights.



Virginia law prohibits right and left turns at red arrow lights unless a sign is posted permitting these turns.

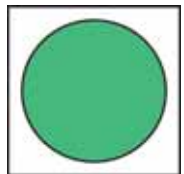
Caution—a steady yellow light or arrow warns that the light is about to change. If you have not entered the intersection, you should come to a stop. If you are already in the intersection, continue moving in order to clear it. Speeding up to beat the light could cause a crash.



At a flashing yellow light, slow down and proceed with caution. You'll find flashing yellow lights at locations with higher-than-normal hazard conditions.



Go—At a green light you may proceed in the direction indicated by the signal or arrow if the roadway is clear. If you are turning, you must yield the right-of-way to oncoming vehicles or pedestrians in the intersection.



Lane Use Signals

Lane use signals indicate lanes where you can and cannot drive during different hours of the day. These signals are used frequently to reverse a lane's direction. They provide additional lanes for heavy early morning traffic and evening traffic.

Red X

Never drive in a lane marked with a red X signal.



Yellow X

A steady yellow X signal means that you should move out of the lane as soon as safely possible.





Green Arrow

You are permitted to drive in a lane marked with a green arrow signal.



Steady White 2-Way Left Turn Arrows

Two-way left turn arrows mean you may use the lane for a left turn; however, vehicles coming from the other direction may also use the same lane for left-turning.



Steady White Left Turn Arrow

A steady white arrow indicates that you may use the lane for a left turn. (No vehicles coming from the opposite direction may use the same lane for left-turning.)

Traffic Signs

Sign Shapes

The shape of a traffic sign communicates important information about the sign's message. In poor visibility conditions, such as heavy fog, you may be able to make out only the shape of a sign. Part one of DMV's driver licensing knowledge exam consists of a 10-question test on traffic signs. You must answer all ten questions correctly before you can take part two. The traffic sign questions are selected from the following information.

Octagon: Stop

The octagon (eight-sided) shape always means stop. You must come to a complete stop at the sign, stop line, pedestrian crosswalk or curb. Then, yield the right-of-way to any vehicle or pedestrian approaching from either direction.



At some intersections you'll find a plaque beneath the stop sign that says "All Way" or "4 Way." At these intersections all vehicles on all roads leading into the intersection must stop. The driver on the left must yield to the driver on the right.

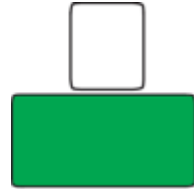
Triangle: Yield

Slow down to a speed reasonable for the conditions and yield the right-of-way. Stop if necessary.



Rectangle: Regulatory or Guide

Vertical signs generally give instructions or tell you the law. Horizontal signs may give directions or information.



Diamond: Warning

These signs warn you of special conditions or hazards ahead. Drive with caution and be ready to slow down. (Pedestrian and bicycle signs may also be displayed in fluorescent yellow-green.)



Pentagon: School Zone and School Crossing

The pentagon (five-sided) shape marks school zones and warns you about school crossings. Signs may display horizontal lines indicating the point at which a crosswalk exists.



Signs may have a separate downward-pointing arrow plaque which indicates the actual location of the crosswalk. (Signs may also be displayed in yellow-gold.)

Crossbuck and Circle: Railroad Crossing

Both of these signs indicate that you are approaching a railroad crossing. Slow down, look and listen for trains.



Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

Regulatory Signs

These signs inform you of the law; therefore, you must obey their instructions. Remember that a red circle with a slash means NO—the symbol inside the circle tells you what is prohibited.



Speed Limit

This indicates the maximum legal speed that you may travel on the road where this sign is posted assuming weather conditions are favorable. During rain, snow and ice, you may receive a ticket for overdriving the conditions even if you are driving at or less than the posted speed limit.



Do Not Enter—Wrong Way

These signs are used often in combination and identify a one-way street, expressway ramp or the wrong direction or wrong side of a divided highway. Do not drive past either of these signs -- turn around.



One Way

Traffic flows only in the direction of the arrow.



No Left Turn

Left turns and U-turns prohibited. In Virginia U-turns are considered as two left turns and are prohibited if this sign is posted.



No Right Turn

Right turns prohibited.



No U-Turn

U-turns prohibited.

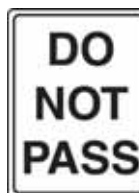
No Turn on Red

You may not turn during the red light. Wait for the signal to turn green.



No Passing

This sign marks the beginning of a no passing zone. You may not pass cars ahead of you in your lane.



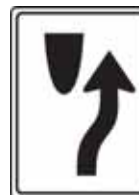
Left Turn Yield on Green

This sign is used in combination with a traffic signal. It emphasizes that traffic turning left on the circular green light does not have the right-of-way and must yield to oncoming traffic.



Keep Right

A traffic island, median or obstruction is ahead. Keep to the side indicated by the arrow.



Lane-Use Control

These signs are used where turning movements are required or where special turning movements are permitted for specific lanes.





High Occupancy Vehicle

Indicates lanes reserved for buses and vehicles with the minimum number of occupants specified on the sign.



Disabled Parking

Parking spaces marked with these signs are reserved for individuals with disabled parking privileges.

Warning Signs

Warning signs alert you to possible hazards ahead. Slow down and watch for other signs or signals that may follow.



Advisory Speed

Indicates the maximum safe speed for an entrance or exit on the expressway.



Signal Ahead

Traffic signals are ahead. Slow down and be ready to stop.



No Passing

This sign marks the beginning of a no passing zone. You may not pass cars ahead of you in your lane.



Merge

Two lanes of traffic are about to become one. Drivers in both lanes are responsible for merging smoothly.

Lane Reduction

The right lane ends soon. Drivers in the right lane must merge left when space opens up. Drivers in the left lane should allow other vehicles to merge smoothly.



Divided Highway Begins

The highway ahead is split into two separate roadways by a median or divider and each roadway is one-way. Keep right.



Divided Highway Ends

The highway ahead becomes a single roadway with traffic going in both directions. Keep right.



Slippery When Wet

When pavement is wet, reduce your speed. Do not brake hard or change direction suddenly. Increase the distance between your car and the one ahead. These actions are needed on all wet roads and especially on roads where this sign is posted.



Low Clearance Sign

The overpass ahead has a low clearance. Do not proceed if your vehicle is taller than the height indicated on the sign.



Hill

A steep grade is ahead. Check your brakes.



Low Ground Railroad Crossing

Steep grade adjoining railroad bed may create a hang-up situation for vehicles with low ground clearance and a long wheel-base.



Deer Crossing

Deer regularly cross the highway in this area. Slow down and be ready to stop.



Section 2: Behind the Wheel...



Pedestrian Crossing

Watch for people crossing your path. Be prepared to slow down and stop. Signs may display horizontal lines indicating the point where a crosswalk exists. Signs may have a separate downward-pointing arrow plaque which indicates the actual location of the crosswalk.



Bicycle Crossing/Bike Path

Bicycles regularly cross or ride beside traffic in this area. Drive with caution. Signs may have a separate downward-pointing arrow plaque which indicates the actual location of bike crossing. (Signs may also be displayed in yellow-gold.)



School Zone—School Crossing

Slow down—the speed limit is usually 25 MPH. Watch out for children crossing the street or playing. Be ready to stop. Obey signals from any crossing guards. Signs may display horizontal lines indicating the point where a crosswalk exists. Signs may have a separate downward-pointing arrow plaque which indicates the actual location of the crosswalk. (Signs may also be displayed in yellow-gold.)



Open Joints

Slow down—open section joints on bridges or ramps could be of sufficient size to cause rider to lose control of motorcycle.



Expansion Joints

Used when a joint across lanes creates a significant bump or is wide enough to cause loss of traction in wet weather.

Crossroad

A four-way intersection is ahead. Watch for cross-traffic. Be ready to yield the right-of-way.



Side Road

A road joins from the right. Be alert for vehicles entering the roadway you are traveling on.



Y Intersection

You must bear either right or left ahead.



T Intersection

The roadway you are traveling on ends ahead. Signal before turning right or left.



Right Curve/Side Road

The road ahead curves right and a side road joins from the left within the curve. Be alert for vehicles entering the roadway you are traveling.



Sharp Right Turn

Be prepared for a sharp turn to the right in the road ahead.



Sharp Right and Left Turns

The road ahead turns sharply right, then left.



Right and Left Curves

The road ahead curves right, then left.





Right Curve (with safe speed indicator)
The road ahead curves right. Slow down to the safe speed indicated.



Winding Road
The road ahead winds with a series of turns or curves.

On all curves, slow down for better control.

Many localities and the Virginia Department of Transportation use electronic message boards mounted above the roadway or on the shoulder of the road to indicate hazardous driving conditions ahead (such as crashes, delays or road construction). Watch for these messages and obey the warning.



Rough Road, Bump, or Uneven Lanes
Used when certain road conditions, such as gravel or milled pavement, affect the roadway surface and create potentially difficult conditions for motorists, especially motorcyclists.

Work Zone Devices

The lives of highway construction workers depend on drivers like you obeying the posted speed limits in work zones. If you are convicted of exceeding the speed limit in a highway work zone, you may be fined up to \$500. Remember, the color orange marks a work zone and means slow down.



Road Construction Ahead/Detour

These signs indicate unusual or potentially dangerous conditions and guide drivers along a different route.



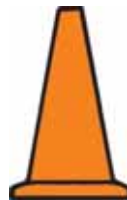
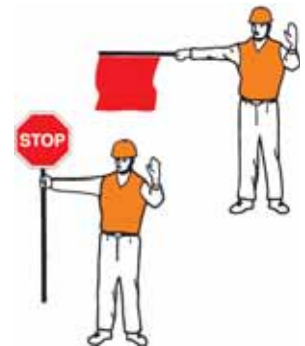
Flashing Arrow Panels

Large flashing arrow panels or flashing message signs in work zones guide drivers into designated traffic lanes and inform them that part of the road ahead is closed.



Flaggers

Flaggers normally wear orange or yellow vests, yellow-green shirts or jackets. They use STOP/SLOW paddles and red flags to direct traffic through the work zone and to let workers or construction vehicles cross the road.



Channelizing Devices

Barricades, vertical panels, concrete barriers, drums and cones are the most common devices used to guide drivers safely through work zones.

When driving near the devices, keep your vehicle in the middle of the lane and obey the posted speed limit. As you leave the work zone, stay in your lane and maintain your speed. Don't change lanes until you are completely clear of the work zone.



Section 2: Behind the Wheel...

Railroad Crossings



Railroad Crossing Sign

Advance warning signs are placed before the crossing. These signs warn you to look, listen, slow down and be prepared to stop.



Railroad Crossbuck

If there is more than one track, the sign below the crossbuck will indicate the number of tracks at the crossing. Slow down and be prepared to stop.

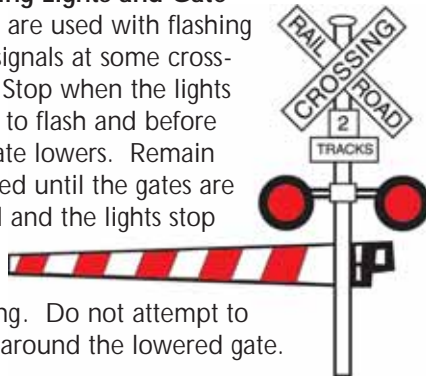


Railroad Crossbuck and Flashing Lights

Flashing lights may be used with crossbuck signs. Always stop when the light begins to flash and be alert for approaching trains. Do not proceed until all trains have passed, the tracks are clear, and the lights are no longer flashing. Be especially alert at multi-track crossings because a second train could be approaching from the opposite direction.

Crossbuck, Flashing Lights and Gate

Gates are used with flashing light signals at some crossings. Stop when the lights begin to flash and before the gate lowers. Remain stopped until the gates are raised and the lights stop



flashing. Do not attempt to drive around the lowered gate.

Pavement markings, consisting of an X and RR, may be painted on the pavement at the approach to some crossings.

When approaching railroad tracks, be alert. Trains may approach the crossing at any time and from either direction. Never start across the tracks unless there is room for your vehicle on the other side. Don't cross the tracks until the vehicle ahead of you is completely off the tracks.

If a dangerous condition exists at a highway rail crossing, call the number listed on the emergency notification sign. This will allow the rail company to stop or reroute approaching rail traffic until the hazard is removed. Be sure to give the DOT crossing number so that the hazard can be identified correctly.

TO REPORT STALLED
VEHICLE ON TRACKS OR
OTHER EMERGENCY
CALL 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX
AND REFER TO
CROSSING #XXX-XXXX
ON STREETNAME RD

If your car stalls on the tracks, don't hesitate. Get out of the car and run diagonally away from the tracks in the direction of the oncoming train.



Message Boards

You may see portable or permanent message boards along the highway. They may provide information about traffic, road, weather or other hazardous conditions. Always obey any directions posted on these message boards. For information about road conditions or road construction, visit the VDOT web site at www.virginiadot.org.

Slow Moving Vehicle

Slow Moving Vehicle

Vehicles which travel at 25 MPH or less—such as farm equipment and horse-drawn vehicles—must display these emblems when using a public highway. Be prepared to adjust your speed or position when you see a vehicle with one of these placards.



Index

Acceptable documents.....	9	Driving under the influence.....	30
Addresses.....	8	Drugs and driving.....	32
Address change.....	13	DUI.....	30
Administrative license suspension (ALS).....	30	Eligibility to obtain a Virginia driver's license.....	13
Aggressive driving	29	Emergency vehicles.....	34
Air bags.....	20	Exchanging your out-of-state license.....	4
Alcohol and you.....	31	Fees.....	11
Applying to register to vote.....	6	First-time drivers.....	1
Avoiding the risks.....	32	Flaggers.....	45
BAC.....	30	Flashing arrow panels.....	45
Backing.....	27	Fog.....	28
Before you get behind the wheel.....	19	Four-way intersection.....	34, 41
Bicyclists.....	23	Getting your first license.....	3
Bioptic telescopic lenses.....	11	Green traffic signals.....	40
Blind spots.....	23, 25	Hand signals.....	29
Blood alcohol content.....	30	Hazardous conditions.....	27
Braking distance.....	33	Headlights.....	28
Broken lines.....	38, 39	High occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes.....	39, 43
Buckle up.....	20	HOV lanes.....	39, 43
Caution.....	40	ID card.....	7
CDL.....	6	Ignition Interlock.....	30
Cell phones.....	3, 30, 49	Identity, proof of.....	8
Changing lanes.....	26	Implied consent laws.....	31
Channelizing devices.....	45	Insurance.....	5, 20
Circular intersections.....	35	International driver's license.....	7
Child safety seats.....	21	Intersections.....	34, 35
Commercial driver's license.....	6	Knowledge exam.....	10
Construction and maintenance devices.....	45	Lane use signals.....	40
Crashes.....	37	Learner's permit.....	2, 3, 8
Crossbuck and circle.....	41, 46	Left turn on red.....	40
Curfew restrictions.....	3	Legal presence.....	9
Diamond.....	41	License address.....	8
Disabled parking privileges.....	16	Licensing ceremony.....	3
Double lines.....	38	Lights.....	28
Drinking and driving.....	30	Maintaining a space cushion.....	25
Driver education requirements.....	2	Message boards.....	46
Driver's license.....	7		
Driver's license replacement.....	13		
Driver's license expiration.....	12		
Driver's license suspension or revocation.....	17		
Drivers with disabilities.....	3, 15		
Driving records.....	14		

Index

Military, diplomatic and civilian/employee contractor extensions.....	13	Scanning.....	5
Military personnel.....	4	School buses.....	35
Mirrors.....	23	School bus endorsement.....	6
Mopeds.....	23	Selective service registration.....	3
Motorcycle driver's license.....	6	Services for drivers with disabilities.....	15
Motorcycle learner's permit.....	6	Sharing the road.....	23
Name change.....	13, 14	Sign shapes.....	41
New residents.....	4, 5	Slow moving vehicle.....	46
Night driving.....	27	Snow.....	28
No-Zones.....	25	Social security number, proof of.....	8
Non-residents.....	4	Solid lines.....	38, 39
Octagon.....	41	Space cushion.....	25
Open container.....	30	Special restrictions.....	3
Organ/tissue donation.....	5	Speed limits.....	32
Out-of-state students.....	4	Stopping.....	33
Painted curbs.....	39	Stop signs.....	41
Parental consent.....	1, 3	Sun shading.....	20
Parking.....	36	Test questions.....	10
Passenger restrictions.....	3	Three-lane roads.....	39
Passing.....	26	Traffic crashes.....	37
Pavement markings.....	37	Traffic signals.....	40
Pedestrians.....	23	Traffic signs.....	41
Pentagon.....	41	Trailers.....	25
Photo ID card.....	7	Trucks.....	25
Proof of identity.....	8	Tips for traveling with children.....	21
Proof of legal presence.....	9	Triangle.....	41
Proof of name change.....	14	Turn signals.....	29
Proof of residency.....	9	Turns on red.....	40, 42
Proof of social security number.....	8	Two-lane roads.....	38
Radar detectors.....	32	Three-second rule.....	22
Railroad crossings.....	41, 46	Types of driver's licenses.....	6
Rain.....	28	U-turns.....	36
Reaction distance.....	33	Unattended vehicles.....	37
Recreational vehicles.....	25	Uninsured motor vehicle fee.....	19
Rectangle.....	41	Vehicle impoundment.....	31
Red traffic signals.....	40	Visibility.....	22, 27
Regulatory signs.....	42, 43	Vision screening.....	11
Residency, proof of.....	9	Warning signs.....	43, 45
Revocation & suspension.....	17	White lines.....	38
Right-of-way.....	34	Window tinting.....	20
Right turn on red.....	40	Work zones.....	45
Road skills test.....	10	Yellow lines.....	38, 39
Roundabouts.....	35	Yellow traffic signals.....	40
Safety belts.....	20	Yield.....	34, 35, 41
Safety inspection.....	5	Yield line.....	38
		Zero tolerance.....	31

Virginia Traffic Laws at a Glance

- ▶ Virginia license plates must be displayed on the vehicle so that all wording, numbers and decals are upright, visible and readable. The license plate holder or frame cannot obscure the license plate number, name or issuing state or expiration decals.
- ▶ You must use your headlights during inclement weather, or whenever you use your windshield wipers.
- ▶ You must signal before you change lanes, make a turn or pull in front of another vehicle.
- ▶ Radar detectors and radar jamming devices are illegal in Virginia. Mobile infrared transmitters that change traffic lights are also illegal.
- ▶ Virginia law prohibits the use of hand-held or hands-free cell phones or other wireless devices while operating a school bus. The only exceptions are in an emergency situation or when the vehicle is lawfully parked and for the purposes of dispatching. School bus drivers may use two-way radio devices authorized by the owner of the school bus.
- ▶ It is unlawful to operate a motor vehicle, moped or bicycle on Virginia roadways while using earphones or headphones in both ears.
- ▶ No moped shall be driven on any highway by any person under the age of 16. For persons 16 years or older, no moped shall be driven on any highway faster than 35 miles per hour.
- ▶ Bicycles are considered vehicles and have the same rights-of-way as motor vehicles; bicycles must also yield the same rights-of-way as motor vehicles.
- ▶ If you change your address, you must notify DMV of your new address within 30 days.
- ▶ All children under age eight must be properly secured in an approved child safety seat or booster seat.
- ▶ All children age six through 15 must be properly secured in an approved child safety seat, booster seat or safety belt no matter where the child is seated in the vehicle. It is unlawful for persons under age 16 to travel in the bed of a pick-up truck.
- ▶ The driver and front-seat passenger must wear safety belts.
- ▶ If traffic lights are not working at an intersection, the driver on the left must yield to the driver on the right.
- ▶ Do not cut through, join, or interfere with a funeral procession. You must yield the right-of-way to the procession.
- ▶ Pull to the curb and yield the right-of-way to all approaching emergency vehicles. When approaching a stopped emergency vehicle, you must change lanes or proceed with caution.
- ▶ Never drink or use drugs and drive.
- ▶ Failure to pay any motor vehicle-related or other court fine and other fees can result in suspension of your driver's license.
- ▶ Failure to pay the local vehicle license fee or personal property tax will prohibit you from renewing your vehicle registration(s).
- ▶ Virginia's DUI laws apply to the operation of mopeds on public highways.
- ▶ It's unlawful to watch television, a motion picture or similar video display while driving. Television monitors must not be placed within the driver's view.
- ▶ Metal mesh utility trailers that do not require state inspections must have two or more reflectors or 100 square inches of reflective tape on the rear of the trailer. Reflectors or tape must outline the rear end of the trailer.
- ▶ Drive away without paying for gas and you could lose your driver's license and receive a fine of up to \$250.
- ▶ In Virginia, while you maintain a Virginia registration of a vehicle, you must have insurance for that vehicle—even if it cannot be operated. If you cancel the insurance on a vehicle, the license plates must be returned to DMV immediately.

If you are stopped by a police officer...

- ▶ Pull off to the right side of the roadway. Position your vehicle as far away from traffic as possible.
- ▶ Turn on your flashers.
- ▶ Turn off your engine, radio and any other device that could hinder communication with the officer.
- ▶ Roll down your window so that you can communicate with the officer.
- ▶ Remain calm.
- ▶ Keep your safety belt fastened and ask your passengers to keep their belts fastened.
- ▶ Stay in your vehicle. Do not get out unless the officer asks you to.
- ▶ Keep your hands in plain view, preferably on the steering wheel. Ask your passengers to keep their hands in plain view also.
- ▶ Do not make any movement that will make the officer think you are hiding or reaching for something.
- ▶ Carry proper identification: a valid driver's license, proof of vehicle registration and proof of insurance. If the officer asks for these documents, tell him or her where they are and reach for them slowly, keeping one hand on the steering wheel.
- ▶ If the officer is driving an unmarked car or is not in uniform, ask to see his or her identification.
- ▶ Answer the officer's questions fully and clearly. If you don't understand something, ask the officer questions calmly and politely.
- ▶ If the officer issues you a citation, do not argue with the officer about the citation. You will have your chance to make your case when you go to court.
- ▶ You will be asked to sign the citation. This is not an admission of guilt. Refusal to sign the citation, however, may result in your arrest. Or, you may be required to go to the station to post collateral and pay for the offense.

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This manual is an informational tool. It does not supercede the Code of Virginia, Virginia Administrative Code or any other statute. To view Virginia's motor vehicle laws, refer to the Virginia Code, Title 46.2.

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