The Heaviest Machinery: Virginia Alcohol, Drugs & Driving Laws

The complete visual study guide for the Virginia Knowledge Test. Exact numbers. No jargon.

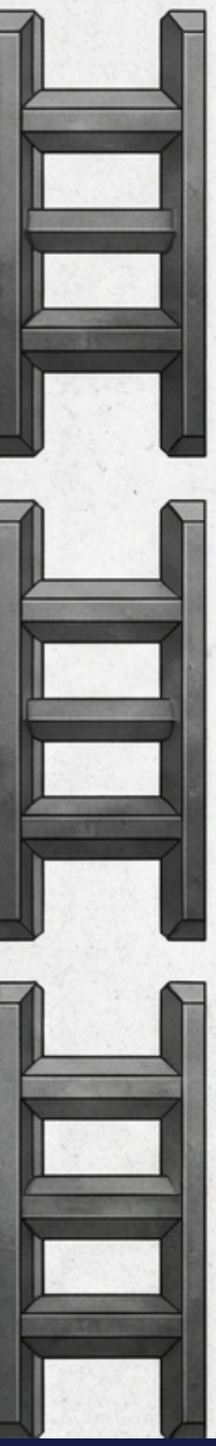
Virginia’s rules are a ladder.

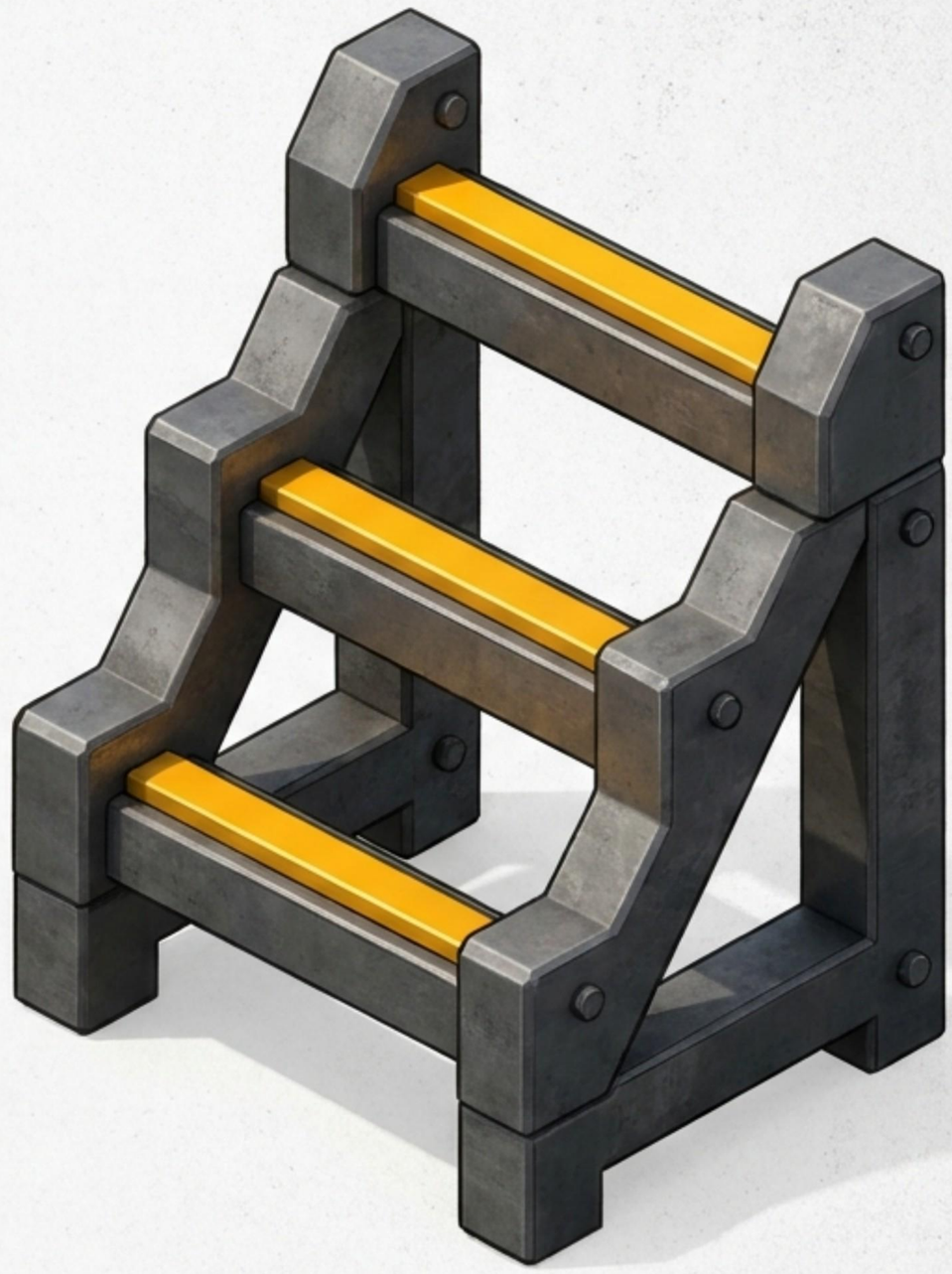
Alcohol is the single greatest common factor in fatal crashes.

Virginia doesn’t use generic warnings. It uses exact numbers: two BAC limits by age, and suspensions before trial.

Mandatory minimums that judges cannot waive.

Your goal for the test: Memorize the rungs.





21 & OVER

0.08

The per se limit. At this Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) or higher, you are legally driving under the influence, regardless of how you feel.

UNDER 21

0.02

The illegal-consumption law (§ 18.2-266.1). An absolute zero tolerance rule for any driver under 21.

TEST TRAPS: WHAT LEGAL ACTUALLY MEANS

1



I feel fine.

Impairment starts with the first drink. Judgment is the first ability alcohol takes. There is no safe BAC below the legal line—only a legal one.

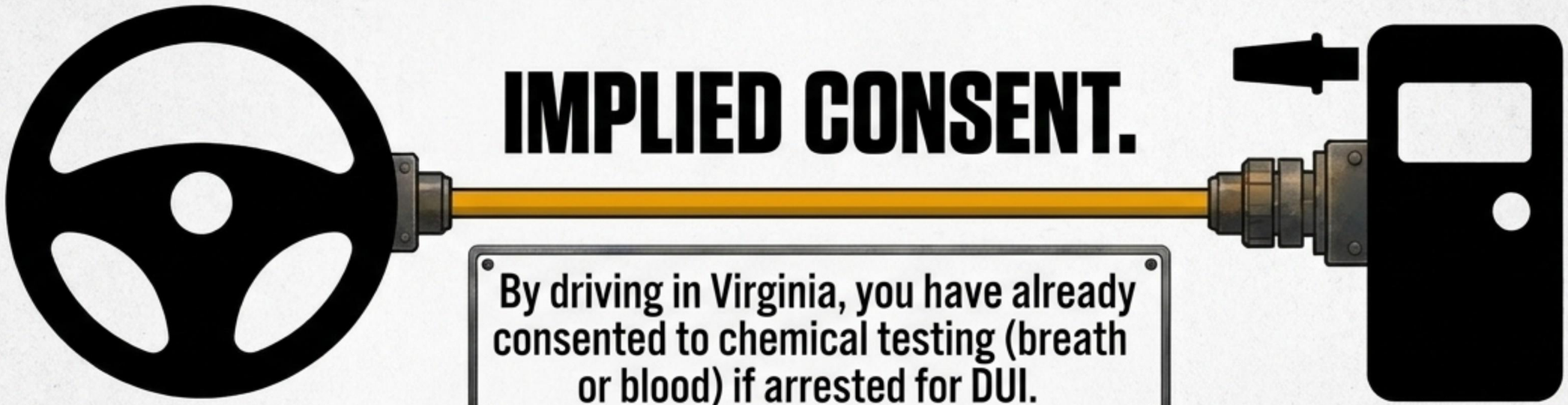
2



It’s a prescription.

Marijuana and impairing drugs lead to DUI charges just like alcohol. A prescription is no defense if the medication impairs your driving.

THE AGREEMENT YOU ALREADY SIGNED.



IMPLIED CONSENT.

By driving in Virginia, you have already consented to chemical testing (breath or blood) if arrested for DUI.

Refusing the test is a separate charge.
Refusing never makes the DUI problem go away.

THE SUSPENSION THAT COMES FIRST.

Administrative License Suspension (ALS) happens on the spot.
Before any conviction. On the arrest alone.



7 DAYS	60 DAYS	UNTIL TRIAL
1st refusal or DUI	2nd in 10 years	3rd offense

SEVEN, SIXTY, TILL TRIAL — THE SUSPENSION LADDER STARTS AT THE ARREST, NOT THE VERDICT.

CLIMBING THE PENALTY LADDER: FIRST OFFENSE
(Class 1 Misdemeanor)

Program: Mandatory VASAP
(Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program)

License: 1-year revocation

Fine: $250 mandatory minimum

Mandatory minimums a judge cannot waive.

(Up to $2,500 and 12 months jail possible)

THE HEAVY MACHINERY: SECOND & THIRD OFFENSES

SECOND IN 10 YEARS

$500 minimum fine

10 days mandatory jail
(20 days if within 5 years)

3-year license revocation

THIRD IN 10 YEARS (FELONY)

$1,000 minimum fine

90 days mandatory jail
(6 months if within 5 years)

Indefinite license revocation

MANDATORY ADD-ONS: THE ENHANCERS

ELEVATED BAC ON 1ST OFFENSE

.15–.20 → +5 days mandatory jail

above .20 → +10 days mandatory jail

THE CHILD PASSENGER

17 or younger → +5 days mandatory jail AND +$500–$1,000 additional fine

RESTRICTED LICENSES & THE INTERLOCK LOOPHOLE (THAT DOESN'T EXIST)

A restricted license always comes with conditions: VASAP completion and an ignition interlock.



For a 1st offense, the interlock stays for 12 months.
It must be installed on EVERY vehicle the driver owns or operates.

BORROWING A FRIEND'S CAR WITHOUT AN INTERLOCK JUST FOR ONE ERRAND IS NOT A LOOPHOLE. IT IS A VIOLATION.

TWO FAST TRACKS TO LOSING YOUR VEHICLE.

DRIVING SUSPENDED FOR DUI



DRIVING WHILE SUSPENDED FOR DUI TRIGGERS IMMEDIATE 30-DAY VEHICLE IMPOUNDMENT.

ON CONVICTION, THE COURT MAY ADD 90 MORE DAYS.

OPEN CONTAINERS



AN OPEN CONTAINER OF ALCOHOL NEVER BELONGS IN THE PASSENGER AREA.

THE ONLY LAWFUL PLACE IS THE TRUNK OR A LOCKED COMPARTMENT OUTSIDE THE PASSENGER AREA.

UNDER 21: LICENSE CONSEQUENCES WITHOUT DRIVING.

Possession or Fake ID (§ 4.1-305) Class 1 Misdemeanor	Minimum fine of $500 or 50 hours community service **PLUS license suspended 6 months to 1 year**
Driving at .02+ (§ 18.2-266.1)	Same $500-or-50-hours minimum **PLUS license forfeited for 1 full year.**

POSSESSION OR A FAKE ID: SIX MONTHS TO A YEAR.
DRIVING AT .02: A FULL YEAR, GONE.

THE EXAM TESTS NUMBERS. THE ROAD TESTS THE PLAN.

Every heavy penalty in this guide proves one thing: the planning must happen before the drinking.

Alcohol is a depressant that takes judgment first.

The person least able to judge whether they are okay to drive is the person who has already been drinking.

DESIGNATE A DRIVER, USE RIDESHARE, OR STAY PUT.

FINAL CHECK: ARE YOU READY?

1 What is implied consent, and what happens to your license if you simply refuse the test on a first arrest?

2 A first offender blows .17. What mandatory jail time does the elevated BAC add?

3 How long does the ignition interlock last on a first offense, and which cars does it apply to?

ANSWER KEY & DATA LOG

ANSWERS

1. Consent to breath/blood test if arrested. Refusal = 7-day administrative suspension immediately.

2. At .15–.20, an additional mandatory 5 days in jail.

3. 12 months, on every vehicle the driver owns or operates.

THE DATA LOG

- **BAC Limits:** 0.08 (21+) / 0.02 (Under 21)
- **ALS:** 7 days (1st) / 60 days (2nd) / Till Trial (3rd)
- **1st DUI:** $250 min, 1-yr loss, VASAP
- **Child in car:** +5 days, +$500–$1k fine
- **Fake ID:** 6 mo – 1 yr loss
- **Under-21 at 0.02:** 1 yr loss

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Virginia Alcohol, Drugs & Driving Conditions study guide, practice tests & flashcards:

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