



Driving in Virginia – DID YOU KNOW?

Please note that each individual US State has its own driving laws and they may differ from Virginia.

1. Did you know that if you are stopped by law enforcement you should switch off your engine and remain in your vehicle. Roll/wind down your window and keep your hands visible on the steering wheel. Only when asked to produce your vehicle registration and driving license should you move slowly to retrieve them from your glove box/wallet/purse. Be Polite!
2. Did you know that if you are involved in an accident, you should, with due consideration to matters of safety, remain with your vehicle until law enforcement/ambulance arrives. Have your vehicle registration, driver's license and proof of insurance available.
3. Did you know that in a school zone where there is a flashing speed limit sign, you must adhere to the speed limit indicated on that sign.
4. Did you know that you are required to stop for a school bus with flashing red lights (most have an extended arm that reads STOP). You must remain stopped until all the children are safely off the bus, the flashing lights are turned off, the arm retracted and it starts moving away. Please refer to the Virginia Driver's Manual, which contains additional information and diagrams regarding the requirements and exceptions for school bus safety.
5. Did you know that the High Occupancy Vehicle lane (HOV) lanes are designated lanes available to vehicles which have a minimum number of occupants, as noted on the signs, and hybrid vehicles with clean special fuel license plates. These vehicles may travel in the HOV lanes during designated peak commuting times. Since vehicle occupancy is restricted in the HOV lanes, traffic moves faster than in the regular traffic lanes. The HOV lanes are sometimes a walled highway with minimum exits and sometimes a designated lane on the highway. You must obey the indicated occupancy number and designated times of use.
6. Did you know that you must use your headlights whenever you are using the windscreen/shield wipers.
7. Did you know that you may turn RIGHT at a RED traffic light unless there are signs that indicate otherwise, provided that you come to a full and complete stop. Please remember that driving laws vary from state to state and some states do not allow a right turn at a red traffic light.
8. Did you know that if an emergency vehicle is approaching with its lights on, you must *safely pull over to the right edge of the road and stop until the emergency vehicle has passed* (excerpted from Virginia Driver's Manual, Section 3, Safe Driving, page 15). Did you also know that if a police car has pulled over a vehicle or there is a vehicle that is stationary with lights flashing/blinking, you must immediately (if safe and possible due to traffic conditions) move over to another lane or if there is no lane, slow down and move over to a safe distance.
9. You must obey the speed limits at all times posted on all highways including speed limits within residential neighborhoods.



10. Did you know that in Virginia, drivers 18 years of age or older are legally permitted to converse on their mobile telephones while driving without using a hands-free device. Virginia law prohibits drivers under the age of 18 from using their mobile telephones while driving for any purpose—even when using a hands-free device. Under Virginia law, it is unlawful to draft, read or send email or text messages (SMS) from mobile communication devices while driving. Please remember that laws vary from state to state. For example, the District of Columbia and Maryland prohibit handheld cell phone use while driving. In addition, *[v]ehicle operators on a DoD Installation ... shall not use cell phones unless the vehicle is safely parked or unless they are using a hands-free device.*
11. Did you know that the US flag is raised and the US national anthem played every morning at 0800 and every evening at dusk on military installations (known as “colors”), including the Naval Support Activity base where HQ SACT is located. As a sign of respect to the host nation, the United States, if you are driving or walking on base and hear the bugle or national anthem, please bring the vehicle to a complete stop and if you are walking please face the music and stand still (saluting if you are in uniform) until you hear the music stop and the bugle blown
12. Did you know that if you are pulled over by law enforcement, there are certain documents that you will be asked to produce. A police officer will ask you to provide proof of vehicle registration (white card/paper issued by Virginia DMV) and insurance (insurance card or binder issued by your insurance company). In addition to the state inspection sticker on your windshield/screen, you are also required to carry the state inspection certificate in your vehicle.

****DO NOT** keep the Certificate of Title in your vehicle. Keep it at home somewhere safe.

Please refer to the DMV Virginia Driver's Manual for additional information [Virginia Driver's Manual:](http://www.dmv.state.va.us/drivers/#manual.asp)
<http://www.dmv.state.va.us/drivers/#manual.asp>

You may also wish to consult the *Arrivals and Staff Guide for NATO Personnel:*
<http://www.act.nato.int/arrivals-and-staff-guide>

Legal Assistance Section detailed information sheets:
<http://legal.collab.act.nato.int/SitePages/Legal%20Assistance.aspx>

Office of the Legal Advisor, Legal Assistance Section
(757) 747 3228/3640

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DRIVE SAFELY AND OBEY THE LAW!

This information sheet is a non-exclusive list of helpful tips intended to supplement but not replace the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) drivers manual.