

Virginia Permit Test Cheat Sheet

40 rules people miss most

Every rule and number below comes from the official Virginia Driver's Manual (April 2026 edition). Print it, read it twice, then take a practice test.

THE VIRGINIA KNOWLEDGE EXAM

10 road-sign questions
all 10 must be correct

THEN

30 general-knowledge questions
24 correct to pass (80%)

You can't start part two until every sign question is right.

Road signs: shapes & colors

- 1 **Octagon** (8 sides) **always** means STOP.
- 2 **Downward triangle** = YIELD: slow down and be ready to stop.
- 3 **Pentagon** (5 sides) = school zone or school crossing.
- 4 **Pennant** on the left side of the road = start of a no-passing zone.
- 5 **Round yellow sign with X and RR** = railroad ahead. A white X (crossbuck) marks the crossing itself.
- 6 **Orange** = work zone · **pink** = incident area · **brown** = historical · **blue** = services · **green** = destinations.
- 7 **Orange triangle with red border** = slow-moving vehicle going **25 mph or less**.

Right-of-way

- 8 First to arrive goes first. Arrive at the same time? The driver on the **left yields to the right**.
- 9 Merging onto an interstate: traffic **already on the highway** has the right-of-way.
- 10 Leaving a driveway or private road: **stop** and yield to all traffic and pedestrians.
- 11 Roundabouts: yield to traffic already in the circle, then travel **counterclockwise**.
- 12 "Left Turn Yield on Green": a green light does **not** give you the right-of-way over oncoming traffic.

Speed limits (when no sign is posted)

- 13 School, business, and residential areas: **25 mph**.
- 14 Unpaved roads: **35 mph**.
- 15 All other roads: **55 mph**.
- 16 **20+ mph over the limit, or over 85 mph**, can be charged as reckless driving.
- 17 Radar detectors are **illegal** in Virginia.

How to use this sheet: read it twice, then take a free [practice test](#). When you score well, try the [exam simulator](#) (10 signs + 30 general questions, like the real test).

Following distance

- 18 Dry pavement: **2 sec** under 35 mph • **3 sec** at 35–45 mph • **4 sec** at 46–70 mph.
- 19 Behind a motorcycle: add **1 extra second**, and double the distance in bad weather.
- 20 Wet pavement can **double** your braking distance.
- 21 Low beams within **500 ft** of an oncoming vehicle and within **200 ft** of a vehicle you're following.

Parking distances

- 22 Not within **15 ft** of a fire hydrant.
- 23 Not within **20 ft** of an intersection.
- 24 Not within **50 ft** of a railroad crossing.
- 25 Not within **15 ft** of a fire, ambulance, or rescue station entrance, or **500 ft** of fire trucks answering an alarm.
- 26 Parked at a curb: no more than **1 ft** from it.
- 27 Downhill with a curb: wheels **toward** the curb. Uphill with a curb: wheels **left**. No curb: wheels **right**.

Alcohol, BAC & implied consent

- 28 Age 21+: DUI at **.08% BAC** or higher, or at a lower BAC if your driving is impaired.
- 29 Under 21, BAC **.02% to under .08%**: **1-year** suspension + **\$500** min. fine or **50+ hrs** community service.
- 30 Implied consent: driving on Virginia public roads means you agree to a **breath test** when an officer asks.
- 31 Refuse the test, or **.08%+** with a DUI charge: automatic **7-day** suspension on a first offense.
- 32 One drink = **12 oz** beer = **5 oz** wine = one shot of liquor. Only **time** sobers you up.

Teen & new-driver rules

- 33 On a permit, a licensed driver **21+** sits in the front seat (**18–20** is OK if they are your guardian or sibling).
- 34 Fail the knowledge exam under 18? Wait a full **15 days** (fail Jan 1 → earliest retest Jan 17).
- 35 Under 18, demerit/belt conviction: clinic in **90 days** • 2nd: **90-day** suspension • 3rd: revoked **1 yr** or until 18.
- 36 No holding a phone while driving. Navigation is OK only if you are not holding it or typing.

School buses & emergency vehicles

- 37 School bus stopped, red lights flashing: **stop from either direction**, unless a median/barrier divides the road.
- 38 Also stop for a school bus that is loading or unloading, even if its lights are **not** on.
- 39 Emergency vehicle behind you, or oncoming on an undivided road: pull to the **right edge and stop**.
- 40 Never follow an emergency vehicle with flashing lights closer than **500 ft**.

2027 DRIVER'S ED RULE

Starting **January 1, 2027**, a first license at age **18, 19, or 20** requires a learner's permit held at least **90 days** and a state-approved driver education course. At **21+**, it's a **60-day** permit hold or driver education. Rules for drivers under 18 do not change.

Check your situation: vadrivetest.com/do-i-need-drivers-ed-virginia

Sources: Virginia Driver's Manual (April 2026), Sections 1–6. 2027 rule: Virginia DMV, "Revised Learner's Permit Holding Period and Driver Education Requirements – FAQs."