

Driver Improvement Clinics

When you satisfactorily complete a driver improvement clinic, you'll learn defensive driving techniques that can help you avoid and prevent crashes. These eight-hour classroom sessions cost no more than \$75 and are offered at sites around the state and as a computer-based course on the Internet. Contact the court to be sure it will accept a computer-based course.

If DMV requires you to attend a clinic, you must complete the entire eight-hour course.

If you fail to satisfactorily complete the clinic within 90 days, your driving privilege will be suspended until you meet this requirement. If you are attending college outside of Virginia or you are a member of the military or a military dependent and stationed outside of Virginia, you may be eligible for an extension of the 90-day requirement. The extension will be granted only if you are in an area where no approved clinics are offered. The extension will last until a break in your schedule.

If you are age 18 or older, you may be awarded five safe driving points after you successfully complete a driver improvement clinic. If a court requires you to complete a clinic, the court will determine if you will be awarded safe driving points.

Commercial Drivers

If you hold a commercial driver's license (CDL) or committed an offense while operating a commercial motor vehicle, and you are required to attend a driver improvement clinic, you must satisfactorily complete a driver improvement clinic designed specifically for commercial drivers.

Insurance Discounts

Insurance companies may offer premium discounts to policyholders 55 years and older who complete a classroom or online crash prevention course for mature drivers. Check with your agent to see if your insurance company offers this benefit.

If you take a driver improvement clinic to reduce your insurance premium, you will not be eligible to receive safe driving points. If a court assigns you to complete a clinic, you will not be eligible to receive the insurance premium reduction.

Clinic Locations

To find the location of the nearest driver improvement clinic in your area, check DMV's website at www.dmvNOW.com, or check the yellow pages of your local telephone directory. For more information, call toll free 1-866-DMV-LINE (368-5463) or 1-800-435-5137.

Drivers on Probation

If you are convicted of a demerit point offense that was committed while you were on probation, your driving privilege will be suspended. The suspension period depends on the number of demerit points assigned for the violation.

3 point violation = 45 day suspension
4 point violation = 60 day suspension
6 point violation = 90 day suspension

Once you complete the suspension period, you will be placed on probation for another six months.

If you are convicted of a demerit point offense that occurred while you were on probation for the first time, you may request that DMV grant you restricted driving privileges. If you violate a second or subsequent probation, DMV will grant you restricted privileges only if the probationary period during which the violation occurred was immediately preceded by a control period (an 18-month time period during which your driving record is monitored).

Restricted driving privileges granted by DMV allow you to drive only

- ▶ to and from your place of employment,
- ▶ during employment hours only if driving is a required part of your job,
- ▶ to and from school if you are a student,
- ▶ for medical treatment, including necessary transportation of an elderly parent,
- ▶ to transport your minor child to and from school, day care or for medical treatment,
- ▶ to and from a court-ordered visitation with your child,
- ▶ to and from court appearances when subpoenaed as a witness or a party,
- ▶ to and from appointments with a probation officer, or
- ▶ to and from any programs required by the court or as a condition of probation.

Restricted driving privileges are not available to operate a commercial motor vehicle.

Drivers Under Control Period

If you receive demerit points for a violation during the 18-month control period, you will be placed on six months probation. Once you successfully complete the control period, you will exit the Driver Improvement Program.

Be sure to read *Moving Violations and Point Assessments* (DMV 115) for more information about the Driver Improvement Program.


www.dmvNow.com
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*"The odds are
one out of four..."*



**A Different Kind of
Crash Course**

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles



**In Virginia
a vehicle crash
occurs every
four minutes.**

The Odds are One Out of Four

The odds are one out of four that you will be involved in a crash during your lifetime. To reduce these odds, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles has created a different kind of crash course. Our Driver Improvement Program rewards safe drivers and warns potentially unsafe drivers in advance. It helps educate drivers who have developed risky driving practices and it takes dangerous drivers off the road. Here's how it works.

What does the point system say about you?

DMV uses a point system to rate drivers. You receive demerit points for unsafe driving. Safe driving points are awarded for good driving.

Demerit Points

Demerit points are assigned when you commit a traffic violation and will remain valid for two years from the date you commit the offense. Different violations carry different demerit point values, depending on the seriousness of the offense.

Safe Driving Points

Safe driving points are assigned for each full calendar year that you hold a valid Virginia driver's license and drive without any violations or suspensions. In some cases, you may also earn safe driving points by completing a driver improvement clinic. You can accumulate a total of five safe driving points. These points are used to offset demerit points for convictions with the chronologically earliest offense date.

Demerit Points Can Add Up

Each time you are convicted of a traffic offense, DMV adds additional demerit points to your record. This can add up to big trouble for some drivers.

Drivers under age 18

If you are convicted of a demerit-point traffic violation (or a safety belt or child-restraint violation) committed when you were under age 18, you will be required to satisfactorily complete a driver improvement 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 (or a safety belt or child-restraint) conviction for a violation committed when you were under age 18, DMV will suspend your permit or license for 90 days. If you are under 19 and have no other means of transportation, you may petition the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court in your jurisdiction for restricted driving privileges to drive between home, work, and/or an institution of higher learning.

After a third demerit-point (or a safety belt or child-restraint) conviction for a violation committed when you were under age 18, DMV will revoke your permit or license for one year or until you reach age 18, whichever is longer.

You will be required to attend a driver improvement clinic for safety belt and child restraint violations as well as demerit point convictions.

You will receive five safe driving points if you voluntarily complete a driver improvement clinic. Safe driving points will not be awarded if clinic attendance was required by DMV or a court.

A computer-based driver improvement clinic will not satisfy a driver improvement clinic requirement. You must satisfactorily complete a clinic that provides classroom instruction.

Drivers age 18 and older

If you are convicted of a demerit-point violation (or a safety belt or child-restraint violation) committed when you were age 18 or 19, you will be required to complete a driver improvement clinic.

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.

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

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 period.

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

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