

DRINKING AND DRIVING – DRIVER THEORY TEST QUESTIONS

SUPPLEMENTARY PDF OF NEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR THE MODULE; ALCOHOL & DRIVING

Introduction

This new section of the Driver Theory Test has been introduced in response to recent evidence about drinking and driving, the pre-crash report, [Fatal Collisions 2008-2012: Alcohol as a Factor](#) (also referred to as the pre-crash Report) shows that all too often death and injury result from this behaviour on our roads. One myth is that drink driving is a thing of the past, but unfortunately, the facts show that the opposite is the case. The new questions in the section are taken from the pre-crash Report and from information available in the Rules of the Road.

The Road Safety Authority is taking further steps to raise awareness of this killer behaviour. One of a number of initiatives we are taking is reorganising the Driver Theory Test to ensure that you, as a new driver, know and understand;

- What drink driving is,
- How drink driving can affect you, and
- Some of the consequences of drink driving if you ever decide to take the risk.

The reorganised theory test will include a new mandatory section on drink driving. This means that every candidate sitting the theory test for either a car (BW) theory test or motorcycle (AM) theory test, will have to answer at least two questions on drink driving.

By reading this document and visiting the Drink Driving Campaign, section of our website www.rsa.ie you can inform yourself about the dangers of drink driving. After you have read the information, you should discuss it with your driving instructor as you continue to learn to drive. You should also discuss the potential consequences of drink driving with friends and family members to gain other views on this killer behaviour.

Drivers do not set out to deliberately kill their friends, family members or other road users, but this is what happens when drivers make the decision to drink and drive. Our hope is that you will earn your full driving licence, develop a responsible attitude towards yourself and other road users, have a lifetime of enjoyable, crash-free driving and never drink and drive.

Road Safety Authority

Effects of Drinking and Driving

Before starting on the questions, read the information here to get some background on the problem of drink driving. It is important for you and other drivers to understand how drinking can affect driving. For example, drinking can make you tired and affect your concentration, reducing your ability to drive safely. If you drink, you need to be aware of how long it takes alcohol to leave your body. Many people underestimate the length of time alcohol stays in their system and, as a result, their driving may be affected or they may still be over the legal limit (perhaps even the next day).

As a rule, you should allow at least one hour for each unit of alcohol (for example, a half pint of beer) to leave your body. However, it may take longer than that, as other factors – such as body size or how recently you’ve eaten – can also have an effect. So, the best advice is never drink and drive. Do not assume that if you have stopped drinking a few hours ago, it is safe to drive – usually it is not!

Drivers who drink and drive are a lethal hazard on the road to themselves and other road users. Alcohol affects the decisions drivers make, fooling them into thinking they are okay to drive. In making that decision, they do not think about the consequences of their actions. That decision to drive could change their life and the lives of others forever.

The following slogans get this message across:

- ❖ **Stay alive, don’t drink and drive.**
- ❖ **The problem with drinking and driving is ... the mourning after!**
- ❖ **Friends don’t let friends drink and drive.**
- ❖ **Sober driving today. Alive tomorrow.**
- ❖ **Drinking and driving is a gamble that you just can’t win**

Aside from the catastrophic consequences for anyone involved in a serious collision, there are other effects that may not be fully understood until they become a problem later.

A drink driving conviction may prevent you entering or working in another country, as some countries have strict immigration laws. Immigration officials often get visa applicants to self-declare that they have not been convicted of a drink driving offence before they check for themselves. A non-declaration of a drink driving conviction, that is, not being truthful about having a conviction, can itself, result in a ban on you entering other countries.

The same applies to convictions for drugs offences. One lapse in judgment can have lifelong consequences for you. You will not forget the incident if it has lifelong consequences for you.

Drink driving or driving after taking certain drugs are criminal offences that are notifiable under Garda vetting requirements. Garda vetting is a common part of the recruitment process for many jobs, including teaching and professional driving.

Remember: A conviction will remain on your record for a minimum of seven years. A single moment's lapse in judgment can have consequences that last a lifetime.

The Road Safety Authority (RSA) has put together the following list of 10 common driving errors resulting from alcohol intake:

1. Drivers' peripheral vision (side vision) is affected, making it difficult to see signs and other road users and lengthening reaction time to hazards.
2. Drivers react to alcohol consumption by driving too fast or too slow.
3. Drivers drive in the wrong lane.
4. Drivers lose control and run over the kerb.
5. Drivers weave in and out of traffic lanes.
6. Smooth control is reduced or lost altogether, so that drivers make quick or jerky movements.
7. Drivers forget to signal or use headlights.
8. Drivers' vehicles might straddle lanes.
9. Drivers fail to stop when they need to – for example – at stop signs or red lights.
10. Drivers overtake in a dangerous manner.

All of these driving errors place you, your passengers and other road users at risk.

Never ever drink and drive. Any amount of alcohol or drugs will impair your driving.

Questions for new Module: Alcohol & Driving

1. According to the pre-crash Report which gender was more likely to drink and drive and be involved in a fatal collision?

Answer: Males

RSA00037A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that more male than female drivers drink and drive and are involved in a fatal collision in Ireland. This means you need to be careful who you accept a lift from – can you be certain that your friend has not been drinking before they met up with you? Be sensible and say no to a lift if you suspect your friend has been drinking and plans to drive. If in doubt, make other arrangements for getting home.

2. According to the pre-crash Report what type of vehicle were the majority of people driving when they had consumed alcohol and caused a fatal collision?

Answer: Private car

RSA00038A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that more private car drivers take alcohol than drivers of any other type of vehicle before being involved in a crash. This means that if you arrange a lift home in a car, after socialising where drink was available, you are more likely to have a driver who has taken alcohol. That means you cannot take your safety for granted. Do what you can to protect yourself and other friends – including the driver.

3. According to the pre-crash Report what type of fatal collision was a person more likely to be involved in when drink driving?

Answer: Single-vehicle collision

RSA00039A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that the most common type of crash where alcohol is a factor is a single vehicle collision.

4. According to the pre-crash Report which days of the week were people more likely to drink and drive and cause a fatal collision?

Answer: Saturday and Sunday

RSA00040A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that more alcohol related collisions occur on Saturday and Sunday compared to other days of the week.

5. According to pre-crash Report how did the use of alcohol affect a person's decision to use a seatbelt?

Answer: Drivers and passengers were less likely to wear a seatbelt.

RSA00041A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that fewer drivers and passengers wore a seatbelt, in a car, after being drinking compared to drivers and passengers who had not been drinking. The evidence is that alcohol affects your judgment. This, combined with the fact that a driver is more likely to be distracted in this state, means a dangerous situation can develop quickly.

6. What is the minimum blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level at which a learner or a novice driver is committing an offence?

Answer: 20mg

RSA00042A

Rationale: The law sets different drink driving limits according to various categories of driver, with Blood Alcohol Concentration levels ranging from 20mg to 80mg. Learner or novice drivers are subject to the lowest drink driving limit.

7. What is the maximum disqualification period imposed in court where the learner driver has a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level in excess of 80 mg?

Answer: Six years

RSA00049A

Rationale: When a learner driver is tested and has a Blood Alcohol Concentration level of over 80mg they face a driving ban of up to six years. So, think about that for a moment. How much do you depend on your car? Do you drive to work? Do family members depend on you for lifts? This can be all affected by you having a drink and then getting behind the wheel of a car.

8. According to the pre-crash Report which age group had the highest number of drivers causing fatal collisions where alcohol was a factor?

Answer: 16-24years

RSA00043A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that drivers aged 16-24 years were more likely to drink and drive and cause a fatal collision. However, drinking and driving at any age is dangerous.

9. According to the pre-crash Report how many people were killed by a driver who had consumed alcohol?

Answer: More than 251

RSA00044A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that between 2008 and 2012, at least 286 people were killed on our roads as a result of a driver who had consumed alcohol. Sadly, drivers still drink and drive. You can decide yourself or, better still, with your friends to never drink and drive. You can also decide to be careful about not distracting the driver while they are driving. It sounds simple – everyone should be able to do it. Discuss the issue and the consequences of drink driving when you are not out drinking. You owe it to yourselves, your friends and your families.

10. A driver is automatically disqualified from driving for how long if, on a first offence, they refused to provide a member of An Garda Síochána with a sample of blood, urine or breath?

Answer: 4 years

RSA00045A

Rationale: Drivers who refuse to provide a Garda with a breath, blood or urine sample can, for a first offence, be disqualified from driving for four years. But you don't need to be afraid of providing a sample if you have not been drinking. Please take time to consider the effect on your life and on your friends and family if you are banned from driving for any length of time.

11. Which of the following is a possible consequence for a learner driver if they drive after drinking as little as just one unit of alcohol?

Answer: A three month disqualification from driving

RSA00046A

Rationale: Even if you are within the legal limit for drinking, your driving will be affected. The safest approach is to never drink and drive. In some cases, one drink may push a learner driver over the reduced Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) level and lead to a three month disqualification from driving.

12. According to the pre-crash Report out of 867 fatal collisions how many had alcohol as a contributory factor?

Answer: 251-350

RSA00056A

Rationale: Drink driving is a killer behaviour. 330 collisions involved a driver, cyclist, motorcyclist or pedestrian who had consumed alcohol. The pre-crash Report found that the most common collision type – where alcohol is a factor – is a single vehicle collision.

13. According to the pre-crash Report what age group had the highest number of passenger deaths in collisions where alcohol was a factor?

Answer: 17-24 years

RSA00048A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that passengers in the 17-24 age group are at the highest risk for being killed in a collision involving alcohol. All drinking and driving is dangerous but this age group is most likely to be at risk.

Be sensible and say no to a lift if you suspect your friend has been drinking and plans to drive. If in doubt, make other arrangements for getting home.

14. According to the pre-crash Report how many passengers were killed in a collision where alcohol was a known factor?

Answer: 71 – 90

RSA00055A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that 83 passengers were killed in an alcohol related collision where a driver or motorcyclist had been drinking between 2008 and 2012. In addition, passengers who have been drinking may contribute to crashes, sometimes distracting the driver. Safe and socially responsible road use goes beyond the drivers themselves. If you want to stay safe, you must take responsibility for your own actions, especially as to how they might affect drivers and other road users.

15. According to the pre-crash Report what percentage of the 169 drivers killed in an alcohol related collision had consumed alcohol?

Answer: 92%

RSA00050A

Rationale: The figures speak for themselves: The pre-crash Report found that 9 out of 10 drivers who were killed in alcohol related collisions had consumed alcohol prior to the fatal collision. Drivers are affected by drinking even small amounts of alcohol. Alcohol affects your judgement, vision, co-ordination and reaction time, which in turn lead to serious driving errors.

16. According to the pre-crash Report how many pedestrians were killed where alcohol consumption by the pedestrian was a factor?

Answer: 41 – 90

RSA00051A

Rationale: Alcohol affects everybody who takes it. The pre-crash Report found that 81 pedestrians killed during 2008-2012 had consumed alcohol. This shows us that no matter what kind of road user you are, you need to take care and avoid using the roads when you have been drinking.

17. According to the pre-crash Report in how many fatal collisions was alcohol a contributory factor?

Answer: 4 out of 10

RSA00053A

Rationale: The pre-crash Report found that the number of fatal collisions where alcohol was a factor was about four out of every 10. Drink driving is a killer behaviour. Drivers take the risk despite the high death rates. The RSA believes that some drivers are not considering the consequences. Otherwise, they would never ever drink and drive. Alcohol affects your judgment. Even one drink, where you may still be below the legal limit, will alter your behaviour. There is no safe limit.

