

DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED

Earlier this year a young driver in Cavan was arrested after being caught drink-driving by gardai.

The driver was found to be 11 times over the legal alcohol limit deemed safe for driving.

The motorist was charged and now faces a date in court, while their car has now been taken off the road.

The maximum penalty in Ireland for drink driving is **€5,000 or 6 months in prison, or both**, and comes down to a judge's decision made on a case-by-case basis.



DRINK DRIVING

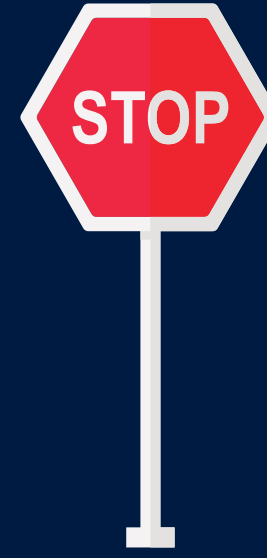
It is a criminal offence to drive whilst intoxicated to the extent of not being able to control your vehicle or to have consumed more than the legally permitted amount of alcohol. The current general blood alcohol content (BAC) limit for driving is *50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood*.

If you drink and drive, you risk injuring yourself and others through your inability to control your vehicle. Remember – intoxication is when your co-ordination, judgement, vision and reaction time is impaired due to consuming alcohol or drugs.



A Garda may stop a driver for a breath-test for certain driving offences, such as inconsiderate, careless and dangerous driving; you may have been involved in a traffic accident; or they may believe you have consumed alcohol. Any driver can also be stopped at a mandatory alcohol checkpoint for a breath-test regardless of whether they have made a traffic offence.

The Gardai **do not have the power** to pull cars over whilst in traffic and breathalyse the driver at random.



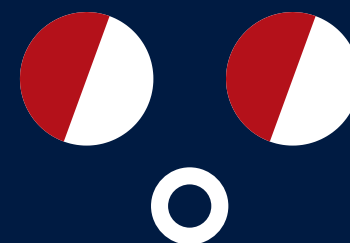
LISTEN UP!

If you are finished drinking in the pub and you sit into your car which is parked in a public place, then a guard could easily think you intended to drive. The intention to drive does not have to be immediate.

If a guard formed the opinion that you had intent to drive then you could be arrested for intent to drive while intoxicated.



Under the the Road Traffic Act 2018, all drink-drivers, without exception, receive a driving disqualification which means you are not legally allowed to drive!!



DRUG DRIVING

In 2017, the drug driving provisions of the Road Traffic Act 2016 came into effect. These give Gardaí the power to conduct initial drug tests at the roadside or in Garda stations.

Drug testing devices test saliva for cannabis, cocaine, opiates (for example, heroin and morphine) and benzodiazepines (for example, valium). It is an offence to refuse to provide a saliva sample.

It is illegal to drive under the influence of drugs (including prescription drugs) if your driving is impaired to such an extent that you don't have proper control of the vehicle.

According to PULSE data, in 2018 and 2019, 1,630 arrests were made for drug-driving, of which 490 (30%) were aged 18-24 years. Young males were more likely than females to be arrested for drug-driving offences.



Here's what you need to know about calculating your safest drive time.....

Beer

If you have 10 pints of Guinness, Heineken, Carlsberg, or some other lager or stout, you can not get into the car for 20 hours **after finishing your final drink.**

So if you get to bed at midnight, you can not get back into the car until 8 pm the following night.

Wine

You will have to stay off the road for **eight hours after you finish one bottle of red or white wine.**

Vodka

If you are sticking to vodka - with professional measuring - and manage to drink 10 by the end of the night, then that would mean **no driving for 10 hours after your final drink.**

Behaviours and attitudes towards drink-driving

The RSA commissioned a national survey of driver attitudes and behaviours, analysing a number of key measures including drinking and driving.

Of young drivers aged 24 years and under, 8% admitted to having driven a motor vehicle after consuming alcohol in the last year.



However, the majority (74%) did not agree that it was acceptable to drive short distances after consuming one drink.



Awareness of the risks of drink driving was high with 83% of young drivers indicating that driving under the influence of alcohol seriously increases the risk of a collision and 68% agreed that one drink can impair driving.