

Traveling on Virginia Tollways

Inexperienced drivers often find the challenges of driving on the interstates, freeways, expressways, and paying tolls daunting. Like all safe driving techniques practice is crucial. As a parent, if your teen is nervous about driving on interstates a good first lesson would be for you to drive, discuss, and demonstrate safe interstate driving.

Here are some tollway terms and tips:

Full service: A manned lane where change is given from larger dollar amounts. In Virginia, any customer can use full service lanes.

Exact change: Automated machine collection of precise toll amounts only - usually in coins.

E-ZPass: This pass properly mounted on a windshield allows the driver to pay their toll without slowing down or stopping. Highways that accept the E-ZPass are known as "Open-Road Toll Lanes".

When approaching a toll booth - Note the Red "X" or red light overhead means "booth closed." A Green arrow or green light overhead means "booth open". Line up your car to clear barriers separating booths. Watch for traffic around you. Watch for toll collectors who may be moving across lanes. In a toll booth area, reduce speed to 5-10 mph but don't stop; proceed slowly through the booth.

At the toll booth - Make sure you can reach the payment window. Roll down your window. Pay toll. Wait for change if it is due. Obey signal lights. Remain in your car! If you drop coins, await instruction from collector. **NEVER BACK OUT OF THE BOOTH AREA!**

Tip: If possible, have your toll payment ready in advance.

Paying at an "Exact Change" lane - Pull within arm's length of the machine. Roll down window. Deposit exact change into the machine's metal basket. Depart when light turns green and/or restraining arm rises. Some automatic toll collection machines do give change, many do not. Be prepared and have coins on hand. If you don't have change, choose the "Full Service" lane.

Toll Bridges - Be sure to keep moving! Maintain posted speed across the bridge. Maintain a safe stopping distance; don't follow too closely. Don't change lanes. Don't pass. Don't be distracted by the view.

Know which lane allows easy access to the booth you need. Be in that lane as you approach.

More Tollway Tips

- Know your toll amount in advance.
- Be vigilant. Other drivers may be confused and change course unexpectedly.
- Have your toll amount ready.
- Keep change in your car so you're always prepared.
- Don't fumble with change while exiting the booth. Put it aside to deal with later.
- Be polite to toll collector, but limit conversation. Traffic may be backing up behind you.

A FEW MORE TIPS . . .

Every toll road is a little different. Be alert for signs designed to help you navigate.

Some toll facilities do not staff 24-7. Automatic toll collection may be all that's available at night.

Be sure to pay your toll. The law has tough penalties for toll evaders.

Consider using an E-ZPass. These electronic devices eliminate the need to keep cash on hand. They make traveling through toll areas quicker, easier, and safer.

For more information see:

- E-ZPass 877-762-7824
customerservice@ezpassva.com
www.ezpassva.com
- Va. Highway Safety Challenge
www.safevahighways.org
- Virginia Dept. of Transportation
www.virginiadot.org
- VDOT toll facilities information
www.virginiadot.org/travel/faq-toll

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