

DOUBLE D VIP™

The Real Life of the Party

The Essential Guide to Enjoying Being The Designated Driver

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-Mischelle Davis

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Double D VIP: The Essential Guide to Enjoying Being the Designated Driver

INTRODUCTION

There is a perception that being the designated driver is no fun. The view is that drinking non-alcoholic drinks while your friends are having cool cocktails, drinking up and throwing down makes you an anti-social nerd, an outsider. Changing this perception can help save thousands of lives each year.

In ancient times it was thought that drinking the blood of a virgin would prolong life. Today, being the designated driver and sticking to 'virgin cocktails' or 'mocktails' may ultimately save your life, and/or the lives of your friends and loved ones.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), approximately 28 people are killed each day in the United States as a result of traffic collisions involving an alcohol-impaired driver. Public interest groups across the country, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), maintain the stance that there is nothing "accidental" about drunk driving accidents, and that these collisions are 100 percent preventable. I agree whole-heartedly.

Despite the obvious drawbacks of driving under the influence, countless people throughout the country make the conscious decision to drink and get behind the wheel on a daily basis. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that this happens approximately 300,000 times every day in the United States. This statistic alone shows that being in a motor vehicle on our nation's roadways is a random lottery that often results in meaningless tragedy and a series of narrow escapes.

Making the "social sacrifice" by not drinking alcohol for one night won't kill you, I promise. But the statistics show us that driving under the influence might. In order to prevent unnecessary injuries and fatalities on America's roadways, it is up to you to make responsible decisions when planning a night out. It's up to you to help make being the designated driver (Double D) cool. Make the Double D a real VIP. Maybe even create a cool VIP pass for the DD so everyone knows the just how important the Double D is having a great time and staying safe.

Changing general perceptions about being the designated driver and making it actually fun to be the 'Double D VIP' is one of the most important cultural shifts that must happen in order to ultimately eliminate drunk driving. Following the simple steps outlined in this guide will ensure that you have a fun and safe evening as the designated driver. The DD is the real life of the party.

BENEFITS, ADVANTAGES & PERKS OF BEING THE DOUBLE D

Let's face it, unless you take a taxi or use public transportation, you and your friends are going to need someone to step up and be the ride home at the end of an evening of partying and 'raising hell'. And while some might think being the Double D puts a damper on the evening, a safe ride home for you and your friends is undoubtedly the most important part of the fun. Being the Double D doesn't mean all of the evening's fun goes out the window. In fact, there are quite a few advantages to being sober during a night out on the town. Here is a list of just a few of the rewards that you can expect to realize during your responsible night out:

Keeping Your Cool. If you are single and hoping to meet someone during your night out, staying sober will allow you to keep your wits and avoid embarrassing yourself during the infamous first-impression. If you are in a relationship, the absence of alcohol will allow you to make good choices and be the voice of reason to your significant other throughout the evening.

Saving Money. Most of the time, the average alcoholic drink costs between \$3-6 apiece. Order a soda, ice water or other non-alcoholic beverage (see our 'mocktails' section for more info) and avoid throwing away your hard-earned dollars.

Cheap Entertainment. While your friends are buying round after round for each other, they're getting more and more incoherent as the evening progresses. As the designated driver, you get to sit back with your non-alcoholic beverage and let your friends make you look like a model citizen by comparison. And, typically, your friends will put on an entertaining show—just for you.

A Better Morning. One of the most significant drawbacks of drinking all night is waking up the next morning with an awful hangover. Fortunately for you, non-alcoholic drinks do not have this effect on the body, so you can expect to wake up feeling refreshed and hydrated.

Leave When You Want. Because you took the responsibility of being the designated driver for the night, you get to call the shots (for the most part, anyway). Whether it's late or you're simply ready to go home and get in bed, the decision is ultimately up to you. Since you're the one with the keys, you get to decide when the group calls it a night.

Also: If you happen to meet a potential date during your night on the town and would like to keep the evening going, you've already got a set of wheels waiting outside. You'll look like a hero for taking such good care of your friends. Go for it!

Return of the Favor. Since you are doing your friends a huge favor by taking one for the team tonight, it is only fair for one of them to follow suit next time the group decides to go out. Ideally, a group of friends will have a constant rotation of designated drivers.

As you can see, there are a number of additional perks to being the designated driver. The most important advantage of all, however, is maintaining the responsibility of getting the group home safely.

HOT TITLES FOR THE DOUBLE D

What's in a name? Everything. As the Double D you need a cool title. It's a must. A cool title is like a badge of honor. Here are a few suggestions if you can't think up anything interesting and creative on your own.

- Trustee of the Topsy
 - Watchdog of the Woozy
 - Superintendent of the Sloppy
 - Escort of the Intoxicated
 - Buddy of the Boozed
 - Preserver of the Pickled
 - Lifeline of the Loaded
 - Rescuer of the Ripped
 - Bulwark of the Bombed
 - Manager of the muddled
 - Guardian of the Glazed
 - Pilot of the Polluted
 - Dean of the Destroyed
 - Wheelman of the Wiped-Out
 - Chaperone of the Sloshed
 - Director of the Drunken
 - Executor of the Embalmed
 - Conductor of the Clobbered
 - Shepherd of the Sauced
 - Custodian of the Crooked
 - Patron of the Plastered
 - Usher of the Over-Served
 - Coordinator of the Crapulous
 - Helper of the Hammered
 - Benefactor of the Blitzed
 - Bodyguard of the Blacked-Out
 - Transporter of the Trashed
 - Safeguard of the Shit-Faced
 - Attendant of the Unconscious
-

- Keeper of the Keys
- Warden of the Wasted

EVENT PLANNING FOR THE DOUBLE D

Often times, negotiating a designated driver comes after the group has already decided on a particular event or cocktail lounge for the evening. However, if you and your friends are simply drafting your plans on the fly, here are some quick tips to help you determine the best options for having a fun night without putting a burden on the driver.

Ask passengers to chip in for fuel. As the saying goes, “gas isn’t cheap.” If this isn’t enough to persuade your buddies to chip in for gasoline, just remind them all of the favor you’re doing them by driving them around all night and getting them home safely. An alternative to this is asking someone in the group to provide their own vehicle for the evening.

Make your voice heard. Because you are abstaining from alcohol for the evening, it is important that you select a venue where the fun doesn’t revolve around being impaired. Sporting events, karaoke bars and restaurants that feature on-stage bands are just some of the better venues for everyone to enjoy.

Avoid lengthy destinations. Perhaps the most obvious criteria of all; it is likely not in your best interest to select a bar or restaurant located an hour away. Concert venues are really out of your control, but if you do have control over the situation, select somewhere practical that everyone can enjoy. Arcade bars and sports bars are a perfect destination because of the additional forms of entertainment available to customers.

Choose a designated driver-friendly location. Many bars and other social gatherings are beginning to team up with law enforcement and public safety organizations to promote the use of a designated driver. These establishments will often provide the cover charge, a free appetizer or some other sort of perk to the designated driver. [Add something about the importance of a parking-friendly location]

Although being the Double D requires a great deal of responsibility, you should still be able to have a great time with your friends. Taking such a great responsibility should be especially rewarded, so remind your friends of the social sacrifice you are making for their sake when you’re trying to sort out event plans for the evening.

HOW TO DEAL WITH YOUR DRUNK FRIENDS

I've had friends tell me before that the worst part of being the only sober one in the group can be annoying, especially as the night progresses. The good news is that you have the power to prevent that from happening. We know that no one in their right mind would want to babysit a bunch of adults, so we came up with a list of tips for dealing with your friends while they are under the influence of alcohol.

Establish guidelines early. Tell the group that while you are thrilled to be the responsible adult of the evening, you still want to be able to enjoy yourself without worrying about taking care of them. If you have a friend who is known for causing trouble or has a difficulty handling alcohol, make sure to keep an eye out for any potential problems.

Keep an eye on alcohol consumption. As the clearest-thinking member of the group, you have some level of responsibility for keeping the members of the group in line. We all have those friends who have trouble handling their alcohol, and if your friends are slurring speech or stumbling, it might be time to head home.

Be a good wingman/woman. Let's face it; being intoxicated can easily ruin a person's chance at impressing a member of the opposite sex. Be a good supporter of your friend by helping introduce them and suggest appropriate conversation topics. You might be surprised how effective the help of a sober friend can be when it comes to making first impressions.

Make sure everyone gets home safely. While this may seem obvious, try to understand that this goes beyond the car ride portion of the evening. If one of your passengers has had more than their fair share to drink, help them to the front door and make sure they are not in danger of alcohol poisoning. Also encourage your friends to drink water before going to bed.

Who ever said being the designated driver wasn't any fun? While being the only sober one of the group can be a challenge and requires a lot of responsibility, these are just some examples of ways that you can turn your night of sobriety into an exciting evening. It's all about having a positive mindset and remembering that your friends are guaranteed a safe ride home because of you.

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR THE DESIGNATED DRIVER

If you have come this far and followed all of the instructions for being an all-star designated driver, then you are set for a great evening. You have eliminated al-

cohol from your plans altogether, found other ways to have fun with your group of friends and even come up with a few tasty beverages to explore. Perhaps more important, however, is for you to understand what you did not do tonight. By enlisting yourself as tonight's designated driver tonight: You did not become one of the estimated 1.41 million total drivers who were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics in 2010.

You did not allow yourself and your friends, plus any of the other innocent drivers on the road, to add to the estimated 30 impaired driving-related fatalities that happen every day in the U.S.

You did not add to the 211 total children (under age 14) who were killed in drunk driving crashes in 2010.

You did not become one of the 300,000 estimated daily incidents of drinking and driving in the United States.

You did not add to the financial burden on society imposed by impaired driving, which is estimated to be \$132 billion annually in the United States.

You did not get into an alcohol-related car accident, which the NHTSA estimates will happen to one in three people during the course of a lifetime.

BECOMING THE BAR MEISTER: MAKING SURE YOU AREN'T LEFT OUT OF THE FUN

When you are the only one who isn't drinking it is easy to feel left out. But by not drinking and being one of the few people who has the ability to think clearly, you have just created a great opportunity for you to become the life of the party by taking the initiative to become the Bar Meister (master) or cruise director—the one who leads the fun, organizes games, makes creative cocktails, helps to facilitate introductions, etc.

Being the designated driver will only be a downer if you let it be a downer. If you decide to make it fun you'll find a 100 different ways to enjoy yourself and help others have a great time.

MOCKTAILS: HOW TO LOOK COOL WHEN YOU AREN'T DRINKING

At this point, it should be clear that, as the Double D, you are prohibited from consuming any alcohol during your evening. That does not, however, mean that you are prohibited from looking cool and enjoying some of the tasty treats that nightlife has to offer. You just need to be responsible about it—which means the big "V". Virgin drinks.

Though they can be quite enticing, the alcohol component of cocktails instantly makes them a hands-off commodity for designated drivers. Fortunately, you can still enjoy the delicious taste of many of your favorite drinks without the intoxicating effect of alcohol by choosing from our list of Double D-approved mocktails.

If you are short on ideas for virgin drinks, here are a few suggestions (proportions are up to you and your own personal taste). Included is 'Virgin Blood', the hottest mocktail drink around, popularized by the vampire craze generated by Twilight and Vampire Diaries.

Virgin Blood – Red cranberry juice, grenadine, lemon/lime soda, maraschino cherry.

Arnold Palmer – Half iced-tea, half lemonade.

Fizz – Cherry juice, ginger ale.

Virgin Mojito – Lime juice, mint leaves, lime soda.

Cherry Lime Ricky – Cherry juice, lime juice, lime soda, lime wedge

Virgin Daiquiri – Sweet and sour mix, frozen strawberries, grenadine, ice.

Apple Julep – Apple juice, orange juice, lemon juice, pineapple juice, mint.

Mock Champagne – Ginger ale, pineapple juice, white grape juice.

Virgin Pina Colada – Pineapple juice, milk, sugar, heavy cream.

Cucumber Colada – White grape juice, sugar, sliced cucumber.

Virgin Mint Julep – Lemonade, mint, ice.

About Michelle Davis

I was first touched by the impact of drunk driving when I was a teenager living in Kentucky. First several high school classmates were injured and one killed in a drunk driving crash that took place shortly before graduation. A few short years later 27 people were killed by a drunk driver that crashed into a school bus in Kentucky. As an adult I got an up-close view of the emotional and physical destruction that is caused by drinking and driving through my husband Chris' work as an attorney helping DUI victims in Washington State.

I don't want anyone that I love to be injured or killed in a drunk driving crash. When I learned just how big the drunk driving problem is in Washington State I felt called to take an active role in the effort to reduce impaired driving in my community. So I became a supporter of and active volunteer in the Washington State chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

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