

DRIVER'S ED GURU

The Free Online Guide
to Learning to Drive

I recently received a pair of Drunk Busters Impairment Goggles from Curt Kindschuh of Drunk Busters of America. The purpose of the goggles is to simulate the effects on your vision when intoxicated.

When I put them on, I was immediately disoriented. These goggles induce double (sometimes triple) vision and extreme blurriness. At first, you'll find it almost impossible to perform the simplest activities like picking up a pencil in front of you. However, with practice, you can achieve some semblance of coordination. However, the experience is ultimately frustrating and an excellent learning opportunity for new drivers.

The Instructor's Guide that accompanies the goggles offers some great tips and suggested activities.

The impairment goggles will make an immediate impact on new drivers and should be included in any driver's ed program. However, I believe it's important for instructors to realize the limitations of the goggles.

While the goggles will impair your vision and negatively affect your coordination, you should be careful of equating looking through these goggles to what it is like to be drunk. Alcohol impairs much more than your vision. It also impairs your mental faculties, reaction time, and judgment.

My gut feeling is that some students will view the Drunk Busters Impairment Goggles as a challenge to be overcome. They may believe that if they can "conquer" the goggles, that they will be able to conquer driving while intoxicated. Therefore, it is important to ask your students to perform a variety of activities with and without the goggles and have their fellow students record the results scientifically.

Simple activities, like picking up objects in front of you, can eventually be conquered while wearing the goggles. However, you will be much slower while wearing the goggles. Therefore, ask students to work in groups and use a stopwatch to record the results. You want to avoid a situation in which students can incorrectly assume that they are able to function as well while wearing the goggles as when not wearing them.

The Impairment Goggles (as well as a host of other great products) are available at www.drunkbusters.com.

