

Alcohol User Guide

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1. Overview

Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant. It slows brain function and body responses, affecting judgment, coordination, memory, and reaction time. Even small amounts impair performance; effects worsen as blood alcohol concentration (BAC) rises.

At high levels of BAC, alcohol can cause confusion, unconsciousness, or even death.

2. Objective

By the end of each activity, participants will be able to:

- Identify some of the gross motor impairments that alcohol use can cause.
- Relate those impairments to daily activities such as driving, walking, and picking up objects.
- Reflect on how alcohol impairment affects their own safety and the safety of others.

Modeled Impairment

The Fatal Vision® Alcohol Goggles simulate impairment from alcohol use. These are some of the impairments the Alcohol Goggles demonstrate:

- **Diminished Judgment:** Alcohol slows brain function and clouds judgment. Participants may take unnecessary risks—like speeding, ignoring safety rules, or misjudging distances—similar to poor decision-making while driving or operating equipment.
- **Loss of Coordination:** Alcohol weakens muscle control and balance. Participants may stumble, drop objects, or struggle with targeting tasks, reflecting impaired motor skills critical for driving, sports, or workplace safety.
- **Delayed Reaction Time:** Alcohol reduces the brain's ability to process and respond quickly. Participants may react late to hazards, miss cues, or fail to stop in time, increasing crash and injury risk.
- **Distorted Vision and Perception:** Alcohol blurs vision, narrows peripheral awareness (“tunnel vision”), and impairs depth perception. Participants may misjudge object distance or placement, leading to errors in timing and control.
- **Reduced Focus and Memory:** Alcohol makes multitasking and recall more difficult. Participants may lose track of steps or forget instructions, simulating the mental confusion and distraction common in real-world impairment.

When the participant is wearing the Alcohol Goggles while performing the activity, you will likely observe participants:

- Losing balance or coordination

- Reacting slowly or missing cues
- Making poor or risky decisions
- Showing confusion or disorientation

These altered behaviors demonstrate how alcohol impairs perception, coordination, and judgment—leading to delayed reactions, poor decision-making, and increased crash and injury risk. Other observable behaviors may also indicate impairment.

Levels of Impairment Simulated

The Fatal Vision® Alcohol Goggles include **five levels of impairment** to demonstrate a progression from subtle to extreme effects as estimated blood alcohol concentration (BAC) rises:

- **White Label — Low Impairment (Est. BAC < .06):** Simulates early-stage impairment; even one drink can slow reaction time.
- **Bronze Label — Low–Moderate (Est. BAC .07–.10+):** Noticeable impairment with reduced coordination and slower responses.
- **Red Label — Moderate–High (Est. BAC .12–.15+):** Clear impairment that significantly affects performance.
- **Silver Label — High (Est. BAC .17–.20+):** Simple tasks become difficult; strong impact on balance and control.
- **Black Label — Very High (Est. BAC .25+):** Simulates extreme impairment; used to demonstrate the dangers of binge or toxic drinking.

Shaded Versions: Each goggle level is also available in a shaded version that adds the challenge of **nighttime impairment**, further reducing visibility and depth perception.

3. Research-Based Approach

Many people believe they can “handle their alcohol” and avoid serious consequences, known as *optimistic bias*. They underestimate both their *susceptibility* to impairment and the *severity* of potential outcomes.

Through these activities, participants experience firsthand how quickly alcohol reduces control and performance. They see that no one is immune to impairment (*susceptibility*) and recognize how those impairments can lead to serious, even life-changing consequences (*severity*). Guided discussion helps participants connect their personal experience to real-world risks; crashes, injuries, or life-changing outcomes.

CAUTION: For all activities, spot participants who are wearing the goggles to ensure they do not inadvertently injure themselves. The goggles distort vision, and participants wearing the goggles could inadvertently injure themselves. Be aware that some participants might experience a woozy “hangover” after they take off the goggles. While this reinforces the lesson, people may need to sit for a while to let the effects

wear off. People susceptible to motion sickness may be particularly affected by the goggles; you may want to exclude them from using the goggles.

Walk the Line Activity

Material List

- Fatal Vision® Alcohol Goggles
- Walk-the-line tape

Set up:

Lay out a straight ten-foot line of tape.

Baseline Attempt:

1. Have the participant walk down the line, count nine heel-to-toe steps, turn around, and repeat the same process back to the start.
2. While walking, have the participant keep their arms at their sides.

Impaired Attempt:

3. Have the participant wear the Fatal Vision Alcohol impairment goggles.
4. Have the participant repeat the same process by walking down the line, counting nine heel-to-toe steps, turning around, and walking the line back to the start.
5. While walking, have the participant keep their arms at their sides.
6. Note any cues of impairment such as hesitation, stepping off the line, leaning, and loss of balance.

Discussion Questions:

- How often did they waver, wobble, or step off the line?
- Imagine someone in this condition behind the wheel – what risks might the public face?

Driver and Passenger Activity

Material List

- Fatal Vision® Alcohol Goggles
- Not Included
 - Wheeled chair
 - Cones

Set up:

Place five or more cones in a line about four or five feet apart.

Prepare a manual wheelchair that can be pushed slalom-style through the cones.

Baseline Attempt:

1. Have a participant 'passenger' sit in the wheelchair.
2. Instruct a second participant 'driver' to push the passenger, weaving through the cones to the end.

Impaired Attempt:

3. Have the 'driver' participant put on the Fatal Vision alcohol impairment goggles.
4. Have both participants repeat the same process by having the 'passenger' participant sit in the wheeled chair while the impaired 'driver' participant pushes the chair through the cones like before.
5. Note any cues of impairment, such as hesitation, running into cones, and miscalculating turns.

Discussion

- How many times did the driver hesitate, hit a cone, or miscalculate a turn?
- Ask the passenger how confident they were in the driver's abilities to steer accurately.
- If someone were impaired like this and driving down the road, should the public around them feel safe?
- What could happen?

Grab a Drink and have a Seat Activity

Material List

- Fatal Vision® Alcohol Goggles
- Not Included
 - Glass filled with water

Set-up:

Prepare a table with a full glass/cup of water on it.

Place a chair about 10 feet away from the table.

Have something to wipe up the potential water spills.

Baseline Attempt:

1. Have a participant sit in the chair facing the table.
2. Instruct the participant to stand up, walk to the table and pick up a full glass/cup of water.
Optional: Have the participant pour the water from a pitcher first.
3. Have the participant return to the chair and sit down while holding the glass with one hand.
- 4.

Impaired Attempt:

5. Have the participant put on the Fatal Vision Alcohol goggles.
6. Repeat the process of sitting in the chair, standing up, walking to the table, picking up the glass/cup of water, and returning to the chair.
7. Note any cues of impairment, such as hesitation, trouble with balance, trouble targeting in picking up the water and returning to sit down safely.

Discussion

- How confident and accurate was the participant while standing, walking, picking up the cup, turning around and returning to sit down?
- If someone was impaired like this in a room with multiple obstacles, what could happen?

Ring the bell Activity

Material List

- Fatal Vision® Alcohol Goggles
- Not Included
 - Service Bell

Set up:

Prepare a table with a service desk bell or buzzer on it.

Baseline Attempt:

1. Have a participant stand close to the table.
2. Instruct the participant to hit the bell quickly with one finger, then step back to reach and hit the bell once more quickly.

Impaired Attempt:

3. Have the participant put on the Fatal Vision Alcohol impairment goggles.
4. Repeat the process of hitting the bell quickly with one finger, then stepping back and hitting the bell once more with the same finger quickly.
5. Note any cues of impairment, such as hesitation, and trouble targeting.

Discussion

- How did the participant's confidence compare to their actual accuracy when targeting the bell?
 - If someone with this level of impairment insisted they were fine to drive, how would you intervene?

