



# Interlock Ratings



## 2023 Ignition Interlock Ratings and Buying Guide

# WHAT IS AN IGNITION INTERLOCK DEVICE?

An ignition interlock device, or IID, is an in-car breathalyzer that measures the user's BrAC (Breath Alcohol Concentration) level. These devices are often used in conjunction with IID programs to ensure that users are not driving under the influence of alcohol.

If the device detects alcohol on the user's breath, it prevents the vehicle from starting. Additionally, many IIDs require the user to take periodic tests during a drive but will never stop the car while driving.

There are various places across the country where IIDs are available, including local auto service shops or other service centers. These service centers lease, install, and maintain ignition interlock devices and are also available to answer questions about the device.

# WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THIS GUIDE?

The goal of this guide is simple: to help you compare the different devices and providers available so you can choose the right IID for your needs and budget.

This guide includes ratings, pros and cons, and additional details about some of the top IID providers in the country. These ratings include an overall score, weighted by device score (40%), customer service score (30%), and device convenience (30%).

*Pricing Note: Ignition interlock prices and the length of IID programs vary based on location and specific circumstances. In some cases, a person may be required to use a camera and/or GPS device.*

## Disclaimer:

*The views and opinions expressed in this guide are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the included ignition interlock companies. Any content provided in this document are of their opinion using public information and data, and are not intended to malign any religion, ethnic group, club, organization, company, or individual.*

# IGNITION INTERLOCK RATINGS

## OVERALL SCORE

**LifeSafer® L250**  
Ignition Interlock Device



## OVERALL SCORE

**Guardian Interlock®**  
AMS 2500 Device



## OVERALL SCORE

**SmartStart® SSI 20/35™**  
Ignition Interlock



## OVERALL SCORE

**Intoxalock® 1001A**  
Ignition Interlock Device



## LifeSafer® L250 Ignition Interlock

The LifeSafer L250 Ignition Interlock device is the smallest handheld device, making it discreet and easy-to-use in a vehicle. As a NHTSA-certified IID, customers can be confident that they are receiving the most reliable breath alcohol testing technology available.

The device includes an easy blow pattern and a simple screen, removing complications during testing. With thousands of service locations, LifeSafer has great nationwide coverage for customers. They also offer a 5-minute no-call install/enrollment option and well-informed customer service agents that can help drivers find the best price and closest service center (including mobile installation) based on their location and circumstances.

### Pros:

- Most ergonomic and modern-looking device
- Easiest appointment scheduling options
- Excellent, knowledgeable customer service
- Nationwide coverage
- In business for over 30 years (since 1991)

### Cons:

- Fewer locations than other providers due to a focus on quality of locations vs. quantity of locations

## Guardian Interlock® AMS 2500

The Guardian Interlock AMS 2500 IID is simple to use and includes the latest alcohol-specific fuel cell technology available to ensure accurate test results, exceeding NHTSA's standards. It is one of the smaller devices on the market and includes a removable handset that can act as an additional vehicle anti-theft device.

With service centers located across the country, Guardian Interlock has many locations and provides installation and calibration appointments on evenings and Saturdays. Additionally, Guardian offers flexible month-to-month payment options and 24/7 bilingual customer service.

### Pros:

- Smaller-than-average interlock device
- Most durable device
- In business for almost 40 years (since 1985)

### Cons:

- Limited regional coverage



**LifeSafer**  
Ignition Interlock



**Guardian** Interlock

## SmartStart® SSI 20/35™ Ignition Interlock

The size of the SmartStart SSI 20/35 IID is the industry average, fitting comfortably in the user's hand. The device also follows laws specific to the state, so customers can be sure they are meeting their IID requirements.

The company offers flexible payment options, including autopay, so managing a SmartStart device is hassle-free.

### Pros:

- Better than average customer service
- Can pay online or through an app via client portal
- In business for 30 years (since 1992)

### Cons:

- Limited location availability
- Average size device, but not as discreet as others



## Intoxalock® 1001A Ignition Interlock

The Intoxalock 1001A IID meets the toughest state requirements and includes one-button activation and simple blow pattern. With service locations nationwide and 24/7 customer support, Intoxalock has helped many drivers with their IID requirements.

Additionally, Intoxalock offers a device protection plan at \$10 per month and flexible payment options via mobile app.

### Pros:

- Highest number of service locations
- In business for over 30 years (since 1988)

### Cons:

- Largest and heaviest device—does not fit in standard cup holders
- Difficult to find device information on website without providing personal information
- Largest volume of negative reviews



## OUR TOP PICK

### LifeSafer L250 Ignition Interlock

- Most discreet and easiest to use device (based on dimensions and weight)
- Top-tier customer service with friendly and informative representatives
- LifeSafer focuses on the quality of their sites, resulting in fewer locations but excels with superior service
- Mobile installation available
- Variety of ways to book an installation appointment (phone call, online enrollment, etc.)
- 4.6-star Trustpilot rating, with over 12,000 reviews



## RUNNER UP

### Guardian Interlock AMS 2500

- Not as small as the LifeSafer device, but more rugged overall
- Highly rated customer service
- Limited regional service location coverage in some larger states (California, Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Texas, etc.), but still widely available



## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### SmartStart SSI 20/35 Ignition Interlock

SmartStart's customer service is rated highly—on par with LifeSafer—however, while not as large as Intoxalock's, the device itself is larger and bulkier than the LifeSafer L250 IID. SmartStart does have good service location coverage but does not offer the easy installation and booking options as compared to other providers.



### Intoxalock 1001A Ignition Interlock

While Intoxalock has the most locations nationwide compared to other IID providers, they have more negative reviews overall, especially on social media. The device itself is also substantially larger than the industry average in weight and dimension, making it a more cumbersome and less discreet choice. It appears that the device has not been updated in quite some time and has fewer modern features.



# OTHER BRANDS WITH INCOMPLETE DATA

## QuickStart

*QuickStart was not included in the ratings due to its limited location availability (Arizona only).*

While it is not the smallest or lightest device, the overall size of the QuickStart Ignition Interlock device makes it a top-performer. Smaller devices are not only more discreet, but much easier to handle while driving, and QuickStart IID is no exception. With over 100 reviews on Trustpilot, QuickStart stands at a 4.4-star rating.

Additionally, being a single-state brand provides more specific expertise in Arizona IID law and requirements, and several of their service centers are open on Saturdays. QuickStart also offers 'No Money Down' pricing so customers can install their IID with \$0 out-of-pocket.

## Monitech®

*Monitech was not included in the ratings due to its limited location availability (North Carolina only).*

The Monitech® Ignition Interlock device is on the larger end of those available on the market but is an easy-to-use handheld design. With a limited number of Trustpilot reviews, it is difficult to fully understand the extent of the customer service provided.

## Alcohol Detection Systems™

*Alcohol Detection Systems was not included in the ratings due to its limited location availability.*

Owned by Intoxalock, the ADS™ IID is oddly shaped and not discreet in a vehicle. This device is not available nationwide and has a 2.2-star Trustpilot rating with around 20 reviews total.

## ALCOLOCK

*ALCOLOCK was not included in the ratings due to its limited location availability.*

Only available in approximately 20 states, ALCOLOCK has a limited service center network. With the lowest Trustpilot rating of 1.7 stars, this brings up concerns about the device functionality as well as the quality of their customer service.