

# stay in control



## > how much is too much?

A useful way of keeping track of how much you're drinking is to look at the unit content of drinks. 1 unit is approximately half a pint of normal strength beer or a pub measure of spirits or a small glass of wine. Although by law the alcohol strength (%ABV) of bottles and canned drinks must be shown on the label, unfortunately not all drinks manufacturers print the unit content on their packaging. If they don't, here's how you can work it out:

MULTIPLY THE VOLUME OF THE DRINK BY THE %ABV THEN DIVIDE BY 1000

for example, a bottle of wine at 12%ABV would be:  $750\text{ml} \times 12\%ABV = 9000$   
 $9000 \div 1000 = 9$  units

### male and female daily guidelines

2-3 units per day for females and 3-4 units per day for males, but not every day. These are not hard and fast as everyone handles alcohol differently but they do offer useful guidelines so you can keep track of how much you are drinking and you are more likely to know when you've had too much.

## > how do i know if i've got a problem?

Many people have an image of what they think someone with a drink problem looks like, but: it doesn't matter what age of sex you are, or your occupation or lifestyle. You don't need to have a dependence or 'need' of alcohol to have a problem. People who drink regularly and heavily or aim to get drunk may also have a problem through accidents, violence, workplace problems, relationship problems, contact with the law, and poor health. The following is not a complete list but may indicate a problem:

Are you aware that you're drinking more? If so, think about why this is.

Do you regularly have a hangover, or need to take time off work or studies due to a hangover?

Are you using alcohol to block out feelings or thoughts?

Do you find yourself having arguments with friends or family about your drinking?

Are you drinking to 'cure' a hangover?

If you're concerned about your own or someone else's drinking, or if you would like to know more about alcohol contact :

Alcohol Focus Scotland  
 2nd Floor, 166 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 2LW  
 tel: 0141 572 6700  
 email: [enquiries@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk)

Useful Numbers

Drinkline : 0800 917 8282

Sexual Health Line : 0800 567 123

You can also get advice from your Students' Association Welfare Service or the National Union of Students website [www.nusonline.co.uk/advice](http://www.nusonline.co.uk/advice)

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is everyone talking about last night...



...or about you?

students & booze.. all you need to know

[www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk](http://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk)



is your hair all you let down last night?



Figures show that 16-24 year olds are the group most likely to binge drink and alcohol is often seen as being a big part of the student lifestyle. Alcohol can be enjoyed in moderation at the right time and place, but problems do arise from its misuse. Some people decide to totally abstain from alcohol. That's their choice and it should always be respected.

## alcohol facts...

- ● ● Alcohol is a depressant drug, even though it may feel stimulating when drunk at first.
- ● ● Within minutes of drinking, some alcohol will be absorbed into the bloodstream. The rate of absorption can be affected by certain things e.g. eating slows this down.
- ● ● Alcohol slows down a person's reactions. This means that driving, using machinery or doing certain sports e.g. swimming, after even small amounts of alcohol is dangerous. Don't risk it!
- ● ● Females have less water in their bodies than males, so they have less to dilute the alcohol. This is one of the reasons why females get drunk quicker than males.
- ● ● It takes the body (mainly the liver) at least one hour to break down one unit of alcohol.
- ● ● Alcohol does not warm you up, despite what many people think. There is a real risk of hypothermia if you fall asleep outside in cold weather after drinking too much.
- ● ● Mixing alcohol with drugs, whether illicit, prescribed or over the counter can be dangerous and the results unpredictable. Ask your pharmacist or doctor for advice.

## drinking too much...

When drunk, people behave in ways they wouldn't normally and this can lead to all sorts of risky situations like not being able to get home safely, getting into an argument, having unsafe sex and being a victim of an accident or crime. Think about how you appear to your friends when you've drunk too much - do you really think they want to spend their night looking after you while you're being sick or get knocked back from a club just because you can't control yourself?

A recent study of 16-24 year olds showed that after drinking:

1 IN 7 HAD UNSAFE SEX
1 IN 5 HAD SEX THEY LATER REGRETTED
1 IN 10 WERE UNABLE TO REMEMBER WHETHER THEY HAD SEX THE NIGHT BEFORE
40% THOUGHT THEY WERE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE CASUAL SEX

## essential safety info...

Never leave someone unattended who is drunk, especially if they're starting to fall asleep. If you're unable to rouse the person, you should turn them onto their side (recovery position) so that if they vomit they won't choke. It is essential to summon medical assistance for someone who is comatose - they can die if not properly treated.

## some tips before & during drinking...

- ● ● Eat something before you start drinking.
- ● ● Avoid drinking to get drunk - the reality is not sexy, glamorous or a 'badge of honour'. Stay in control.
- ● ● Watch out for larger measures at home or at a party compared with pub measures
- ● ● Don't accept drinks from strangers or leave your drink unattended in case your drink gets spiked.
- ● ● Slow down and try soft drinks or water in between alcoholic drinks.
- ● ● Avoid cheap drinks promotions or competitions to get you to drink more - it's not a bargain if you end up ill.
- ● ● Be careful about drinking in rounds - you tend to end up drinking at the speed of the fastest drinker.
- ● ● Avoid using alcohol to help you cope with situations like shyness or insomnia. Drinking won't solve your problems, it will only blot them out.