



BOOZE

A YOUNG PERSON'S
GUIDE TO DRINKING







ALCOHOL IS ONE OF THE MOST COMMONLY USED DRUGS IN THE UK.

IT AFFECTS DIFFERENT PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT WAYS, DEPENDING ON WHEN AND WHERE YOU DRINK, WHO YOU ARE WITH AND HOW YOU FEEL AT THE TIME.

**THIS BOOKLET WILL HELP
YOU IDENTIFY THE RISKS
ASSOCIATED WITH ALCOHOL
AND GIVE ADVICE ON HOW TO
STAY SAFE IF YOU
DO DRINK ALCOHOL.**



EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

Initially, small amounts of alcohol generally produces feelings of relaxation and cheerfulness, but drinking more can lead to blurred vision and coordination problems.

Knocking back even more drinks can lead to a loss of control, blurred/double vision, dizziness, wobbly legs, vomiting and even loss of consciousness.

The effects start within about 15 -20 minutes of drinking and can last a few hours, depending on how much you drink.

Stronger drinks (like spirits) and fizzy drinks [like alcopops] are absorbed quicker into the bloodstream and therefore, they take effect quicker.

The effect alcohol has also depend on other things, such as :

> **How quickly you drink it**

Your body can only process alcohol at a steady rate, so drinking faster is going to make you more drunk and probably ruin your night

> **Whether you have eaten any food**

Food help slow down the amount of alcohol released in your system.

> **Your body weight**

In general, the less you weigh the more you will be affected by a given amount of alcohol.

> **Your mood before drinking.**

If you feel a bit down before drinking, alcohol may make you feel even more depressed.

YOUR HEALTH

DRINKING LOTS OF ALCOHOL ON A REGULAR BASIS CAN EVENTUALLY DAMAGE YOUR BODY.

EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL CAN LEAD TO:

- > Accidents
- > Injuries or violence
- > Stroke
- > Heart disease
- > Liver Disease
- > Cancer

Alcohol is linked to over 20,000 deaths per year

ALCOHOL AND YOUR LOOKS.

Alcohol drinks can be high in calories, which can lead to weight gain. Did you know that some cans of lager contain the same calories as a jam doughnut.

Damage to your liver can also affect the way your skin absorbs certain nutrients.

UNITS IN YOUR DRINKS

WHAT IS A UNIT?

The amount of alcohol in a drink is measured by the number of units.

A unit is 10ml by amount or 8gm by weight, of pure alcohol.

We won't bore you with the mathematical calculation for how to work out the exact units in every drink. Instead, we have given you the units for some of the most popular drinks on the opposite page

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDED UNITS

Government guidelines state that the alcohol limit for men and women is the same.

Both should not regularly drink more than 14 units per week to keep health risks from drinking alcohol low.

If you do drink up to 14 units a week, it's best to spread these evenly across a few days and to have at least two drink-free days a week.

Drinking under the age of 15 can damage growing organs, such as liver & brain.

Not drinking until you are over 18 is the best option.



**Bottle of
strong lager**

330ml

2 units



**Bottle of
wine**

750ml

10 units



Can of lager

440ml

2 units

(Normal strength)



**Bottle of
alcopops**

275ml

1.4 units



Shot

35ml

1.3 units

(Tequila,
Sambuca etc)



**Bottle of
strong Cider**

1000ml

9 units

THE RISKS

GETTING HOOKED ON ALCOHOL

Regular use of alcohol can lead to tolerance - having to drink more and more to get the same effect. This can lead to physical dependence, where you get ill without alcohol.

MIXING ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Taking alcohol with other drugs is very risky. As the combination produces effects which are difficult to predict. The combination of alcohol with other drugs (including cannabis) can lead to increased risk of passing out or worse.

ALCOHOL AND SEX

Alcohol can affect your judgement and make you feel confused. You are more likely to have unplanned sex when you have been drinking, or sleep with someone you normally wouldn't go near when you are sober.

You are also at risk of rape, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy.

Always use a condom during sex.

ALCOHOL AND VIOLENCE

Alcohol lowers your inhibitions, causing you to over react in certain situations which can lead to aggressive behaviour. It's not much fun waking up in a police cell with a hangover and a criminal record.

It might also lead to problems with your friends and family- being drunk isn't much of an excuse if you say something to a friend you regret the next day.

Too much alcohol can make you a victim. Being drunk makes you an easy target for robbery and assault. So don't flash your mobile phone, or any other valuables, around. Be aware of your surroundings.

DRINK DRIVING

Driving while drunk or being in a car with a drunk driver is very dangerous both for you and other people in the car. You, your friends or an innocent person could be seriously hurt or killed.

STAYING SAFE

DON'T DRINK ON AN EMPTY STOMACH

Food helps to limit how quickly you get drunk. It's a good idea to eat a meal before you go out, or snack while you drink. It'll also give you more energy to enjoy yourself!

HAVE A SPACER DRINK

Use soft drinks or water as 'spacers' between alcoholic drinks. Your night will last longer, it will stop you getting dehydrated and reduce the effects of a hangover.

HAVE SMALLER DRINKS

Some measures in pubs and clubs can be very large and have 2 or three units in each drink. Where possible choose a smaller glass.

HAVE THE DAY OFF

Give your liver a chance to 'detox' by having at least two alcohol-free days – this way it has time to recover and repair itself.

TRY TO STICK TO ONE TYPE OF DRINK

Avoid mixing your drinks. This will help you keep track of how many drinks you have had and avoid mixing different strength drinks.

PASSING OUT

It is possible to overdose on alcohol which can be fatal. If someone you are with passes out, turn them onto their side so they can't choke on their own vomit and ring an ambulance or find an adult to help you.

THERE IS NO MIRACLE CURE TO BEING DRUNK

It is not true that giving someone black coffee, speed or a cold shower will help sober them up, they'll still be drunk, asleep or not.

GETTING HELP

If you feel your drinking is getting out of hand, consider talking to someone. Maybe a close friend, parent, teacher or a local advice project.

Here are some organisations that can also help you:

Talk to Frank

National drugs awareness site for young people and parents/carers.

0800 77 66 00

www.talktofrank.com

Childline

Calls are free and confidential.

www.childline.org.uk

0800 1111

Addaction

UK - wide treatment agency, helping individuals, families and communities to manage the effects of drug and alcohol misuse.

www.addaction.org.uk

Brook

Free, confidential advice on sex for young people.

Call 0800 185 023 or visit www.brook.org.uk