

Plan Your Evening & Staying Safe

Tips for Drinking Less and Staying Safe

- Be aware of the risks of getting drunk; hangover, injury, embarrassment and unsafe sex.
- Try not to drink when you're feeling scared, angry, sad or confused, as it's more likely to make matters worse.
- If you are trying to cut down, avoid social situations where drinking is the main focus of the evening, or choose soft drinks.

Try to avoid drinking fast, gulping drinks and becoming drunk.

- Make arrangements to get home safely with friends or pre-book a taxi.
- Decide your limit and stick to it. If you usually drink until the money runs out, take less cash and leave the credit cards at home.
- Go out later so you start drinking later.
- Pace yourself, eat before you drink to slow down the rate your body absorbs the alcohol in your drink and switch between non alcoholic and alcoholic drinks.
- Avoid situations that are likely to get you drunk fast such as rounds, drinking games, or mixing drinks of different strengths.
- Mixing alcohol with medicine or drugs is very dangerous. The effects of each mix are unpredictable and could lead to overdose.
- If you drink at home, control the measures (use smaller glasses or a spirit measure).
- Don't drive, swim or use machinery after drinking.
- List your trigger situations and work out how to handle them.
- Avoid sexual situations that you may regret later. If you do have sex, use a condom.

The HSE's askaboutalcohol.ie has a range of tools and information that can help you calculate the impact of alcohol on you and your family. Go to the website for
Drinks Calculator
Self Assessment Tool
Self Help Strategies

A quick question



Is alcohol affecting your life, your work, your relationships or your health?

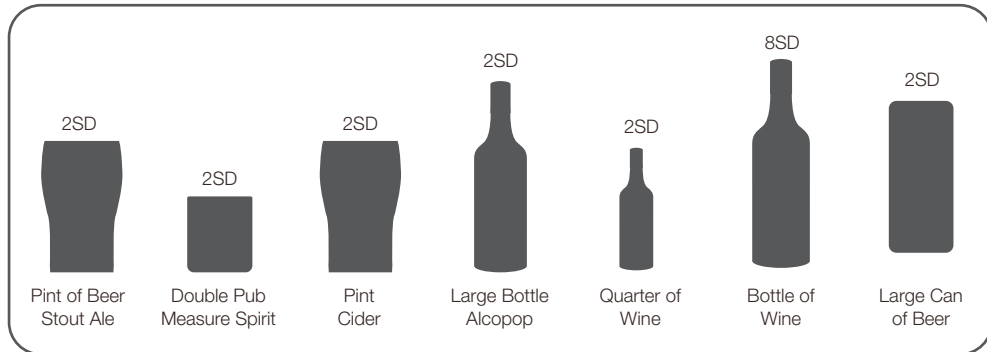
This leaflet will help you assess your drinking and your level of risk

Call the HSE Drug and Alcohol Helpline Number to find a service local to you: **1800 459 459**
Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30 or email helpline@hse.ie

1 Standard Drink contains **10g of pure alcohol**



and some drinks are more than one standard drink



Are you at risk ?

Risk	Men	Women	Common effects
Low risk	Less than 17 standard drinks per week with two alcohol-free days	Less than 11 standard drinks per week with two alcohol-free days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased relaxation • Sociability
Increased risk	17 to 40 standard drinks per week	11 to 28 standard drinks per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less energy • Depression • Increased stress • Insomnia • Impotence • Risk of injury while drunk • High blood pressure
High risk	41 or more standard drinks per week	29 or more standard drinks per week	All of the above and... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memory loss • Risk of liver disease • Risk of alcohol dependence • Certain types of cancer for both men and women.

Risk increases progressively- the more you drink, the greater the risk.

How many standard drinks do you drink in a week?

LOW RISK DRINKING GUIDELINES:

11

Adult women should drink less than 11 standard drinks per week

17

Adult men should drink less than 17 standard drinks per week

It is advisable to spread this number out over the week and essential to have two or more alcohol-free days each week to minimise tolerance and habit formation

How do you feel?

Drinking above the weekly lower risk limits can have a negative impact on your physical and mental health

The benefits of drinking less or not drinking at all:

Physical

- Better sleep
- More energy
- It's easier to loose weight
- No hangovers
- Improved memory
- Better physical shape
- Less risk of injury
- Less risk of high blood pressure
- Less risk of cancer
- Less risks of liver disease
- Less risks of brain damage

Emotional and mental benefits

- Better mood
- Improved relationships
- Less stress
- Clearer thinking
- Better judgement

Other Benefits

- Save money
- More time to spend with those you love

Important:

If you find that you regularly drink more than you intended or that you are drinking despite problems it is causing, you may need professional help to assess for dependency. Call the HSE Drug and Alcohol Helpline on **1800 459 459** or email helpline@hse.ie to find a service near you.