



EVERYBODY BENEFITS: EMPLOYEE GUIDE

Know your alcohol limits



Happy hour!

Cheers! Bottoms up! Cin Cin! To your good health! I'll drink to that! Time to wet the baby's head! Down the hatch! Fancy a nightcap? One for the road! A quick toast! I need a hair of the dog!

Sound familiar?

From birthday or workplace celebrations to christenings and graduations through to Friday night wind-down wines or Saturday liveners, alcohol is part of our daily lives.

A few beers after work or a glass of wine with a Sunday roast are one of life's simple pleasures. A G&T on a summer evening or fizz to toast a birthday is something we take for granted.

But it's so easy for 'just a few drinks' to slowly creep above healthy levels without really noticing.

1.7 million
people in
England drink at
a higher risk level



Cheers to cutting back!

Stopping or just drinking less alcohol can make a big difference to your health. It can boost your energy and mood, help you lose weight, improve your skin - and save you a lot of money!

If you are drinking more than you would like or should, you are not alone. Lots of people find it hard to cut back or give up altogether.

But every small change you make, along with the right support can make it easier. This guide will help you **reduce your alcohol intake and take control of your health**.

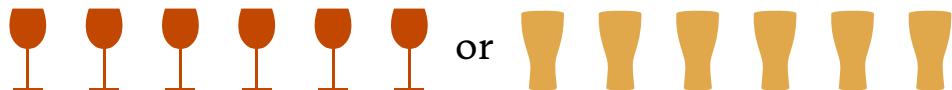


82%
of those
dependent
on alcohol in
England are not
in treatment

What are you drinking?

The NHS recommends drinking **no more than 14 units of alcohol a week, spread across 3 days or more.**

That's around 6 medium (175ml) glasses of wine, or 6 pints of 4% beer.



But many of us underestimate how much we drink simply because serving sizes vary so widely and especially at home where we rarely use a measure.

Plus, the 'same' drinks contain different amounts of alcohol. Wine ABV (strength) can vary from 5% for a light sparkling to 15% for a full-bodied red - which will make a big difference to your unit tally.

What counts as a 'unit'?

You can work out how many units in a drink by using this calculation:

$$\text{ABV (\%)} \times \text{volume (ml)} \div 1,000$$

A large glass (250ml) of wine with an ABV of 12% is **3 units**, while a bottle of lager, beer or cider (330ml) with an ABV of 5% is **1.7 units**. Meanwhile, a single shot of 40% ABV spirit (25ml) is **one unit**.





10 million
people in
England
regularly
exceed low-risk
guidelines

The health hangover

Alcohol impacts your body and mind in both subtle and obvious ways. In the short term, it may **disrupt your sleep, leave you feeling anxious or slow your reactions** which can affect concentration.

Over longer periods, regular or excessive drinking **raises the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, hypertension, stroke, liver problems, certain cancers and mental health issues such as depression or even dependence.**

Alcohol affects everyone differently. But even patterns that feel 'normal' can take their toll over time.

The social hangover

Alcohol can shape the way we perform at work and in our personal lives.

Even moderate drinking can affect focus, energy and emotional balance, which can make work feel harder. Over time, this can strain working relationships or affect how reliable and motivated you are perceived by colleagues.

At home, alcohol can also influence the way we communicate, manage stress or connect with the people who matter most.

Small changes in mood, patience and lethargy especially 'the morning after the night before' can affect relationships with those closest to us.

Being aware of these social impacts will help you recognise that small changes could make a big difference.

10 ways to cut back to 14!

Start by paying attention to **what, when and why** you drink.

You do not necessarily need to go teetotal to feel the benefits of drinking less alcohol. But the following simple tips could help you manage the recommended 14 units per week:



Most importantly, be kind to yourself.

Don't feel guilty if you don't achieve 14 units or less every week. Be proud that you are making choices that support your wellbeing.

1

Take this 5-minute quiz to see how your lifestyle is affecting your health.

[→ TAKE QUIZ](#)

2

Use an app or online tracker to get a clearer and honest picture of your drinking habits and consumption. Alcohol Change UK has this simple unit calculator tool.

[→ USE CALCULATOR](#)

3

Try to alternate alcoholic drinks with soft drinks.

4

Choose lower-strength options or non-alcoholic wines, beers and spirits which have all of the taste but none of the units.

5

Set aside a few alcohol-free days each week.

6

Find alternative distractions for moments when you tend to drink 'to unwind'. Try a short walk, meditation or relaxing bath instead.

7

If you're heading to an event where you know there may be pressure to drink, plan to drive so there is no temptation.

8

Going for drinks is not the only way to get together with friends and family. Meet up for brunch or grab a coffee and cake instead!

9

Try to avoid being involved in rounds as it makes it easy to end up drinking more than you intended.

10

Remember that alcohol is high in calories so cutting back will also help with weight management too.

Worried about your drinking?

You should see your GP if you have physical withdrawal symptoms (shaking, sweating or feeling anxious or irritable until you have your first drink of the day). Be mindful that it can be dangerous to stop drinking suddenly without proper support.

If you've noticed a drinking pattern that concerns you, help is always available.

Organisations such as [Drinkaware](#), [Alcohol Change UK](#) and [Alcoholics Anonymous](#) all offer confidential guidance.

You can also call Drinkline on **0300 123 1110** for free, confidential help if you are concerned about your own or someone else's drinking.

Support may also be available through your workplace, with many employers offering access to counselling, mental health services and wellbeing resources. These services can help you understand what you're experiencing so you can take positive steps forward.



More than
608,000
adults in England
are estimated to be
dependent on alcohol



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Protection that matters. You | Your people | Your business

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EB179-1-0126

