

NHS

choices

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DRINKS DIARY



NHS recommends

MEN	WOMEN
3-4	2-3
UNITS DAILY	UNITS DAILY

SHOULD NOT
REGULARLY EXCEED

**How much are
you drinking?**

Complete our handy
drinks diary below to
find out

How much are you drinking? Keep a drinks diary for a week to find out

Follow these three easy steps:

1. Fill out the diary using the basic alcohol units information below, or download a full drinks tracker at www.nhs.uk/alcohol. If you're not sure about the units in a drink, try and choose one below that seems close to it rather than miss it out altogether
2. Add up the units for each day and write the total in the last column
3. Finally, divide your total for the week by seven to give you an average units per day

Drinks and units

1.5
units



Small glass red/white/rosé wine
(125ml, ABV 12%)

2.1
units



Standard glass red/white/rosé wine
(175ml, ABV 12%)

3
units



Large glass red/white/rosé wine
(250ml, ABV 12%)

2
units



Pint of lower-strength lager/beer/cider
(ABV 3.6%)

3
units



Pint of higher-strength lager/beer/cider
(ABV 5.2%)

1.7
units



Bottle of lager/beer/cider
(330ml, ABV 5%)

2
units



Can of lager/beer/cider
(440ml, ABV 4.5%)

1.5
units



Alcopop
(275ml, ABV 5.5%)

1
unit



Single small shot of spirits*
(25ml, ABV 40%)

You can always work out the number of units in any drink for yourself. You simply multiply the volume (in ml) by the ABV [in %] and divide by 1,000. **For example, 125 (ml of red wine) x 12 (% ABV) / 1,000 = 1.5 units.**

*Gin, rum, vodka, whisky, tequila, sambuca. Large (35ml) single measures of spirits are 1.4 units.

Drinks diary

Day	Type of drink	Number of drinks	Units	Total units for day
<i>Example</i>	<i>Pint of lower-strength lager</i> <i>Single small vodka and coke</i>	<i>1</i> <i>1</i>	<i>2</i> <i>1</i>	<i>3</i>
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

If do you find you are over the recommended limits (no more than 3-4 units a day on a regular basis for men; and no more than 2-3 units a day for women), you may well want to start cutting back.

Total

Daily average

Which category are you?

Now look at the average units per day and the total for the week that you wrote down and compare it with the categories below. If the last week was not typical, you may want to consider whether you are really sitting in the right category.

Liver problems, reduced fertility, high blood pressure, increased risk of various cancers and heart attack are some of the numerous harmful effects of regularly drinking above recommended levels.

Which category fits you best?

1 Lower risk

- As a man, you don't drink more than 3-4 units a day on a regular basis
- As a woman, you don't drink more than 2-3 units a day on a regular basis

Lower-risk drinking means that you have a low risk of causing yourself future harm.

2 Increasing risk

- As a man, you drink more than 3-4 units a day on a regular basis
- As a woman, you drink more than 2-3 units a day on a regular basis

Drinking at this level substantially increases the risk of alcohol damaging your health.

3 Higher risk

- As a man, you regularly drink more than 8 units a day, or more than 50 units a week
- As a woman, you regularly drink more than 6 units a day, or more than 35 units a week

If you're in this group, you're at an even higher risk of damaging your health compared to increasing risk drinkers. Your body may well have suffered damage already, even if you're not yet aware of it.

Next steps

Visit the alcohol pages in Live Well www.nhs.uk/alcohol to read about the health risks of drinking too much, get tips on cutting down, and get help and support.

www.nhs.uk/alcohol