

# Alcohol

**AKA:** Booze, plonk, bevies, hooch, brew, ethanol, ethyl alcohol

## Popularity

82% of people drank in last year (2018)  
59% of men & 50% of women drank in last week (2019)  
37% of men and 33% of women age 45-64 exceed 14 units per week (2019)  
Levels of drinking went up during Covid.

## Method of Use:

Drunk; Other (daft) routes used include snorting, inhalation and other orifices

## Mechanism:

Initially elevates dopamine and serotonin acting as euphoriant;  
Slows down electrical signals in brain by mimicking GABA and blocking Glutamate

**Duration:** 1hr per unit

## Effects:

+ve: relaxation, disinhibited, laughing, euphoric, calming  
Slowed reactions, drowsiness, amnesia  
-ve: loss of muscle control, nausea, unconsciousness



**Law:** 5+: legal to be given alcohol  
18+: legal to buy in pub/off licence

**Cost:** Varies by drink and quantity;  
In Scotland the minimum price per Unit Is 50p

**Source:** pubs, clubs, shops, home brewed, diverted household products

**Purity:** less than 1% to 45% by volume on a retail basis. Up to 100% with household products  
A Unit of alcohol = 10ml

**Category:** euphoric anti-depressant at lower doses. CNS depressant at higher doses.

**Indicators:** smell of alcohol, red eyes, slurred speech

**Risks:** Acute poisoning; longer term harm to most major organs including brain, heart, stomach, pancreas, intestines, liver, kidneys, skin and nervous and circulatory systems. Increased risk of mouth, throat and stomach cancers. Can cause birth defects. Weight gain, accidents, reckless behaviour, physical dependency, dangerous physical withdrawal death. © Kevin Flemen/KFx 2002-2022