

UK alcohol consumption and drinking patterns



A moderate majority

4 in 5

79% of UK adults do not exceed the CMO's recommended lower-risk guideline of 14 units per week ¹

Average weekly unit intake
12.8 units



¹

Low risk drinking

9 in 10

89% of adults have 'low risk' drinking behaviour, according to the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) which screens for 'problematic' alcohol use ²

Classed as 'higher risk' or possible alcohol dependence ²

2%



²

Over a decade of falls...

UK alcohol consumption

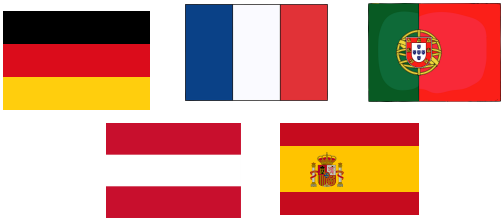


over last 20 years



% of adults either not drinking or within the 14 unit guidelines ¹

Lower than many countries including:



³

Binge drinking* has fallen by a fifth between 2012 and 2022



⁴

Sources: 1. Health Survey for England, January 2026 / Scottish Health Survey, October 2025 / National Survey for Wales, November 2025 / Health Survey Northern Ireland, November 2025; 2. Health Survey for England, January 2026 / Scottish Health Survey, October 2025; 3. WHO, May 2025; 4. Health Survey for England, January 2026; *drinking over 6-8 units in a single session