



ALCOHOL:

This is the most commonly used drug in the country.

Women are recommended to drink no more than 2-3 units a day and men, 3-4 units.

Some people think that alcohol is socially acceptable, but that doesn't make it any less dangerous or powerful in the way it affects you.

Alcohol is a depressant – this means that your body responds slower e.g. you don't feel the cold!

Slang: booze, bevy

The effects

- Alcohol can often enhance the way you feel when you start drinking. It is a relaxant and can make you feel less anxious and reduce your inhibitions in the right quantities.
- It takes your body one hour to process one alcohol unit, so... 1 unit = 1 hour
- If you drink sensibly and within safe guidelines, you're unlikely to experience any problems. However, if your drinking gets out of control, it can lead to regular binge-drinking, harmful drinking and alcohol dependence.

The law

You have to be over 18 to have a drink. It is illegal for you to buy alcohol anywhere (pub, off-licence, supermarket) for you or for anyone else who might be under 18. If you are over 18, you can buy and drink alcohol legally in a licensed premises.

The risks

- If you drink too much, you can lose control, not only losing your balance, but also slurring your speech and vomiting.
- You can become psychologically and physically dependant on alcohol. Your tolerance to alcohol builds up the more you drink, especially if you drink on a regular basis – you might find you need to drink more to feel the same effects you did when you first drank alcohol.
- Alcohol can reflect your mood, but it can also turn you into somebody else – it can make you argumentative, aggressive and act in ways you wouldn't normally.
- If you drink too much, especially if you have a low tolerance to alcohol, you can experience alcohol poisoning which can make you feel very ill, put you into a coma, or even kill you.