

Alcohol Units

Body & health

How units are calculated, and what the guidelines actually say.

Units = volume in ml × ABV% ÷ 1000.

units = (ml × ABV) ÷ 1000

Pint of 4% beer (568 ml)

2.3 units

$568 \times 4 \div 1000$.

Large glass of 13% wine (250 ml)

3.3 units

Most of a day's guideline in one glass.

Single 25 ml of 40% spirit

1 unit

The standard reference unit.

THE COMMON MISTAKE

✗ **Counting drinks rather than units**

✓ **Counting units**

Wine strengths range from 9% to 15% and glass sizes from 125 ml to 250 ml — a factor of three between the extremes.

UK guidance: no more than 14 units a week, spread over three or more days, with drink-free days. Public health guidance, not individual