

2020 Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol

1

If you are a healthy adult,



You should drink no more than 10 standard drinks a week.



This should be no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day.¹

2

To reduce the risk of injury and other harms to your health, if you are under 18 years of age, you should not drink alcohol.

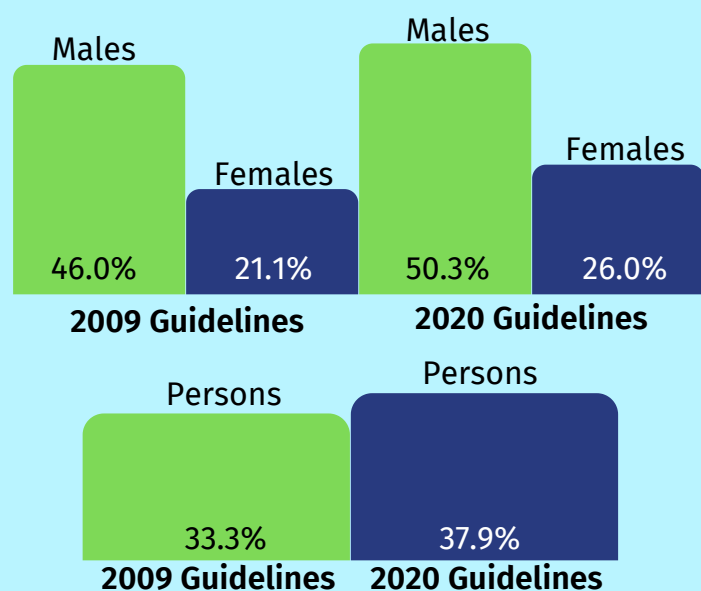
As your brain is still developing, there is no known 'safe' level of alcohol you can drink.¹

3

To reduce the risk of harm to your unborn child, if you are pregnant or planning a pregnancy, you should not drink alcohol.

If you are breastfeeding, not drinking is the safest option.¹

With the 2020 guideline changes more Queenslanders are risky drinkers



This means with the change in guideline 1 an additional:

- 4.3% of males aged 18 years or older*
- 4.9% of females aged 18 years or older*
- 4.6% of Queenslanders aged 18 years or older*

are now considered risky drinkers.²

Important points and changes

- The guidelines have changed because we now have better evidence that suggests the less you drink, the lower your risk of harm from alcohol.¹
- One standard drink contains 10 grams of pure alcohol. The type of alcohol makes no difference and it does not matter whether it is mixed with soft drink, fruit juice, water or ice. Standard drinks are:



100mL of wine (13% alc/vol)



100mL of sparkling wine (13% alc/vol)



30mL of spirits (40% alc/vol)



285mL of full strength beer or regular cider (4.9% alc/vol)

- Based on new evidence, recommended weekly consumption for healthy adults has decreased from 14 standard drinks per week to 10 standard drinks per week.
- In the past, low levels of alcohol were thought likely to protect against heart disease and type 2 diabetes. The evidence is now less clear.
- By following these guidelines you have a 1 in 100 (1%) risk of death from alcohol-related disease or injury.¹



1. National Health and Medical Research Council. Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol [Internet]. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia; 2020. <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/health-advice/alcohol>

2. Queensland Health. Queensland preventive health survey. Queensland survey analytic system (QSAS) detailed results. [Internet]. 2020 [cited 19 Nov 2020]. Available from: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/research-reports/population-health/preventive-health-surveys/detailed-data>

*Note 1: Differences from previous guidelines are expressed as absolute percentage point change



Queensland Government

Adult alcohol consumption, Queensland 2020 (2020 guidelines)

		Prevalence % (95% Confidence Interval [#])			
		Abstainers	Exceeds guideline 1	Exceeding guideline 1 components	
				More than 10 per week	More than 4 per day (monthly)
18+ years	Persons	16.8 (15.8-17.9)	37.9 (36.3-39.5)	31.2 (29.6-32.7)	30.6 (29.0-32.2)
	Males	13.1 (11.8-14.6)	50.3 (47.9-52.7)	43.2 (40.8-45.6)	42.8 (40.4-45.2)
	Females	20.3 (18.9-21.9)	26.0 (24.0-28.1)	19.6 (17.9-21.4)	18.9 (17.0-20.9)
Persons	18-24 years	8.7 (5.8-12.8)	49.9 (41.7-58.2)	35.8 (28.0-44.4)	48.0 (39.8-56.4)
	25-34 years	14.3 (11.8-17.3)	43.4 (39.5-47.4)	32.8 (29.2-36.7)	39.3 (35.5-43.3)
	35-44 years	16.6 (14.2-19.3)	37.7 (34.6-41.0)	30.7 (27.8-33.9)	31.9 (28.9-35.0)
	45-54 years	11.8 (9.9-14.0)	37.2 (34.0-40.5)	30.8 (27.8-34.0)	31.1 (28.1-34.3)
	55-64 years	18.5 (16.3-20.8)	35.5 (32.8-38.3)	32.4 (29.7-35.1)	25.7 (23.2-28.2)
	65-74 years	23.4 (21.2-25.7)	31.6 (29.2-34.1)	29.7 (27.4-32.2)	17.2 (15.3-19.2)
	75+ years	32.7 (29.8-35.7)	22.9 (20.3-25.7)	21.9 (19.3-24.6)	9.4 (7.7-11.5)
Males	18-24 years	*10.4 (6.0-17.5)	60.5 (49.3-70.8)	49.6 (38.1-61.2)	57.9 (46.6-68.5)
	25-34 years	9.7 (6.9-13.5)	58.1 (52.3-63.7)	46.5 (40.8-52.3)	54.7 (48.9-60.3)
	35-44 years	12.2 (9.4-15.7)	48.5 (43.7-53.4)	40.9 (36.2-45.7)	42.7 (38.1-47.5)
	45-54 years	9.8 (7.2-13.2)	48.9 (43.8-54.0)	41.7 (36.8-46.7)	43.7 (38.8-48.8)
	55-64 years	14.8 (11.9-18.4)	47.2 (42.9-51.4)	43.3 (39.2-47.5)	37.9 (33.9-42.0)
	65-74 years	18.8 (15.8-22.1)	43.8 (40.0-47.7)	41.0 (37.3-44.9)	28.6 (25.3-32.2)
	75+ years	23.3 (19.5-27.6)	37.9 (33.3-42.8)	36.6 (32.0-41.4)	18.4 (14.8-22.6)
Females	18-24 years	*6.8 (3.7-12.2)	39.0 (28.2-50.9)	21.5 (13.7-31.9)	37.8 (27.1-49.8)
	25-34 years	18.7 (14.8-23.3)	29.5 (24.8-34.6)	19.8 (15.7-24.6)	24.8 (20.5-29.7)
	35-44 years	21.0 (17.3-25.2)	27.1 (23.2-31.3)	20.7 (17.3-24.7)	21.2 (17.8-25.0)
	45-54 years	13.7 (11.2-16.6)	26.1 (22.5-30.0)	20.5 (17.3-24.2)	19.1 (16.2-22.5)
	55-64 years	22.0 (19.0-25.3)	24.3 (20.9-27.9)	21.9 (18.7-25.5)	13.9 (11.3-17.1)
	65-74 years	27.9 (24.9-31.1)	19.8 (17.1-22.8)	18.8 (16.1-21.8)	6.0 (4.7-7.8)
	75+ years	40.4 (36.4-44.6)	10.5 (8.4-13.0)	9.8 (7.8-12.2)	*2.0 (1.2-3.4)
Socioeconomic status	Disadvantaged	22.4 (20.4-24.6)	35.6 (33.1-38.1)	28.8 (26.6-31.2)	30.0 (27.6-32.4)
	Quintile 2	17.7 (15.9-19.7)	39.3 (36.7-42.0)	32.3 (29.8-34.8)	31.9 (29.4-34.5)
	Quintile 3	15.9 (13.9-18.3)	38.4 (34.4-42.5)	32.4 (28.4-36.6)	30.4 (26.3-34.7)
	Quintile 4	14.8 (12.6-17.3)	39.1 (35.5-42.8)	31.8 (28.4-35.3)	31.2 (27.6-35.0)
	Advantaged	14.2 (11.8-17.1)	36.9 (32.6-41.4)	30.3 (26.4-34.6)	29.4 (25.3-33.8)
Remoteness	Major cities	16.2 (14.8-17.8)	36.4 (34.0-38.8)	29.7 (27.5-32.1)	29.3 (27.0-31.8)
	Inner regional	17.7 (16.2-19.3)	38.2 (35.9-40.7)	31.6 (29.3-34.0)	30.2 (27.9-32.7)
	Outer regional	17.9 (15.9-20.1)	41.7 (38.9-44.5)	35.4 (32.7-38.1)	34.1 (31.4-36.8)
	Remote/very remote	17.7 (15.2-20.5)	47.2 (43.4-51.1)	36.9 (33.5-40.5)	39.9 (36.1-43.8)

Guideline 1: To reduce the risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury, healthy men and women should drink no more than 10 standard drinks a week and no more than 4 standard drinks on any 1 day

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

95% Confidence Interval: In general, a range of values expected to contain the true value 95% of the time

For more information, see QSAS: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/phsurvey>