

Drinking is often seen as part of university life and can be part of many activities. People enjoy alcohol as it reduces inhibitions, makes people feel more relaxed and happy, can increase confidence and helps people socialise and mix. to fit in with other people and other group activities.

Drinking in short can be fun. However there are risks that are associated with drinking, both long term and short term. In university / college environment there can also be lots of pressures to drink to fit in with other people and other group activities. Drinking doesn't have to be a way of life at university, you can still have an active, hangover-free social life.

We want you to have a good time and enjoy yourselves... Think about what you drink. If you feel your alcohol or drug use becomes a problem please contact Forward Leeds for some advice and information

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SURVIVAL TIPS!

BEFORE HEADING OUT

Eating *isn't* cheating

Food helps slow the absorption of alcohol, stopping it going to your head too quickly and helps to protect your stomach lining. Carbs or protein such as pasta, potatoes and chicken are good to eat before or while you're out drinking. They'll keep you full, and the slow release of energy will help you last the distance.

Drinking before you go out?

If you drink too much, too early, you're much more likely to miss out on the proper night. If you and your new housemates have all got some pre-drinks in, alternate them with some water or soft drinks so you stay hydrated for the night ahead.

Keep an eye on your home pouring too, especially when it comes to spirits. Why not order one of Drinkaware's alcohol unit measure cups? Or, if you'd like to keep better track of how many units and calories you're consuming, try using the free Drinkaware: Track and Calculate Units app.

Where do I live again?

It's easy to lose your bearings if you're somewhere relatively new. If you're going to be drinking alcohol, plan your journey while you've got a clear head and you've got a better chance of making it home quickly and safely.

How did I spend that much?!

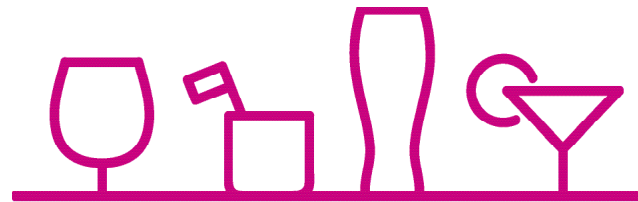
Ever had that sinking feeling in the morning, when you see the pile of receipts for drinks you don't remember buying? That's the last thing you want to wake up to when you know your student loan's got to last. So why not leave your card at home and only take as much cash as you want to spend. Make sure you keep some in a separate pocket for getting yourself home safely too.

WHILE OUT

It's not a race, drink at your own pace

It takes up to an hour for your body to process each unit of alcohol. So have a break between drinks. Skinny, short, male, female... everyone copes with alcohol differently, so why try and keep up with your mates? Save face (and money) by sticking to smaller rounds with a couple of mates or avoid them altogether. Turning down a drink is much less embarrassing than throwing one up. If you feel you need a glass in your hand drink a soft drink instead.

Finish your drink too quickly and you'll feel pressured to get another. Instead, make your drink (and your night) last longer. Chat, sip, snack, drink water, get some fresh air and chat some more.



Feeling peer pressured?

If people are pressurising you to drink too much then it usually says more about their relationship with alcohol than yourself. Don't fall for people making you drink more by saying things like you're no fun, or one more won't hurt....

“ BE TRUE TO YOURSELF, IT'S YOU THAT HAS TO CARRY THE CONSEQUENCE ”

HEADING HOME

Mine's a pint... Of water

If you stop drinking alcohol before the end of the evening and get some water in, your body can get a head start sorting itself out, which means getting home safely and better chance of a dealing with the hangover the next day.

Drink a glass of water when you get home too to try to re-hydrate – you'll thank yourself in the morning.

Sticking together

Make sure you leave the pub or club in pairs or as a group. If someone's disappeared don't assume they've pulled, find out for sure. Don't leave anyone behind. It's not just women who need to watch out – men on their own can attract trouble too.

Getting home safely

All good things must come to an end, and when you've had a great night we want to make sure you make it home safe and sound.

Get some numbers for local cab firms stored on your phone or ask a member of staff in the venue who should have some. If you've got a long wait for a taxi, stay somewhere safe and well-lit until your cab turns up, ideally with a friend.

If you find yourself stranded away from home without any cash for a taxi, some taxi firms will take you home in exchange for your student card – look for details about this at your Student Union, or download apps that you can pay in advance. Check out what offers are around and which local taxi firms will get you home safely.