



Party Smart with the Sauce

Spend some time checking out these resources, links, and apps to:

- Drink more safely
- Learn more about how alcohol affects our brains and body
- Slow your roll
- Taper down to a place you are comfortable with
- Change how alcohol fits in with the rest of your life
- Steal great ideas from accomplished drinkers on how to avoid angry livers, heinous hangovers, going home with dangerous creeps, getting mugged on the way home, and DUIs
- Drink for fun instead of as a way to medicate anxiety, depression, sleep problems, shyness, tough emotions, or physical pain
- Have more tools in your tool box if you are abstinent but have periodic 'slips'
- Meander towards good old-fashioned abstinence without doing it cold turkey

JUMP TO:

[TIPS TO AVOID HANGOVERS](#)

[SAFETY TIPS](#)

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[DAMN, I'M HUNG OVER! WHAT CAN I DO?](#)

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Tips to avoid hangovers



TIP #1: EAT BEFORE YOU DRINK

Eat before you drink to keep your blood alcohol level from spiking. This will help you avoid blackouts and other forms of hammered madness.

TIP #2: CHOOSE YOUR DRINK THOUGHTFULLY

What you choose to drink has a lot to do with how you'll feel the next day. Here's a rundown of the major types of alcohol and their effects:

Beer has the lowest percentage of alcohol (4 to 6 percent) but the carbonation speeds up the absorption.

Wine has a higher alcohol percentage than beer (7 to 15 percent). Choose white wine over red to prevent hangovers. Class it up if you can afford it—generally, the cheaper the wine, the worse the hangover.

Liquor has the highest alcohol content (40 to 95 percent) which increases the likelihood of a hangover. Choose clear liquors (vodka, gin) to prevent hangovers. Generally, cheaper booze will result in a worse hangover.

TIP #3: PACE YOUR PARTY

Try to stick with one type of drink (e.g., only beer, only wine, only gin and tonics). If you like mixed drinks, ask your bartender for a steady measured pour so you know how much booze is in your drink. Drink slowly.

TIP #4: BEFORE YOU START DRINKING, SET YOUR LIMIT

Ask yourself some questions, **“Self, is today a good day to drink?”** If you are taking medications that interact with alcohol, managing a medical condition that can be made worse by drinking, or planning to drive a car, it's safest to avoid alcohol altogether or proceed with extreme caution.

If today is a good day to drink ask, **“Self, how much do I want to drink today?”** Setting a limit before you get started can be really helpful.

TIP #5: DRINK WATER

Drink a glass of water between each adult beverage. This combats dehydration and helps dilute the leftover byproducts in the stomach that contribute to feeling poopy the day after.

TIP #6: FACTOR IN YOUR LIVER AND IMMUNE SYSTEM HEALTH

Heavy regular drinking can damage your liver and weaken the immune system. For those of us who are HIV+ and taking medications, it can mean our bodies don't metabolize our medications as well and we may suffer worse side effects. If you have hepatitis or high levels of blood fats, we recommend you cut down or stop drinking and double up on the water intake.

Safety tips



TIP #1: DON'T WALK ALONE

Have a friend by your side when you are out partying. A friend or group of friends can help keep you safe in a bar or club, while you're walking, or on MUNI.

TIP #2: CHECK WITH A FRIEND

Hooking up? Two guts are better than one...a friend can check their gut on someone you might be thinking about hooking up with. Let your friend know where you are going if you leave with someone.

TIP #3: CONTROL YOUR GLASS

Don't let strangers pour or deliver your drinks. Don't leave your drink unattended. Sadly, there are a lot of creeps out there with date rape drugs.

TIP #4: PLAN YOUR TRANSPORTATION

Avoid driving. It's a good idea to have a travel buddy for walking or taking the bus. Take a taxi. Sleep on your friend's couch or floor.

TIP #5: CARRY CONDOMS

No worrying about STDs the morning after.

TIP #6: AVOID MIXING ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

- If you are drinking, avoid downers, benzos, and opiates. These with booze can cause respiratory suppression, overdose, or accidental death.
- GHB and alcohol do not mix! Gamma hydroxybutyrate—GHB—is a powerful, rapidly-acting central nervous system depressant. When taken as a recreational intoxicant, it can be dangerous when the dose is too high or it is combined with alcohol or some other drugs. When mixed with alcohol, the depressant effects of GHB are enhanced. This can lead to respiratory depression, unconsciousness, coma, and overdose.

TIP #7: AVOID OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINES

Aspirin, acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) and over-the-counter cold/flu medicines can cause liver and kidney damage when combined with alcohol.

Tips to reduce how much you drink



TIP #1: EVALUATE

- Think about reasons you might want to make a change and reasons why you might not want to change.
- Think about what alcohol is doing for you. How is it helping you?
- Take a look at how drinking affects your mood, relationships, health, work, school, finances, and sex life.

TIP #2: PLAN AHEAD

- Plan your party—decide when, where, how much, and with whom.
- Bring a set amount of money.
- Seek out a location and the company of lighter drinkers when you want to moderate your drinking.
- Add abstinence days—i.e. “I take a break Tuesdays and Sundays.”
- Don’t keep booze in the house.

TIP #3: BE MINDFUL

- Keep track of how often and how much you’re drinking.
- Delay the first drink. Start later in the day.
- Include food. Don’t drink on an empty stomach. Eat some food so the alcohol will be absorbed into your system more slowly.
- If you can afford it, drink only in bars or restaurants—not at home.
- Pace and space. Pace yourself. Sip slowly. Add ice to your drink. Alternate booze with water/juice/soda pop. Brush your teeth between drinks. It makes them taste gross and may slow you down.
- Ask your bartender to give you a measured pour (not a heavy pour).
- Stop sooner. Go home at a set time.

TIP #3: GET SUPPORT

- For help with insomnia or anxiety, try adding deep relaxation and wind-down rituals to your bedtime routine. Consider talking with your doctor about these challenges to a good rest. Check out yoga classes, deep breathing tutorials on YouTube, or group or guided meditation. Add movement, exercise, and stretching into your day.
- If drinking has occupied a lot of your time, develop new interests. Participate in new activities, hobbies, and relationships—or, renew and reinvest in those that you’ve missed. If you’ve relied on alcohol to be more comfortable in social situations, to manage your moods, or cope with problems, then seek support and strategies to deal with those areas of your life.
- Check out a harm reduction or abstinence group

> **Local resources:** www.sfaf.org

Damn, I'm hungover! What can I do?



TIP #1: DRINK WATER

Replenishing the body's water supply after a night of drinking combats dehydration, and it also helps dilute the leftover byproducts in the stomach.

TIP #2: EAT BANANAS OR KIWI, AND DRINK SPORTS DRINKS

These provide lost electrolytes and help replenish potassium lost to alcohol's diuretic effects.

TIP #3: DRINK FRUIT JUICE

This will help your body get rid of toxins and replenish nutrients depleted from a night of drinking.

Resources



→ BOOKS

How to Change Your Drinking: A Harm Reduction Guide to Alcohol by Kenneth Anderson

> www.hamsnetwork.org

Responsible Drinking: A Moderation Management Approach for Problem Drinkers by Frederick Rotgers, Rudy Hoeltzel, Marc F. Kern

> www.moderation.org

Over the Influence: The Harm Reduction Guide for Managing Drugs & Alcohol by Patt Denning, Jeannie Little, and Adina Glickman

> www.harmreductiontherapy.org

→ INTERNET SELF-HELP TOOLS

> **Drinkers Check Up:** www.drinkerscheckup.com

> **Rethinking Drinking:** www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov

> **E-CHUG for College Students:** www.echeckuptogo.com/usa

> **How alcohol interacts with over the counter and prescription medications:**

www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/alcohol-interactions-with-medications

> **Antidepressants and Alcohol:** <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/expert-answers/antidepressants-and-alcohol/faq-20058231>

> **Tylenol and Alcohol:**

www.mensjournal.com/health-fitness/health/another-reason-tylenol-and-alcohol-dont-mix-20131107

→ PROFESSIONALLY LED GROUPS SUPPORTING ALL SUBSTANCE USE GOALS

The Stonewall Project

Harm reduction substance use treatment, wellness services, and counseling for gay and bi men.
(415) 487-8043

> www.stonewallsf.org

Stonewall walk-in counseling:

Monday to Friday at 4pm
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
1035 Market Street, 4th floor

Stonewall by appointment counseling at Magnet

Wednesday and Friday afternoons
4122 18th Street
Please call Magnet to make an appointment: (415) 581-1600

Stonewall walk-in alcohol harm reduction group in the Castro

Tuesday evenings at 6pm
4200 18th Street #203

Change your drinking habits for the better

These groups invite you to find your way to safe drinking, controlled drinking, reduced drinking, or quitting.

> **Alliance Health Project:** www.ucsf-ahp.org

> **Harm Reduction Therapy Center:** www.harmreductiontherapy.org

→ PEER LED GROUPS SUPPORTING MODERATION/SUBSTANCE USE MANAGEMENT GOALS

> **Moderation Management:** www.moderation.org

→ PEER LED GROUPS SUPPORTING ABSTINENCE GOALS

> **LifeRing Secular Recovery:** www.lifering.org

> **Smart Recovery:** www.smartrecovery.org

> **Alcoholics Anonymous:** www.aa.org

> **The Castro Country Club:** www.castrocountryclub.org

→ APPS TO HELP YOU CHANGE YOUR DRINKING HABITS

Whether you're trying to remain sober, cut back, or just get a handle on how much you drink each day, these mobile apps can help. Google these App names to find them. Some are free and some cost a few bucks.

APPS SUPPORTING ABSTINENCE GOALS

Stop Drinking with Andrew Johnson. Learn relaxation techniques and use visualization tools to handle stress without turning to alcohol.

12 Steps AA Companion. Reference "The Big Book" text wherever you go and maintain a running sobriety calendar.

APPS SUPPORTING MANAGED USE GOALS

Saying When: How to quit drinking or cut down. Designed by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health to track your drinking and work toward goals around drinking less.

Control Alcohol. Understand how much you're drinking, learn when to stop, and cut back your consumption.

Lift—Daily Motivation. Provides personal coaching geared toward goals that you set.

DrinkControl. Helps you see how much you're drinking compared to 'suggested limits.'

IntelliDrink. Tracks your blood alcohol content as you drink with ability to profile both you and a friend's consumed drinks.

> www.intellidrink.com

BAC Alcohol Calculator. Calculates your BAC with more than 30 drinks to choose from.

R-U-Buzzed? Helps you decide if you're too drunk to drive based on how much you've consumed and helps you locate a taxi nearby if needed.

Last Call. Helps predict when your BAC will be highest based on what you drink.

ALCulator. Calculates your BAC.

AlcoDroid Alcohol Tracker. Keep track of your BAC including when you're over the limit and when you're sober.

Drinking Buddy. Keep track of your drinking habits and compare how much you drink to how much your friends drink on Facebook.

iDrinkSmarter. Helps you stay in the "green zone" of enjoyable (and safer) alcohol use.

PARTY DRUG APP

DanceSafe Mobile. Helps keep you safe at raves, dance parties, and online with access to drug facts and emergency information.

STRESS REDUCTION APPS

Mindfulness Meditation. Guides you through mindfulness meditation to find calm and reduce stress.

Breathe2Relax. Guides you through breathing exercises to help you manage your emotions, lower your blood pressure, and feel more relaxed.