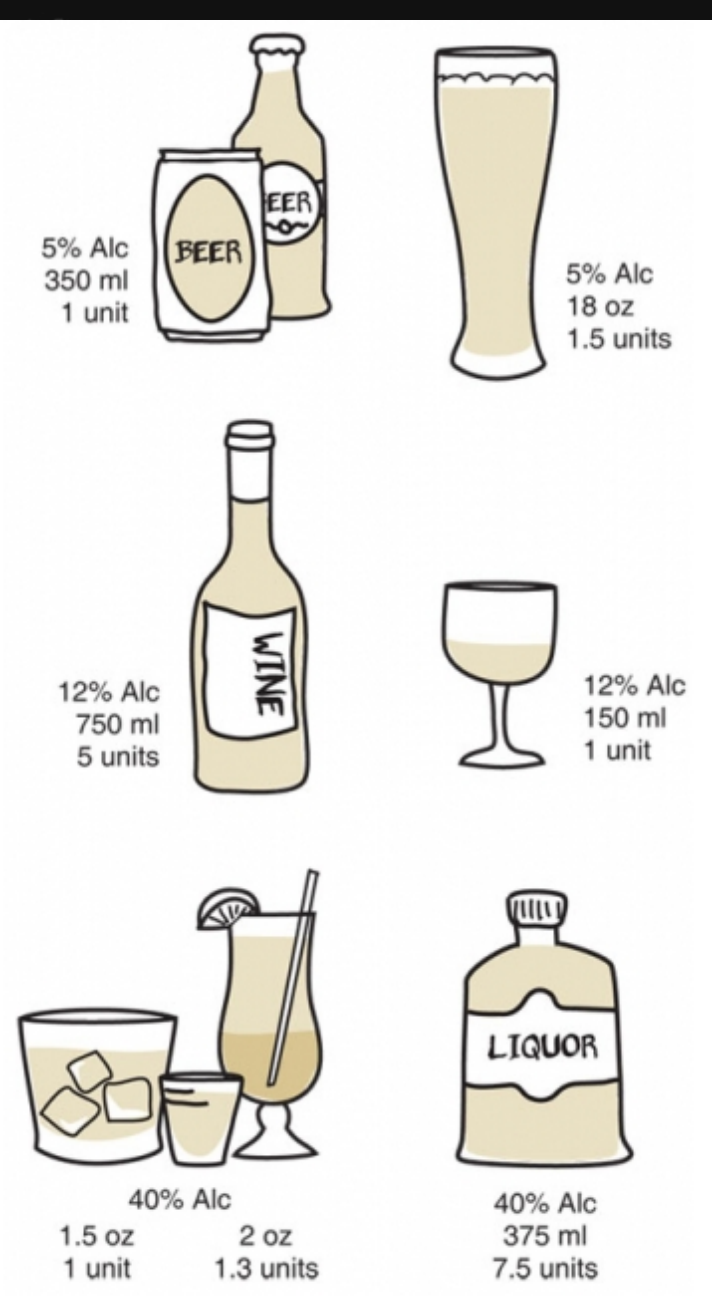


DEPRESSANTS

Depressants are also known as downers. They can decrease heart rate and breathing and can increase euphoria and confidence. They can lead to risk-taking behaviour and unconsciousness. Depressant drugs include alcohol, Valium and Xanax.

WHAT IS A UNIT? ALCOHOL



In Scotland, 24% of adults drank at harmful or hazardous levels in 2017 (down from 34% in 2003) according to the Scottish health survey from 2017. To reduce long-term health risks:

- Try to avoid exceeding weekly limits of 10 units and
- daily limits of 3 units.
- Drink in safe environments.
- No more than 2 units of alcohol in any 3-hour period.
- Eat before or while drinking and alternate with non-alcoholic drinks.
- Choose light beer or other low-alcohol drinks

BENZODIAZEPINES

They are a group of tranquilliser drugs with sedative effects. They can cause drowsiness and long periods of sleep. People have expressed that they experience "floating" sensations and warmth. Effects can also include lack of coordination, slowed speech, aggression, blackouts, short-term memory loss and reduced mental alertness. Benzos can impair your judgement of danger.

STAY SAFE

- Buy less so you use less.
- Set a time limit before you start, and stick to it. Have some juice ready.
- Lower your dosage and frequency. In other words, drink, smoke or inject in smaller amounts—and less often—than you do now.
- Choose the least harmful method of use. Injecting a drug carries more risk than smoking, snorting or swallowing it. (If you do inject drugs, avoid the neck area.)
- Use at your own speed and don't feel pressured from others to pick up the pace.
- Find someone caring and understanding to talk to when you're struggling to stick to your reduced use plan.
- Put condoms in your pocket before you start using a drug, even if you're not planning to have sex.

Sources:

<https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/workbook/you-and-substance-use-harm-reduction-strategies>