

Socializing Responsibly

Socializing with colleagues over a drink or entertaining family, friends or neighbors with food and cocktails are pleasurable pastimes enjoyed by millions of American adults. For those adults who choose to drink, they should do so in moderation and responsibly.

Moderation & Responsibility



Alcohol & Moderation

Distilled Spirits Council
of the United States

The Distilled Spirits Council (DISCUS) is the national trade association representing producers and marketers of distilled spirits in the United States. As a long-time partner on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, DISCUS helps disseminate the alcohol recommendations and promotes moderation and responsibility.



[distilledspirits.org](https://www.distilledspirits.org)



[drinkinmoderation.org](https://www.drinkinmoderation.org)

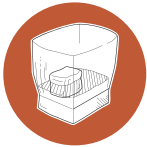
What is Moderate Drinking?

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* state that those who choose to drink should “consume less alcohol for better overall health.” This *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* research defines moderate drinking as:

“**Two drinks or 28 grams of alcohol in a day for men and one drink or 14 grams of alcohol in a day for women.**”

What Counts as a Drink?

In the United States, one standard drink contains 0.6 ounces (14 grams) of alcohol. Examples of standard drink-equivalents are:



1.5 fl oz

1.5 fl oz of 80-proof distilled spirits (40% alcohol) such as rum, vodka, gin or whiskey;



5 fl oz

5 fl oz of wine (12% alcohol); or



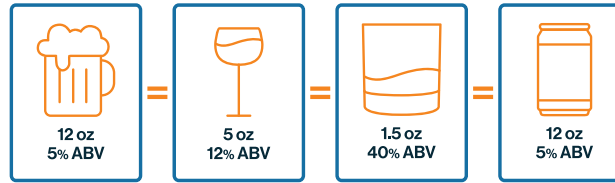
12 fl oz

12 fl oz of regular beer (5% alcohol)

Since beer, wine and distilled spirits products may come in different sizes and alcohol content, these clearly defined drink-equivalent amounts are intended to serve as a guide to help consumers.

Why is the Definition Different for Males & Females?

Most people think the difference is solely based upon body weight, but this is only one factor. Females have less water in their bodies. Therefore, if a female and a male of the same size and weight drink the same amount of alcohol, a female is likely to reach a higher blood alcohol content (BAC). Estimate your BAC at <https://www.responsibility.org/bac-calculator/>



One standard drink-equivalent of distilled spirits is 1.5 fl oz, wine is 5 fl oz, beer is 12 fl oz and a ready-to-drink beverage is 12 fl oz.

Which Contains More Alcohol per Drink?

Distilled Spirits, Wine or Beer

Each drink-equivalent contains the same amount of a pure alcohol called ethanol (0.6 ounces). Whether it is in distilled spirits, wine or beer: ethanol has the same effect on the body. This scientific fact is a critical aspect of responsible drinking underscored by the federal government, state driver's manuals and consumer groups, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving. **Remember, when it comes to drinking alcohol, there is no beverage of moderation, only the practice of moderation.**

For more information on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and its Scientific Foundation, please visit:

realfood.gov

Which Contains More Calories per Drink?

Distilled Spirits, Wine or Beer

A 1.5 ounce drink of distilled spirits (40% alcohol) is 97 calories. A 5 ounce drink of wine (12% alcohol) is about 120 calories. A 12 ounce drink of regular beer (5% alcohol) is about 150 calories. Remember that mixers also contain calories, but sodas, tonics and juices can be substituted with lower- or zero-calorie versions. Garnishes such as apple or orange slices add color and flavor while keeping the calorie count down.

Alcohol Calorie Counter

<https://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/tools/calculators/alcohol-calorie-calculator>

Are the Potential Benefits & Risks Different Depending on Alcohol Type?

When it comes to potential benefits and risks of alcohol, the health effects are the same for spirits, wine and beer. The scientific research for the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* found that moderate alcohol consumption is linked with some health benefits, such as reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and all-cause mortality (meaning, people who drink in moderation tend to live as long or longer than those who do not drink at all). No one should start drinking for potential health benefits, and some individuals should not drink at all. Alcohol abuse can cause serious health and other problems. Research also has shown moderate drinking increases risk for certain health outcomes, such as breast cancer. Individuals should discuss their alcohol consumption with their physician who can determine what is best for them based on individual risk factors, such as family history, genetics and lifestyle.

Who Should Not Drink?

According to the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, some individuals should not drink beverage alcohol, including pregnant women, people who are recovering from alcohol use disorder or are unable to control the amount they drink, and people taking medications or with medical conditions that can interact with alcohol. For those with a family history of alcoholism, be mindful of alcohol consumption and associated addictive behaviors.