KNOW YOUR STANDARDS

Toolkit for public libraries

A guide to implementing the Know Your Standards awareness program in your community.

May 2015
A 'standard drink' is the measure of alcohol used to work out safe drinking levels. However, research shows that an individual's understanding of the concept of a standard drink, their use of it and their drinking practices (size of usual drinks) often differs from official definitions. There is a tendency to over-size drinks and to under-estimate the alcohol content of beverages. Many Australians are unaware of the number of standard drinks in various alcohol products. Also, although 58% of Australian adults are aware of the existence of the Australian Alcohol Guidelines, relatively few (17%) are aware of their content.

According to the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE):

Having an awareness of what constitutes a standard drink is important for a range of health and social reasons. To know if you’re okay to drive, people need to understand how many standard drinks they’ve had. Also, to know if people are consuming alcohol at low risk levels and within the Alcohol Guidelines, people need to know how many standard drinks they’ve had.

Know Your Standards is an alcohol awareness program delivered in public libraries in NSW. The aim of the program is to provide community members with information and resources to improve their knowledge and awareness of standard drinks and the Australian Alcohol Guidelines. Having an awareness of what constitutes a standard drink can assist people to know if they are consuming alcohol at low risk levels and within the guidelines.

The program:

- provides people with the knowledge and tools about standard drinks to help them make informed decisions and choices about drinking
- communicates approaches and strategies for reducing risks associated with alcohol and drinking
- provides people with discussion points around alcohol issues.

The awareness program in public libraries consists of:

- print and online information resources
- practical demonstrations of the differences in what constitutes a standard drink for commonly used alcoholic beverages
- events and activities.

The information in this toolkit is provided by drug info @ your library and is a guide to implementing the Know Your Standards awareness program in public libraries.

drug info @ your library provides up-to-date information about alcohol and drugs via a dedicated website and through local public libraries in New South Wales. drug info @ your library is a joint initiative of NSW Health and the State Library of NSW.

---

3 Annual Alcohol Poll 2015, Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)
4 Awareness of standard drinks and the Guidelines. Annual Alcohol Poll 2012, (FARE)
STANDARD DRINKS

What is a standard drink?

A ‘standard drink’ is a unit of measurement. In the same way as one metre measures a particular distance travelled, one standard drink measures a particular amount of alcohol consumed (or poured).\(^3\) The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) defines standard drink sizes to establish guidelines for alcohol use and work out safe drinking levels.

A standard drink in Australia contains 10g of alcohol.

This is always the same, no matter what type of alcoholic beverage or how it is served. As some drinks are stronger than others (for example, low-strength beer is around 2.7% whereas spirits are typically 40%), the higher the alcohol concentration of a drink, the less liquid it contains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Australian standard drink is equal to approximately:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>285 mL of full strength beer (4.6% alc. vol)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>425 mL of low strength beer (2.7% alc. vol)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 mL of wine (12% alc. vol)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 mL of champagne (12% alc. vol)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 mL of spirits (40% alc. vol)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Serving size vs standard drink size

Often, alcoholic drinks which are purchased contain more than one standard drink. A serving of alcohol in a pub or club can be larger than a 'standard' drink, for example a standard drink of wine is 100ml but a typical serve may be 150ml.

Interesting Fact: When at a licenced venue, the line on a wine glass (plimsoll line) does NOT indicate a standard drink measure. This line indicates approximately 150ml which enables the venue to serve 5 glasses per bottle.

Labelling of standard drinks

In Australia, all bottles, cans and casks containing alcoholic beverages are required by food labelling law to state on the label the approximate number of standard drinks they contain. Labels on alcoholic beverages display the number of standard drinks and alcohol content (%) each specific type of alcohol/beverage contains.

Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol
(Australian Alcohol Guidelines)

SUMMARY OF THE GUIDELINES

Guideline 1: Reducing the risk of alcohol-related harm over a lifetime
The lifetime risk of harm from drinking alcohol increases with the amount consumed.

For healthy men and women, drinking no more than two standard drinks on any day reduces the lifetime risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury.

Guideline 2: Reducing the risk of injury on a single occasion of drinking
On a single occasion of drinking, the risk of alcohol-related injury increases with the amount consumed.

For healthy men and women, drinking no more than four standard drinks on a single occasion reduces the risk of alcohol-related injury arising from that occasion.

Guideline 3: Children and young people under 18 years of age
For children and young people under 18 years of age, not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

A. Parents and carers should be advised that children under 15 years of age are at the greatest risk of harm from drinking and that for this age group, not drinking alcohol is especially important.

B. For young people aged 15–17 years, the safest option is to delay the initiation of drinking for as long as possible.

Guideline 4: Pregnancy and breastfeeding
Maternal alcohol consumption can harm the developing fetus or breastfeeding baby.

A. For women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy, not drinking is the safest option.

B. For women who are breastfeeding, not drinking is the safest option.

Counting standard drinks can help assist people to stay within the Australian Alcohol Guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To lower your risk of an alcohol related injury or disease during your lifetime, drink no more than 2 standard drinks on any day.</td>
<td>On any one occasion, drink no more than 4 standard drinks to reduce your risk of immediate alcohol related injury.</td>
<td>For children and young people under 18 years of age, not drinking alcohol is the safest option.</td>
<td>For women who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding a baby, not drinking is the safest option.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each library service in NSW has been supplied with a standard drink educational pouring & display kit (resin kit) for use in public programs, displays as part of the Know Your Standards program. The resin kit comes with an interactive activity outline which enables any facilitator to deliver an interactive and informative session regarding standard drinks. The kit can be used with small or large groups.

**Standard drink educational pouring & display kit (resin kit)**

The pack contains:

- 6 plastic glasses demonstrating a standard drink of different alcoholic beverages, including light beer/heavy beer, spirits, wine and champagne
- 6 x 425ml empty plastic glasses (labelled with a different alcoholic drink (heavy beer, light beer, wine, champagne, scotch & tequila)
- 1 AlcoCup
- interactive activity outline
- carry bag

Additional supplies of AlcoCups are available on request (subject to availability)

The aim of the kit is to:

- increase clients’ knowledge of standard drinks
- introduce clients to the different strengths of alcoholic beverages
- visually demonstrate the differences in what constitutes a standard drink for commonly used alcoholic beverages
- provide clients with engaging and interactive activities to increase sustainable learning regarding alcohol.

The resin kit is supported by the print resources held in public libraries such as the Know Your Standards pocket guides and postcards and information on the drug info @ your library website. The print resources reinforce learning concepts regarding standard drinks and the Australian Alcohol Guidelines.

The resin kit can be used in library displays or to deliver an educational standard drinks session. After attending a session clients will:

- understand what a standard drink is for different alcoholic beverages
- be able to use resources, such as the AlcoCup and standard drinks pocket guide or postcard, to develop a greater understanding of standard drinks
- understand the importance of knowing about standard drinks to reduce the harms and risks for themselves and others (Australian Alcohol Guidelines).
Print support material

These items are available to support events and activities and can also be used in library displays. More information is available from the Drug Info website:

Standard drinks pocket guide

This business card sized pocket guide features illustrated standard drink measurements for light beer, full strength beer, red/white wine, champagne, spirits (shots and pre-mix) and cider (middy and bottle) as well as tips for keeping safe.

Standard drinks postcard

This postcard features illustrated standard drink measurements for light beer, full strength beer, red/white wine, champagne, spirits (shots and pre-mix) and cider (middy and bottle) as well as the definition of a standard drink.

Quiz / handout

The quiz can also be used as a handout as the answers are printed on the reverse.

Standard drinks guide card

The guide card features an assortment of alcoholic drinks in different sizes (eg glasses, casks of wine, 6 packs of beer, bottles of spirits) and lists the number of standard drinks that each contains. The guide card is also available as a PDF to download and print.
KNOW YOUR STANDARDS

LIBRARY DISPLAYS

Books
Use these books from your drug info @ your library collections in library displays:

- Alcohol, other drugs and pregnancy
- Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol
- The grog book
- Teenagers, alcohol and drugs: what your kids really want and need to know about alcohol and drugs
- The Other Talk: a guide to talking with your child about alcohol and drugs

Poster
Download and print these A4 or A3 posters for your library display and/or event.
Pamphlets
A list of pamphlets relating to alcohol is available on the drug info @ your library website: http://www.druginfo.sl.nsw.gov.au/forpublibs/collections/freepamphlet.html

Factsheets
These factsheets are available to download and print:

- **Standard drinks chart** – NHMRC
  contains a large assortment of different alcoholic drinks in different sizes (eg glasses, casks of wine, cases of beer, bottles of spirits) and lists the number of standard drinks that each contains.

- **Guidelines for low risk drinking**
  Australian Drug Foundation – PDF
  contains Australian Alcohol Guidelines
WHEN AND HOW YOU CAN USE YOUR RESIN KIT

Here are some ideas for using your Know Your Standards kits in your library:

- Hold a display or event during Know Your Standards Week to showcase the collection and service in your local community
- Hold a standard drinks session for library/council staff
- Give a standard drinks session to library reading groups, youth groups or other client groups
- Run a stall at a local health and wellbeing expo
- Offer to deliver a standard drinks session as part of local driving workshops
- Host a presentation by local police on alcohol and young people/partying and run a Know Your Standards session
- Hold the Know Your Standards Quiz in your library. Offer a small incentive prize to each person who participates such as a Drug Info pen or use the Know Your Standards pocket guides
- Run a session with mother’s groups, baby bounce groups - 1 in 4 women drink alcohol while pregnant, even though the Australian alcohol guidelines recommend not drinking during this time (National Drug Strategy Household Survey detailed report 2013 - http://www.aihw.gov.au/alcohol-and-other-drugs/ndshs-2013/ch4/)
- On-train community workers or youth groups in running a Know Your Standards session using an AlcoCup and the standard drinks activity.

Other times of the year to promote Know Your Standards

- Law Week - drink driving is a factor in about one in every five crashes in NSW where someone loses their life (Centre for Road Safety, NSW Government) http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/alcoholdrugs/drinkdriving/
- Science Week – team up with a local high school or your library or council youth group to run an experiment to see how different sized glasses affect how people pour a standard drink
- Host a session during “Party Season” – combine with a mocktail event
- Hold sessions prior to Schoolies – offer to deliver in schools or at an HSC ‘Lock-In’ event
IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES

A great way to engage with people is to set up a stall or a protected space which gives you a real opportunity to start a conversation. An excellent way of bringing up the subject of standard drinks and alcohol use is to engage clients with an interactive tool such as the standard drink educational pouring and display kit and the AlcoCup.

1. Ask the person if they’ve heard of a standard drink before. If they have heard of the term ask them what the definition of a standard drink is and what they think it is used for.

   (Key message: A ‘standard drink’ is the measure of alcohol used to work out safe drinking levels. A standard drink in Australia contains 10g of alcohol.)

   Ask the person what their favourite drink is and use the Know Your Standards postcard or pocket guide to show how much liquid is contained in it. You can also refer to the poster or use the glasses from the resin kit.

2. Ask the person to pour their usual amount of wine or spirits into a wine glass or tumbler glass. Ask the person about the alcohol content of the specific type of alcohol that they have poured. If incorrect provide the correct information as outlined on the AlcoCup and then display the relevant resin filled glass to compare. Use an AlcoCup Standard Drinks Measure Cup to measure the standard drinks contained in their poured serving.

   (Props required: wine glass, tumbler glass, resin kit glasses, AlcoCup, coloured water in a jug or old bottle of wine or spirits)
3. Ask the person to pour what they think is 1 standard drink of wine, beer or spirit into a wine glass or tumbler glass or plastic cup. Ask the person about the alcohol content of the specific type of alcohol that they have poured. If incorrect provide the correct information as outlined on the AlcoCup Standard Drinks Measure Cup and then display the relevant resin filled glass to compare. Use an AlcoCup to measure the number of standard drinks contained in the serving.

(Props required: wine glass, tumbler glass, plastic cup, resin kit, AlcoCup, coloured water in a jug or old bottle of wine or spirits)

4. Run a guessing game quiz. Ask people to guess the number of standard drinks contained in a range of alcoholic beverages e.g. a bottle of whisky, a shot of tequila, a cask of wine. Use empty bottles/containers or print out a page of pictures. People could note down their name and the number of standard drinks they think are on the table or sheet, with a prize going to the winner.

5. Collect a range of empty bottles of alcohol e.g. beer, wine, champagne and spirits. Write down the number of standard drinks each bottle contains on a separate sticky notes and put to one side. Cover the labels with sticky notes to hide the standard drink labels from view. Display the bottles in a row.

Ask people to match the labelled sticky notes to the bottles according to the number of standard drinks they believe each one contains. Once all bottles have been matched with a sticky notes reveal the standard drink labels to the participants to compare their answers. This activity can also be used in a group setting.

(Props required: empty alcohol bottles, sticky notes)
PROMOTION AND FEEDBACK

Feedback
Please use the online form (or the form at the end of this toolkit) to tell us about your Know Your Standards event or activity:

https://liaacdruginfo.wufoo.com/forms/know-your-standards-feedback/

Social Media
Twitter, Facebook and other forms of social media are effective methods of communication. You could use these channels to provide links to useful online resources in order to reinforce the messages and to support people to make informed decisions and choices about drinking.

Use the following hashtags on Twitter (and Instagram/Tumblr):

#knowyourstandards
#nswpubliclibraries
#druginfolibsnsw

Sample tweets:

Do you know how many standard drinks are in your favourite drink? #knowyourstandards @druginfolibsnsw

Do you know how much wine (beer/scotch/tequila/champagne etc) is in a standard drink? Visit XX Library to find out #knowyourstandards #nswpubliclibraries

Images
Post your Know Your Standards images to the drug info @ your library Facebook page or email images to drug.info@sl.nsw.gov.au for inclusion on Facebook and Pinterest. Please note that any images received will be attributed to your library and include a caption of the event. We understand most libraries now have consent to release photos for use in print and social media. When you send your photos you are agreeing to them being used in print and social media (online). If you do not want photos to be used online please do not send them. We look forward to receiving and sharing your photos.
REFERENCES

Guidelines and standards
Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol. National Health and Medical Research Council


Labelling of alcoholic beverages - a user guide. Food Standards Australia

Articles and reports


Statistics
Alcohol is the most widely used drug in Australia.

- 86.2% of Australians aged 14 years and over have drunk alcohol one or more times in their lives.
- 37.3% of Australians aged 14 years and over consume alcohol on a weekly basis.
- The age group with the greatest number of Australians who drink daily is 70+ years.
- Around 1 in 5 (18.2%) Australians over 14 drink at levels that put them at risk of alcohol-related harm over their lifetime.
- Around 1 in 6 (15.6%) people aged 12 years or older had consumed 11 or more standard drinks on a single drinking occasion in the past 12 months.
- 1 in 4 women drink alcohol while pregnant, even though the Australian alcohol guidelines recommend not drinking during this time.
- $7b is generated by alcohol-related tax. But alcohol costs society $15.3b annually.
- Alcohol caused more than twice as many deaths (3,494) than road accidents (1,600) in 2005.
- 1 in 10 workers say they have experienced the negative effects of a co-worker's use of alcohol.

See more at: http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au/topics/quick-statistics#alcohol
Further Information Regarding Standard Drinks for Different Alcoholic Beverages (alcohol content (%) & millilitres required).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol Beverages</th>
<th>Alcohol Content (%)</th>
<th>Millilitres Required for a Standard Drink</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beer - Heavy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton Draught</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>285ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Bitter (VB)</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>285ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fosters Lager</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>260ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crown Lager</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>260ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pure Blonde</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>285ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton Cold</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>320ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cascade Premium</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>255ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Boags Premium</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>255ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tooheys New</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>285ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tooheys Extra Dry</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>285ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corona</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>285ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coopers Pale Ale</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>290ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coopers Sparkling</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>220ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heineken</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>255ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beers - Mid Strength</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton Mid</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>375ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VB Gold</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>375ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXXX Gold</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>375ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pure Blonde Mid</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>375ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beer - Light</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cascade Premium Light</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>470ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fosters Light Ice</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>510ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Boags Light</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>425ml</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See [www.alcoholcontents.com/beer](http://www.alcoholcontents.com/beer) for more info about the alcohol content of different types of beer.
## Alcohol Beverages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol Beverages</th>
<th>Alcohol Content (%)</th>
<th>Millilitres Required for a Standard Drink</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red &amp; White</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>100ml</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** remember that wines vary significantly in alcohol content. Use the equation at the bottom of the table to work out the standard drinks content

### Spirits & liquors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol Beverages</th>
<th>Alcohol Content (%)</th>
<th>Millilitres Required for a Standard Drink</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vodka</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotch</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourbon</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacardi White Rum</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bundaberg Rum</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Daniels</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagermeister</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>36ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tequila</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baileys</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>75ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kahlua</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>60ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midori</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>60ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gin</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambuca</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30ml</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How are standard drinks calculated?

The formula for calculating standard drinks:

\[
\text{Volume of container in litres} \times \frac{\text{% alcohol by volume (ml/100ml)}}{0.789} = \text{The number of standard drinks}
\]

For example one stubbie (375ml) of full strength beer (5% alcohol by volume ABV):

\[
0.375 \times 5 \times 0.789 = 1.5
\]

*The specific gravity of ethyl alcohol is 0.789*
KNOW YOUR STANDARDS FEEDBACK

Use this form to report on your Know Your Standards activity.

Name: 

Library: 

What type of activity are you reporting on?

- Standard drinks demonstration to the public using resin kit
- Standard drinks demonstration to staff using resin kit
- Standard drinks demonstration to council staff using resin kit?
- Standard drinks demonstration using AlcoCup only
- On-training using AlcoCup
- Library display using resin kit
- Standard drink quiz
- Attended webinar
- Other ____________________________

How many people attended your event? (if applicable)

______________________________________________________

What Know Your Standards resources did you use? Tick all that apply.

- Standard drinks resin kit
- AlcoCup
- Know Your Standards pocket guides
- Know Your Standards post cards
- Know Your Standards quiz
- Standard drinks guide card
- Guidelines for low-risk drinking factsheet (PDF)
- Standard drinks chart (PDF)
- Pamphlets
- Books from your drug info @ your library collection
- Drug info pens
- Promotional poster
How would you rate the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The resin kit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The AlcoCup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The toolkit (documentation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know Your Standards pocket guides and postcards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard drinks guide card</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotional poster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
<td>⬜</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you receive any comments or feedback from clients or participants about your activity?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Any other comments?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please return to Drug Info – drug.info@sl.nsw.gov.au