

# BAC TO BASICS

**Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)** is the percentage of alcohol in the blood. Knowing how to manage BAC helps someone stay in control while drinking.

## THE GOLDEN ZONE

In the golden zone, BAC is low and a person may experience effects like increased relaxation and sociability with limited risk of negative outcomes. See the BAC charts below to learn how to estimate BAC.

GOLDEN ZONE	IMPAIRMENT	LEGAL INTOXICATION
Maximum benefits and less risk of negative outcomes.	Judgment and decision-making become impaired.	Increased impairment and greater risk of negative outcomes.
BAC .00	BAC .05	BAC .08

## ESTIMATING BAC

Alcohol is absorbed differently in different people, but these charts help estimate BAC when drinking. Actual BAC will depend on many factors, like sleep, illness, and other drugs. **If you see someone in danger, get them help.**

### BAC FOR FEMALES AFTER ONE HOUR

BODY WEIGHT (LBS)	NUMBER OF STANDARD DRINKS						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
100	.03	.07	.12	.16	.21	.25	.30
110	.02	.07	.11	.15	.19	.23	.27
120	.02	.06	.10	.13	.17	.21	.25
130	.02	.05	.09	.12	.16	.19	.23
140	.02	.05	.08	.11	.14	.18	.21
150	.01	.04	.07	.10	.13	.16	.19
170	.01	.04	.06	.09	.12	.14	.17
190	.01	.03	.06	.08	.10	.13	.15

Minor Impairment | Impaired Judgement & Reactions | Legally Intoxicated

### BAC FOR MALES AFTER ONE HOUR

BODY WEIGHT (LBS)	NUMBER OF STANDARD DRINKS						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
120	.02	.05	.08	.11	.14	.17	.20
140	.01	.04	.06	.09	.12	.14	.17
160	.01	.03	.05	.08	.10	.12	.15
180	.00	.03	.05	.07	.09	.11	.13
200	.00	.02	.04	.06	.08	.10	.12
220	.00	.02	.04	.05	.07	.09	.10
240	.00	.02	.03	.05	.06	.08	.09
260	.00	.01	.03	.04	.06	.07	.08

Minor Impairment | Impaired Judgement & Reactions | Legally Intoxicated

**Why different charts?** Females and males absorb and metabolize alcohol at different rates, even if they are the same weight.

## OPTIONS AND SUPPORT

Subscribe to [Wahoo Weekender](#) emails for substance-free weekend activities. Email [sympa@virginia.edu](mailto:sympa@virginia.edu) with the subject "subscribe wahooweekender".

Identify strategies for successful change of alcohol, marijuana, or other drug use with the confidential [BASICS](#) program. [virginia.edu/basicsprogram](http://virginia.edu/basicsprogram)

Connect with [Hoos in Recovery](#), a UVA community for people in recovery or considering recovery from alcohol or other drug use disorders. [virginia.edu/hoosinrecovery](http://virginia.edu/hoosinrecovery)

### Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

(434) 243-5150

Join a support group, or get one-on-one support and referrals to other services. Call to see how CAPS can best support you.

## WHAT IS A STANDARD DRINK?



BEER

12 oz.  
5% alcohol

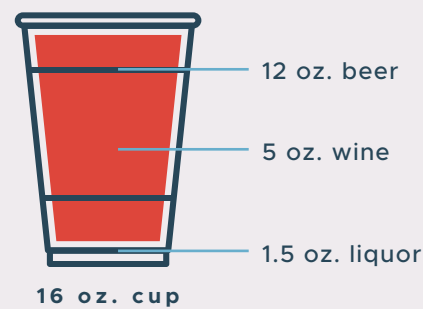
WINE

5 oz.  
12% alcohol

LIQUOR

1.5 oz.  
80 proof

### STANDARD DRINK IN A CUP



## HOO

KNEW ?

Almost all UVA students who drink use five or more safer strategies.\*

95.3% eat before and/or while drinking.

88.7% stay in a group (use the buddy system).

86.6% make plans to get home safely or use a designated driver.

81.6% avoid mixing alcohol with other drugs.

74.7% avoid drinking when sick or tired.

## TIPS FOR MANAGING BAC

### PACE & SPACE

Sip a drink, alternate with water or other caffeine-free drinks, and have no more than one drink per hour. On average, it takes nearly three hours for the alcohol in two standard drinks to leave the body.



### EAT BEFORE AND WHILE DRINKING

Alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream more slowly when there is food (especially protein, like meat or cheese) in the stomach.

### AVOID MIXING ALCOHOL WITH OTHER DRUGS

Some prescription and over-the-counter drugs (e.g. allergy antihistamines and narcotics) can increase alcohol's effects. Caffeine and other stimulants can trick a person into feeling less impaired, increasing the risk of dangerous choices. Not sure about a drug? Ask your doctor or pharmacist.

### USE CAUTION WHEN SICK OR TIRED

Alcohol leaves the body more slowly when a person is sleep deprived or ill.



### BE AWARE OF NEW ENVIRONMENTS

Alcohol can cause greater impairment when drinking different beverages or in new locations. Tolerance depends, in part, on environmental cues (place, people, beverages), not just the amount of alcohol consumed.



## HOO

KNEW ?

Most UVA students who drink limit alcohol in a new environment.\*

\*From the Spring 2017 Health Survey with responses from 1,010 UVA students