



Alcohol Awareness

Drink Driving - The Law

In the UK, the alcohol limit for drivers is **80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood, 35mg per 100ml of breath or 107mg per 100ml of urine.**

There is no fool proof way of drinking and staying under the limit. Even small amounts of alcohol can affect your ability to drive so the only safe advice is to **avoid any alcohol if you are driving.**

The Punishment

Anyone caught drink driving will be **banned from the road for at least 12 months, and fined up to £5,000. You can also be sent to prison for up to six months.** Imprisonment, the period of disqualification and size of fine depend on the seriousness of the offence.

If caught **drink driving** more than once in a 10 year period, you'll be banned for at least 3 years.

The Statistics

- On average **3,000 people are killed or seriously injured** each year in drink drive collisions
- Drinking and driving occurs across a wide range of age groups but particularly among young **men aged 17-29 in both casualties and positive breath-tests** following a collision.
- **If you think you won't get caught, more than half a million breath tests are carried out each year and on average 100,000 are found to be positive.**

You could lose your life, or someone else's if you get behind the wheel over the limit – don't drink and drive.

You as an Athlete

Consider the effects that alcohol has on your performance as a professional sportsman:

Health

- Less energy and less endurance capacity
- Calories from alcohol are stored as fat
- Lower salt levels - risk of cramps
- Dehydration – potentially causing muscle tears
- Effects take longer to wear off slowing reactions, affecting co-ordination, accuracy and balance
- Alcohol increases bleeding and swelling - longer to recover from injury
- Alcohol masks pain - your injury could be worse than you realise
- It can interfere with your normal sleep process and cause disruption in your digestive system by making your stomach produce more acid than normal
- Long term, excessive alcohol lowers testosterone levels and sperm quality and quantity in men. It can also reduce libido, and cause impotence

Personal

- There will be headline stories about you having been caught which will always be on record
- Severe punishments will be handed out by your club including possible suspension
- Damage of reputation to you, your team mates and the game
- Loss of sponsorship and endorsements
- Embarrassment and negativity from the public

If Alcohol is becoming a problem contact LPP Confidential Counselling

- RPA Members can access 4 free sessions with LPP's confidential counselling service. Talk to your PDM, email rpa.ccs@lppconsulting.org or call T+44 20 3219 3080

Further information:

- www.drinkaware.co.uk
- www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
- <http://think.direct.gov.uk/drink-driving.html>



Who does it impact?

Have you ever considered the impact that excessive drinking can have on those around you? **There are 13,000 alcohol-fuelled violent incidents a week round pubs and clubs in the UK. Around 40% of accident and emergency admissions are alcohol-related.**

Your awareness is impaired after a few drinks, and sometimes situations can be read wrongly and misinterpreted. Keep a clear mind, and don't find yourself in a situation that could have been avoided if you hadn't had so much to drink.

When to call time

Government health experts advise that you **shouldn't drink more than 3-4 units a day** if you're a man (**1 pint Stella = 2.95 units**).

Pace yourself; **Your liver can get rid of about one unit of alcohol an hour** – that's equivalent to **one small shot of spirits, less than half a pint of beer or less than one small glass of wine** – give your body the chance to catch up.

Set a limit on how many drinks or how much cash you're going to spend

Eat before you drink – a carb based meal will help absorb some of the alcohol in your system

Alternate between alcohol and water, keeping you hydrated and pacing the intake of booze

Or have a sober night!

