How much is it safe to drink and then drive?

The only safe way is not to drink if you are driving. Never offer a drink to someone else who is.

Department for Transport

www.think.gov.uk

Further copies of this booklet can be obtained from the PRTS Free Literature.

Great night out 12 month hangover

The drive home cost him his licence and his job.

DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE

www.think.gov.uk
How much can I drink and still be under the legal limit?
You can't calculate your alcohol limit - so don't try.
There is no safe guide as to how much you can drink and stay under the limit. The amount and type of alcoholic drink and your weight, sex, age and metabolism will all play their part.

The quantity of alcohol in a half-pint of beer is approximately the same as in a pub measure of port/sherry or a small glass of wine. But:
- many beers and wines are stronger than average
- drinks poured at home are usually more generous than pub measures
- cocktails and schooners are very strong; their high alcoholic content is often masked by the taste of fruit juice.

Any amount of alcohol will affect your judgement, starting with your judgement about whether you should have another drink.
At twice the current legal limit you are at least 50 times more likely to be involved in a fatal collision.

If I've been drinking in the evening is it ok to drive the next morning?
You may still be affected by alcohol the next day. Drive and you could lose your licence if you are still over the legal limit.
It's possible to absorb alcohol faster if you drink on an empty stomach or have long drinks mixed with fizzy mixers.

The buzz comes quickly...
Take half a pint of ordinary strength beer.

AFTER JUST
10 MINUTES
50% of the alcohol will be in your bloodstream.

50 MINUTES
After an hour all the alcohol will be in your bloodstream.

The booze goes slowly...
Take a Saturday night out drinking:

AT MIDNIGHT
You may have 200mg/100ml of alcohol in the blood.

AT 7.30am
When you get up, there is still 100mg/100ml in the blood and you are still over the current legal limit and unfit to drive.

BY MIDDAY
You're down to around 50mg/100ml and under the current legal limit. But your driving may still be affected and you could be guilty of an offence.

What will happen if I am convicted?
If you are convicted of drink driving...
- you'll have a criminal record;
- you won't be allowed to drive for at least a year;
- you could lose your job;
- your lifestyle could change dramatically;
- your insurance costs will rocket;
- you'll have real trouble hiring a car for the next ten years.

It will be worse if you kill someone...

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<th>IF YOU ARE CONVICTED OF</th>
<th>THE MAXIMUM PENALTY IS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Causing death by careless driving whilst under the influence of drink or drugs</td>
<td>10 years imprisonment and banned for at least 2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Driving or attempting to drive whilst above the legal limit or unfit through drink</td>
<td>6 months imprisonment plus a fine of £5,000 and banned for at least 12 months (3 years if you're convicted twice in 10 years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>In charge of a vehicle whilst above the legal limit or unfit through drink</td>
<td>3 months imprisonment plus a fine of £2,500 and a ban for at least 12 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refusing to provide a specimen</td>
<td>6 months imprisonment plus a fine of £5,000 and banned for at least 12 months</td>
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You could also become a 'high risk offender'...
- if you refuse to provide a specimen, or
- if you are convicted at 2½ times the limit, or
- if you are convicted twice in 10 years, in which case you will be banned from driving for a minimum of 3 years.

Then you would have to satisfy an approved doctor that you do not have a drink problem before you get your licence back (and you'd have to pay for the medical).

But I want to go out and enjoy myself!
You don't need to mix drinking and driving....
- book a taxi
- use public transport
- stay overnight
- drink soft drinks until you get home
- arrange for someone who is not drinking to drive – you can take it in turns.

On average 3,000 people are killed or seriously injured each year in drink drive collisions and nearly one in seven of all deaths on the road involve drivers who are over the legal limit.

Think! Don't be one of them.