

# OWN YOUR LIMITS

## READY-TO-USE MESSAGING

**OWN YOUR  
LIMITS**  
SERVE HONORABLY.  
DRINK RESPONSIBLY.

Find 58 ready-to-use messages below on topics such as responsible drinking; the impacts of alcohol on physical, social, financial, and psychological health; the risks of alcohol misuse including short- and long-term effects; and resources for checking drinking habits and getting help. These messages can be used on POD/POW/POM notes, in newsletters and publications, as well as on social media.

## Responsible Drinking

### How to Drink Responsibly

- What does responsible drinking mean? It means knowing and having control over your personal limits to protect yourself and those around you. Learn more about what it means to know your “own limit” (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/what-is-too-much/understand-your-drinking-limit/>) and drink responsibly.
- A drink you order in a bar or make yourself may contain more alcohol than a standard drink. Learn more about what a standard drink is for beer, wine and liquor so you can stick to your limit and keep track of your alcohol intake.
- A key part of responsible drinking is making safe driving decisions. Plan your rides ahead of time and remember never to drink and drive.
- It’s important to check in on your drinking habits often so you’re drinking responsibly if you choose to drink alcohol. Check your drinking habits with this [five-minute anonymous drinking habits quiz](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/drinking-habits-quiz/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/drinking-habits-quiz/>)!
- Did you know food slows down the alcohol absorption in your body? Commit to eating before and while drinking so you make safe, responsible decisions- plus it can help you avoid a crushing hangover.
- Looking for new ways to shed extra pounds, earn spare cash, improve sleep or have better sex? [Hitting pause on drinking](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/why/take-a-break-from-drinking/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/why/take-a-break-from-drinking/>) for a week, a month or even longer can lead to a number of these benefits!
- Hit the night out with friends the right way. Remember the fun is about the people you’re with, not how much you can drink.
- Next time you’re heading out to the bar, encourage your buddies to alternate every other drink for a non-alcoholic option so everyone can avoid a hangover the next day.
- Heavy drinking can alter your mindset and increase your chances of doing something you later regret. Commit to owning your limit so [you don’t wake up in the morning regretting any decisions you made](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/what-is-too-much/heavy-drinking/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/what-is-too-much/heavy-drinking/>).
- What does responsible drinking mean to you? Take a moment to check in with yourself, by asking what it means to you to drink responsibly. Everyone has different reasons to drink responsibly, [hear what it means to your fellow Service members](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/why/what-responsible-drinking-means/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/why/what-responsible-drinking-means/>).
- Driving buzzed IS driving drunk. Even a little bit of alcohol can make it risky to drive. Here are [five ways to avoid driving after drinking](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/risks-of-alcohol-misuse/serious-risks/drunk-driving/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/risks-of-alcohol-misuse/serious-risks/drunk-driving/>). Let’s face it, even if you think you’re safe to drive, it’s never worth the risk.
- Want the facts about drinking responsibly? Get the truth about alcohol and kick some of those [drinking myths](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/how/bust-drinking-myths/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/how/bust-drinking-myths/>) you’ve heard to the curb.
- Contrary to what you may have heard, there is a drinking limit and it looks different for everyone. [Stay informed](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/what-is-too-much/understand-your-drinking-limit/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/what-is-too-much/understand-your-drinking-limit/>) about what a safe limit drinking looks like for you.



- Avoid a night of going over your limit by having no more than one standard drink per hour and making every other drink a non-alcoholic one (water is best!).
- If you choose to drink, make sure to have a plan on how to get home safely. A rideshare app or cab, public transportation or catching a ride with a non-drinking friend are all safe methods to end your night out.

## Alcohol and Your Life

### Physical Health

- Think alcohol doesn't affect your sleep? Think again. [Loose the booze for a better snooze](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/physical-health/alcohol-and-sleep/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/physical-health/alcohol-and-sleep/) so you can wake up refreshed and ready to slay the day.
- Ever wonder what too much alcohol can do to your brain and body? [This short video](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/what-is-too-much/drinking-too-much-video/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/what-is-too-much/drinking-too-much-video/) explains the difference between drinking responsibly vs. too much drinking...and what you can do to protect yourself and have a good time!
- Fellas, are you trying to bulk up but [not seeing results](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/physical-health/mens-health/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/physical-health/mens-health/)? Calories in alcohol are empty and do not contain the nutrients you need to build muscles and can contribute to weight gain. Grab some water instead so you can reveal those muscles you've worked hard for!
- Don't let the empty calories in your beer sneak up in your gut. Find out [how many calories are in your drink](https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Calculators/calorie-calculator.aspx) (https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Calculators/calorie-calculator.aspx) so you can drink responsibly while maintaining a healthy weight.
- Did you know [using tobacco while drinking alcohol](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/physical-health/ditch-tobacco/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/physical-health/ditch-tobacco/) can increase your desire to drink more? It can also make your hangover worse. Next time you're out for the night out, say no to tobacco and alcohol use altogether so you can really have fun.
- Ladies, going one for one with a male buddy is never a good idea- studies show women will likely get drunker. [Protect yourself and your career](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/physical-health/live-your-best-life/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/physical-health/live-your-best-life/) by knowing your limits.

### Social Health

- Social media is a great place to share funny memes and keep in touch with your family and friends. Show the world your best self by [not drinking and posting](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/social-health/drinking-and-social-media/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/social-health/drinking-and-social-media/).
- Ever post something you wish you could take back? Before you reach for another alcoholic beverage, understand what your drinking limits are so you don't wake up [regretting an embarrassing post](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/social-health/drinking-and-social-media/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/social-health/drinking-and-social-media/) or DM.
- You can have fun at a party or bar without the booze. If you choose not to drink, be proud of your decision and consider encouraging your buddies to join you in ditching the alcohol for the evening!
- It can be hard to be the only one not drinking among your friends. However, remember your reason for not drinking and focus more on enjoying yourself with your buddies because those are the memories that will matter.
- Think booze makes everything better? Think again! Less interest in sex and erectile dysfunction are just a couple of bedroom related issues caused by drinking. [Here are seven things that are better without alcohol](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/social-health/fun-without-alcohol/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/social-health/fun-without-alcohol/). Conquer the bedroom not the bar!

### Financial Health

- Regularly drinking alcohol can be a hit to your wallet. Challenge yourself to [track how much you're spending on alcohol](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/financial-health/alcohol-spending/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/financial-health/alcohol-spending/) and learn how much you can save by cutting back.
- The [cost of a DUI can be more than \\$10,000](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/financial-health/cost-of-a-dui/) (https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/financial-health/cost-of-a-dui/) but the consequences can be worse! Don't let drunk driving cost you your health, career or life.



- You decided to cut back on buying booze, now what? Well, now your wallet has some extra cash that you can spend on something exciting like that new video game you've been wanting!
- Need to pay some bills but scrambling to find some money? Next time you hit the town, keep track of all your expenses and you'll see how one night of drinking may free up some dollars.
- Practice smart spending by bringing a set amount of cash with you based on the drinking limits you set for yourself. Non-alcoholic drinks are always a cheaper option too!

## Psychological Health

- What does stress plus stress equal- even more stress! Did you know drinking alcohol to blow off steam can actually increase your stress levels? Wild, right? Instead, you can use tools like **Chill Drills** (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/products/chill-drills-by-military-onesource-playaway-158/>) and **relaxation techniques** ([https://www.med.navy.mil/Navy-Marine-Corps-Public-Health-Center/Population-Health/Health-Promotion-and-Wellness/Relax-Relax/#Tab\\_ModuleID\\_120364\\_TabID\\_884](https://www.med.navy.mil/Navy-Marine-Corps-Public-Health-Center/Population-Health/Health-Promotion-and-Wellness/Relax-Relax/#Tab_ModuleID_120364_TabID_884)) to find your inner Zen.
- Using alcohol to unwind after a long day? Consider trying self-care **options instead like yoga or meditation** (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/psychological-health/relieve-stress/>).
- You can't control everything around you, nor should you have to- instead of using alcohol to cope, **focus on what you can control** (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/alcohol-and-your-life/psychological-health/cope-with-change/>) such as changing up your workout routine or reaching out to a friend you haven't talked to in a while for support.
- Getting physical can help improve your mood and make you less likely to reach for a drink to relieve stress.
- Going through some changes and feel stressed? Talk to your support system and ask them for help. Sometimes a listening ear is all you need.
- Banish Sunday scaries and wasting a precious weekend day nursing a hangover, by preventing one in the first place. **Small and simple changes** (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/how/tips-for-cutting-back/>) during your Friday and Saturday can reshape your drinking habits and up your weekend vibes.

## The Risks of Alcohol Misuse

### Short-Term and Long-Term Effects of Alcohol Use

- Slurred speech, dizziness and blurred vision are what **you may feel while you're drinking** (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/risks-of-alcohol-misuse/effects-of-alcohol/short-term/>). Set your drinking limit and stick to it so you can avoid these side effects!
- Alcohol can cause dehydration and make you feel weak the following day. Opt for water in between alcoholic drinks so you stay hydrated...your kidneys and body will thank you!
- Notice any difficulty getting some good zzzs? Alcohol can disrupt your sleep. Consider cutting back or taking a break from alcohol so you can be your best on and off duty.
- Your drinking decisions today **can affect your body in the long run** (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/risks-of-alcohol-misuse/effects-of-alcohol/long-term/>). Protect your liver, kidneys and heart from damage by cutting back on your alcohol intake.
- Do you plan on having children someday? Not only can alcohol increase your risk of infertility but birth defects can occur as a result of women who drink during pregnancy AND men who binge drink. It may be a good idea to adopt responsible drinking practices now to protect your baby's health or the opportunity to start a family.
- Is your tummy feeling funny? Alcohol may be the culprit! Your digestive system is an important one, so treat it well by taking a break from drinking.
- Every race has a different **genetic make-up that may change the speed** (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/risks-of-alcohol-misuse/effects-of-alcohol/what-does-alcohol-do/>) that your body breaks down alcohol and this can impact your own limit. Being familiar with a standard drink size, eating before drinking, alternating water, and just some of the easy ways you can have fun and drink responsibly.
- Factors like the amount of food or water someone's had before drinking or the amount of muscle someone has may change how alcohol impacts someone. Going one for one with your buddy might not be the best idea- because the effects of alcohol can vary based on these factors. Learn more about what factors can affect how quickly you might reach your limit and tips on how to drink responsibly.



- Excessive drinking can cause memory loss and brain damage. Take care of your brain by swapping the booze for non-alcoholic drinks like water or tea.

## Check your Drinking

### When to Seek Help

- Have you noticed a change in your drinking habits? Are you putting yourself or others in harmful situations while drinking? It might be time to [think about your drinking and your drinking habits](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/check-your-drinking/when-to-seek-help/think-about-your-drinking/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/check-your-drinking/when-to-seek-help/think-about-your-drinking/>).
- Are you [concerned about your alcohol use](https://ownyourlimits-media.s3.amazonaws.com/OYL_Alcohol-Use-Concerns_poster.pdf) ([https://ownyourlimits-media.s3.amazonaws.com/OYL\\_Alcohol-Use-Concerns\\_poster.pdf](https://ownyourlimits-media.s3.amazonaws.com/OYL_Alcohol-Use-Concerns_poster.pdf))? Speaking up early is a sign of strength and the key to getting help!

### Tools

- Commit to owning your limit by finding out [how many standard drinks](https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Calculators/Drink-Size-Calculator.aspx) (<https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Calculators/Drink-Size-Calculator.aspx>) are in your favorite alcoholic beverage.
- Alcohol can pack a lot of empty calories! Use this [alcohol calorie calculator](https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Calculators/calorie-calculator.aspx) (<https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Calculators/calorie-calculator.aspx>) to figure out where those extra pounds are coming from.
- Wondering how your social spending seemed to skyrocket out of nowhere? Use this [alcohol spending calculator](https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/tools/Calculators/alcohol-spending-calculator.aspx) (<https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/tools/Calculators/alcohol-spending-calculator.aspx>) to see how much of your paycheck is going to your livin' for the weekend plans.
- Just because a cocktail might look smaller than a pint of beer, doesn't necessarily make it less strong - use this [cocktail content calculator](https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Calculators/Cocktail-Calculator.aspx) (<https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Calculators/Cocktail-Calculator.aspx>) to learn about an average standard drink size.
- Blood alcohol content, or BAC, is the percentage of alcohol in a person's bloodstream within 30-70 minutes after drinking. Check out this [BAC calculator](https://www.alcohol.org/bac-calculator/) (<https://www.alcohol.org/bac-calculator/>) to get an idea of what your safe limit is.

## Get Help

### Support Resources

- If you think it's time to get help for the parts of your life that may contribute to your alcohol use, there are plenty of [resources to support you](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/get-help/support-resources/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/get-help/support-resources/>) such as Military and Family Life Counselors, Chaplains and more. Remember, you are not alone.
- Protect yourself and career before and incident happens. [Check in with your Service branch](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/get-help/how-to/service-specific-resources/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/get-help/how-to/service-specific-resources/>) to learn more about how to self-refer or self-identify for alcohol use concerns.

### Concerned About Others

- Have a buddy who you feel is struggling with their alcohol use? Talking to them about their alcohol use can be hard but there are [ways to show support](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/get-help/support-your-service-member/dos-and-donts/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/get-help/support-your-service-member/dos-and-donts/>) when having the discussion.
- [Reaching out](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/get-help/support-your-service-member/helping-a-peer/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/get-help/support-your-service-member/helping-a-peer/>) to a buddy or peer who is having difficulty with their alcohol use is not easy, but it shows you care. Your support can make a difference in their lives and may be just what they need.
- [Support and model responsible drinking](https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/how/how-to-model-and-support-responsible-drinking/) (<https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/how/how-to-model-and-support-responsible-drinking/>) not only for your own goals, but for your buddies around you. You can offer non-alcoholic beverages and alcohol-free cocktails the next time you host and remember to respect someone's decision to have one or none drinks while hanging out.

