

# Fit to drive



## DRINK DRIVING

**Q1: Have you driven when you may have been over the drink drive limit in the past 12 months, including the morning after?**

Although nine in 10 respondents (90%) claimed to be sure they had not exceeded the limit, a large proportion of those admit to taking a chance that may have led to just that, and will have increased their risk of crashing. Altogether, nearly a third (32%) admit driving after at least a small amount of alcohol or driving the morning after a heavy night, putting themselves and others at risk.

A much larger proportion of young drivers were sure they had driven over the limit, with only a third (36%) of drivers in this age group saying they were certain they had not exceeded the limit. This may be down to young drivers being more likely to drink drive, or being more realistic about whether they have exceeded the limit.

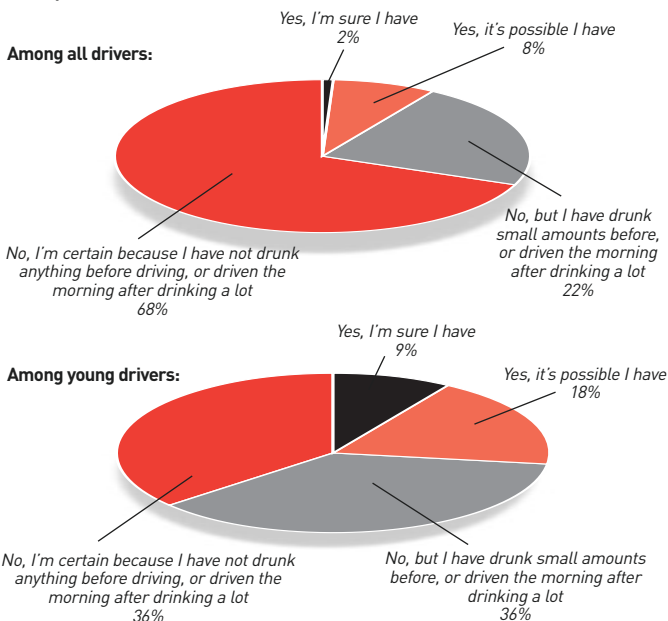
**Among all drivers:**

- 2% said yes, they are sure they have driven over the limit
- 8% said yes, it is possible they have exceeded the limit
- 22% said no, they are certain they have not exceeded the limit, although they have drunk small amounts of alcohol before driving or driven the morning after drinking a lot
- 68% said no, they are certain they have not exceeded the limit, because they have not drunk any alcohol at all before driving or driven the morning after drinking a lot

**Among young drivers:**

- 9% said yes, they are sure they have driven over the limit
- 18% said yes, it is possible they have exceeded the limit
- 36% said no, they are certain they have not exceeded the limit, although they have drunk small amounts of alcohol before driving, or driven the morning after drinking a lot
- 36% said no, they are certain they have not exceeded the limit, because they have not drunk any alcohol at all before driving, or driven the morning after drinking a lot

**Figure 1: Have you driven when you may have been over the drink drive limit in the past 12 months?**



**Q2: Within the past 12 months, have you driven first thing in the morning after drinking a lot of alcohol the night before?**

Worryingly, almost one in five drivers (19%) admits driving the morning after drinking a lot, when they are likely to still be impaired and posing a danger to themselves and others.

A significant minority – one in 17 (6%) – are doing this monthly or more.

- 2% said yes, about once a week
- 2% said yes, about once a month
- 2% said yes, less than once a month
- 13% said yes, once or twice
- 81% said no, never

**Q3: How much alcohol do you think it takes to affect your driving?**

Research is clear that even very small amounts of alcohol affect your driving, but the majority of drivers (60%) think it takes at least two units to affect them, while one in five (19%) estimate it takes three or four units or more.

- 41% said one small glass of wine, half a pint of average-strength beer, or one shot of spirits (or equivalent)
- 41% said two small glasses of wine, one pint of average-strength beer, or two shots of spirits (or equivalent)
- 13% said three small glasses of wine, one-and-a-half pints of average-strength beer, or three shots of spirits (or equivalent)
- 6% said four or more small glasses of wine, two or more pints of average-strength beer, or four or more shots of spirits (or equivalent)

**ADVICE FOR EVERYONE**

- Even very small amounts of alcohol affect drivers' reaction times and hazard perception, making them much more likely to crash. This is the case even if the driver doesn't feel drunk or even tipsy. So the only way to ensure you're safe if you're driving is not drink any alcohol, and as a passenger, to only accept a lift with a driver who's had no alcohol at all.
- Planning ahead to get home safely will help you avoid getting into an awkward or risky situation, such as having to refuse a lift from a driver who has had alcohol. If you're getting a lift back from a night out with someone, make sure they are 100% on board with not having any alcohol at all. Always have a plan B just in case a designated driver lets you down, or arrange from the outset to get a taxi or public transport instead if it's not someone you completely trust.

# Fit to drive

**Q4: If you had been relying on a designated driver to drive you home, and then found out they had been drinking, would you get in?**

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) admitted they would be willing to get a lift with a designated driver who had been drinking, at least in certain circumstances. Nearly half of those (30%) would put themselves at risk by getting a lift with someone who had had two drinks or more, providing they 'seemed safe'.

- 1% said yes, they probably would no matter what the circumstances
- 3% said yes, no matter how much they'd had, but only if they seemed safe to drive
- 10% said only if they had drunk no more than three drinks and seemed safe
- 16% said only if they had drunk no more than two drinks and seemed safe
- 33% said only if they had drunk no more than one drink and seemed safe
- 36% said no, definitely not, even if they'd only had one drink and seemed safe

**Q5: In the past 12 months, have you been a passenger in a vehicle when you think the driver may have been over the drink drive limit?**

A significant minority (12%) say it's a possibility they have been a passenger with a driver who was over the drink drive limit.

- 1% said yes, definitely
- 3% said yes, probably
- 8% said yes, possibly
- 89% said no, definitely not

## THE FACTS: DRINK DRIVING

- One in six deaths on UK roads are caused by drink drivers over the current legal limit (80mg alcohol per 100ml of blood).<sup>1</sup>
- Drivers with even 20-50mg alcohol per 100ml of blood are at least three times more likely to die in a crash than those with no alcohol in their blood.<sup>2</sup> This is because even small amounts of alcohol affect drivers' reaction times, judgment and co-ordination.
- Alcohol makes it impossible for drivers to assess their own impairment because it creates a false sense of confidence and means drivers are more inclined to take risks and believe they are in control when they are not.<sup>3</sup>



## End notes

1. *Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2012 Annual Report*, Department for Transport, 2013
2. *National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, 2010. Review of effectiveness of laws limiting blood alcohol concentration levels to reduce alcohol-related road injuries and deaths*, London: National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
3. *ibid*