

Drink Diary



Using a Drink Diary

Recording your drinking behaviour (how much you drink, where, when and with whom) is an extremely important part of any program to change your drinking pattern.

The information recorded will help you to:

- Understand the factors (moods, situations, events, people) that influence your drinking
- Work out for yourself appropriate ways to change
- Keep track of your consumption so that you can clearly see what changes you are making.

Keeping a diary is also useful as it:

- Helps to maintain motivation by providing a daily reminder
- Helps you develop greater self-discipline
- Gives you something concrete to discuss with your support person.



How to use a Drink Diary

- Your Drink Diary should be completed every day
- It should be completed as soon as possible after each drinking occasion
- Record accurately — the time — the drinking situation — the number and type of drinks you consumed
- Calculate the total number of drinks.



Filling in your diary in public is sometimes difficult, and it is easy to lose track of how many drinks you consume in one session. You may find it helps to keep a tally on the back of a coaster or save the caps from your drinks so you can fill out your diary accurately in private.

1st Drink Diary

Week commencing:

DAY	TIME	SITUATION (PLACE, PEOPLE, FEELINGS, THOUGHTS)	NUMBER & TYPE OF DRINK	TYPE
<i>e.g.</i>	<i>6pm</i>	<i>At home, kids driving me crazy</i>	<i>4 glasses of wine — 2 ports</i>	<i>6 drinks</i>
MON				
TUE				
WED				
THU				
FRI				
SAT				
SUN				
			TOTAL DRINKS FOR THE WEEK	
			TOTAL COST	

Interpreting your drink diary

At the end of the week:

- Calculate how much you spent on alcohol (cost)
- Calculate the total number of drinks you had for the week
- Circle the occasion on which your drinking reached its highest level
- Mark the situations, times, places, people, moods, events associated with heavier use. Let's call these high-risk situations
- Examine these high-risk situations — are there any patterns? For example, do you regularly drink too much at a particular time or place, with certain people, when you're experiencing a particular thought or feeling?

List the high-risk situations for you, and what you think you need to do in order not to drink so much in that situation. It may be useful to discuss this with a support person.

- Examine situations where you did well and drank within the guidelines you had set yourself. What strategies were useful in helping you to maintain control?
- Review your short-term goals for the next week. Use what you've learned to help target specific situations and to be realistic in choosing goals.

If you did not complete your drink diary every day what prevented you from doing so and what can you do in the future to overcome this problem.

For example:

- ⇒ Did you feel unable to recall the amount consumed after a heavy drinking session? A guess is better than nothing
- ⇒ Did you forget? Perhaps you could keep your drink diary in a more obvious or frequently-used location
- ⇒ Did you choose a time to do your recording that proved to be too difficult. For example, over breakfast, but you were often too rushed. Think of another time which will be more suitable.

The importance of accurate, daily self-monitoring cannot be over-emphasised. Self-control is achieved by changing automatic behaviours and habits into behaviours that are under your control. Keeping a diary is a powerful way to maintain motivation, awareness and control.



DRINK DIARY

WEEK COMMENCING:

DRINKING GOALS: 1.

2.

3.

DAY	TIME	SITUATION (PLACE, PEOPLE, FEELINGS, THOUGHTS)	NUMBER AND TYPE OF DRINK	TOTAL NUMBER OF DRINKS
MON				
TUE				
WED				

THU						
FRI						
SAT						
SUN						
					TOTAL DRINKS FOR THE WEEK	
					COST	



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