

Drinking: Adults' Behaviour and Knowledge in 2004

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Notes

1 Fieldwork period

The questions were included for two months, February and March, 2004. The previous drinking survey was carried out in March and April 2002. When the 2004 data was analysed a routing error was discovered, as a result of which some respondents were not asked about last week's drinking. Some of the information presented in previous reports is therefore not included here.

2 Units of alcohol

The standard definition of a unit of alcohol is that which contains 8g of ethanol. However, for calculating the number of units in a particular type of drink it is easier to use the equivalent volume measure, 10ml. If the percentage alcohol by volume (ABV) of the drink is known, the number of units can then be calculated as (volume of drink in mls x ABV)/10.

Thus one unit of alcohol is contained in half a pint of beer (284mls) which has an ABV of 3.5% ($284 \times 0.035 / 10$). The approximate equivalent in other types of drink is a small glass of wine and a single measure of spirits.

3 Socio-economic classification

From April 2001 the National Statistics Social-economic Classification (NS-SEC) was used for all official statistics and surveys. It replaced Social Class based on Occupation (SC, formerly Registrar General's Social Class) and Socio-economic Groups (SEG).

4 Presentation of data

A few respondents failed to answer some questions. These 'no answers' have been excluded from the analysis, and so tables that describe the same population have slightly varying bases. Weighted bases are presented in all tables and this may also cause slight variation in bases describing the same population.

Very small bases have been avoided wherever possible because of the relatively high sampling errors that attach to small numbers. In general, percentage distribution is shown if the base is 30 or more. Where the base is smaller than this, actual numbers are shown within square brackets.

The following conventions have been used in the tables:

0 = less than 0.5%

- = no cases

5 Sampling error

Since the data in this report were obtained from a sample of the population, they are subject to sampling error. The Omnibus survey has a multi-stage design, but in general the design effects associated with the results are small and thus the simple random sample estimates for sampling errors have been used to identify differences in this report.

Unless otherwise stated, differences mentioned in the text have been found to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

It is important to remember that factors other than sampling errors can affect the reliability of the results obtained from any survey. Other sources of inaccuracy include, for example, non-response bias and under-reporting, which are more difficult to quantify.

6 The sample

The sample population consisted of 3,528 adults aged 16 or over residing throughout Great Britain.

Summary

Introduction

- This report is the fifth presenting results from questions about drinking which were included on the ONS Omnibus survey at the request of the Department of Health.
- The questions were asked of 3,528 adults aged 16 and over in February and March 2004. This report looks at changes over the period 1997 to 2004.

Knowledge of units

- Eighty-three per cent of all respondents said that they had heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units. This was similar to the 81% who were aware of units in 2002, and higher than the 1998 figure of 75%.
- Fifty-six per cent of those who had drunk beer in the last year knew that a unit of beer is half a pint but nearly one in five gave an amount that was wrong.
- Knowledge of units among both men and women had increased between 1998 and 2004: for example, the proportion of men who drank beer who knew that a unit of beer is half a pint increased from 49% in 1997 to 59% in 2004. Similarly, the proportion of women who drank wine who knew that a unit of wine is a glass increased from 51% in 1998 to 66% in 2004.
- Drinkers who had heard of units were asked whether they kept a check on the number of units they drank: 13% said that they had (similar to the 2002 figure of 11%).
- There has been an increase from 54% in 1997 to 61% in 2004 in the proportion of the sample who had heard of daily benchmarks. There was no significant difference between men and women.
- Having heard of daily recommended levels did not necessarily mean that people knew what they were – 14% thought that the recommended daily maximum for men was 5 units or more, and 10% thought that for women, it was 4 units or more. There was no significant change in the knowledge of benchmark levels over the survey years.

- About one male drinker in ten (11%) had discussed drinking in the last year with their GP or someone else at the surgery, or a doctor or other medical person elsewhere. Women were less likely to have had discussions (only 8% had done so). There was no significant change since 2000.

Places where people buy alcohol

- The outlets where people were most likely to have bought alcohol in the last year were supermarkets (70%), licensed bars (66%), and restaurants (61%).
- The percentage of respondents who had bought alcohol from an off-licence or from a licensed bar in the past year fell over the survey period. Purchases from a restaurant increased from 57% to 61% over the same time period. The percentages for purchases from a branch of a supermarket or from other retail outlets were very similar to those found in previous survey years.
- Men were nearly twice as likely as women to have bought alcohol from a bar in the past week either for themselves or others to drink (38% compared with 22%) and twice as likely to have bought alcohol from an off-licence (8% compared with 4%).
- There was no difference overall in the proportions of men and women who had bought alcohol at a supermarket in the previous week: 26% of men and 24% of women had done so.
- There was very little change over time in the proportions of people who had bought alcohol from different outlets in the previous week.

Awareness of unit labelling

- Nearly a third (31%) of drinkers who had heard of units had seen unit labelling on alcohol, a significant increase from 23% in 2000.

- The most frequently mentioned outlet where unit labelling had been seen was a supermarket or shop (71%). Pubs were mentioned by a fifth, an increase since 2000 when 16% said they had seen unit labelling in pubs. One in eight (12%) mentioned off-licences, 6% mentioned restaurants and 4% nightclubs.

What people drink

- Half of all alcohol drunk was beer – 37% was normal strength beer and a further 14% was strong beer (defined as being 6% or more alcohol by volume). A quarter of alcohol consumed was wine or fortified wine, and a slightly lower proportion (16%) was spirits. Alcopops accounted for 6% of all alcohol consumed.
- In 2004, men were more likely to drink strong beer, lager and cider and less likely to drink normal beer, lager and cider compared with 2002, but the results were more in line with previous years. Among women, the relative popularity and amounts drunk of each type of alcohol changed little between 2002 and 2004.

Patterns of drinking

- About a quarter (26%) of those interviewed said that they had drunk on at least three days a week in the last twelve months – significantly lower than in 2002 (32%) but nearer to the 2000 level (28%). Ten per cent said they had had a drink almost every day in the last year. Slightly more, 15%, had not drunk any alcohol at all in the last year.

1 Introduction

This report is the fifth presenting results from questions about drinking which were included on the ONS Omnibus survey at the request of the Department of Health. The first report¹ covered questions that were included on the Omnibus in February and March 1997. The main topics were patterns of drinking, drunkenness, knowledge of alcohol units, and awareness of current advice on drinking.

Most of these questions were repeated a year later, in February, March and April 1998 and, in addition, some new questions were included about the frequency with which people buy alcohol from different types of outlet. The purpose of doing so was to provide an indication of the proportion of drinkers likely to be exposed to unit labelling of alcoholic drinks at the point of purchase, which was introduced for some types of drink sold in off-licences and other retail outlets in 1998. These results were published in 1999.²

The questions were asked again in March and April 2000,³ along with some new questions about where and with whom people drank last week. The same set of questions were asked in March and April 2002⁴ and again in February and March 2004. When the 2004 data became available a routing error was discovered, as a result of which some respondents were not asked about last week's drinking. Although the information on drinking days and maximum daily amount drunk last week presented in 2002 was correct, the sub-group described (those who drank at least once a week and drank in the past week) was a mixed population and so has not been shown in 2004. The information on where people drank and with whom presented in 2002 was also based on this mixed population and again has not been included here.

Respondents were also asked about their alcohol consumption, because how much people drink is likely to be an important determinant of their answers to questions on the other drinking-related topics covered by the survey. However, detailed information about alcohol consumption is not presented in this report, since more reliable estimates are available from the General Household Survey⁵ or the Health Survey for England,⁶ both of which use similar methodology for obtaining information on drinking, but have much larger sample sizes. Appendix A describes the way in which usual weekly alcohol consumption is estimated and presents some basic data on consumption as measured on the Omnibus Survey in 2004.

Since 2001 the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) has replaced Socio-economic group (SEG) on the Omnibus, as on other major surveys. Prevalence of drinking is therefore shown for 2004 by NS-SEC.

Appendix C gives a brief description of the Omnibus Survey, which is carried out throughout Great Britain most months with a representative sample of adults aged 16 and over: the relevant questions are included as Appendix D.

Notes and references

1. Goddard E (1997) *Drinking: adults' behaviour and knowledge*, TSO: London.
2. Goddard E and Thomas M (1999) *Drinking: adults' behaviour and knowledge in 1998*, ONS: London.
3. Lader D and Meltzer H (2001) *Drinking: adults' behaviour and knowledge in 2000*, ONS: London.
4. Lader D and Meltzer H (2002) *Drinking: adults' behaviour and knowledge in 2002*, ONS: London. Also available on-line at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=6990>
5. The latest GHS data on drinking are included in Office for National Statistics (2004) *Living in Britain: Results from the 2002 General Household Survey*, TSO: London. Also available on-line at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_compendia/lib2002.pdf
6. For the latest published HSfE data on drinking, *The Health Survey for England – trends*, available on-line at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/PublishedSurvey/HealthSurveyForEngland/HealthSurveyResults/fs/en>

2 Patterns of drinking

2.1 What people drink

The 2004 survey found that men were drinking 15.2 units of alcohol a week on average – about seven and a half pints of beer or the equivalent in other types of drink. Women's consumption was much lower, at 7.0 units, on average (see Appendix A). These figures are broadly similar to the latest data available from the General Household Survey,¹ which estimated average weekly consumption in 2002 as 17.2 units for men and 7.6 units for women. The total amount of alcohol consumed a week has not changed significantly between Omnibus surveys.

Of the total average weekly alcohol consumption of 10.7 units, half was beer – 37% was normal strength beer, and a further 14% was strong beer (defined as being 6% or more alcohol by volume (ABV)). A quarter of alcohol consumed was wine or fortified wine, and a slightly lower proportion (16%) was spirits. Alcopops² accounted for 6% of all alcohol consumed.

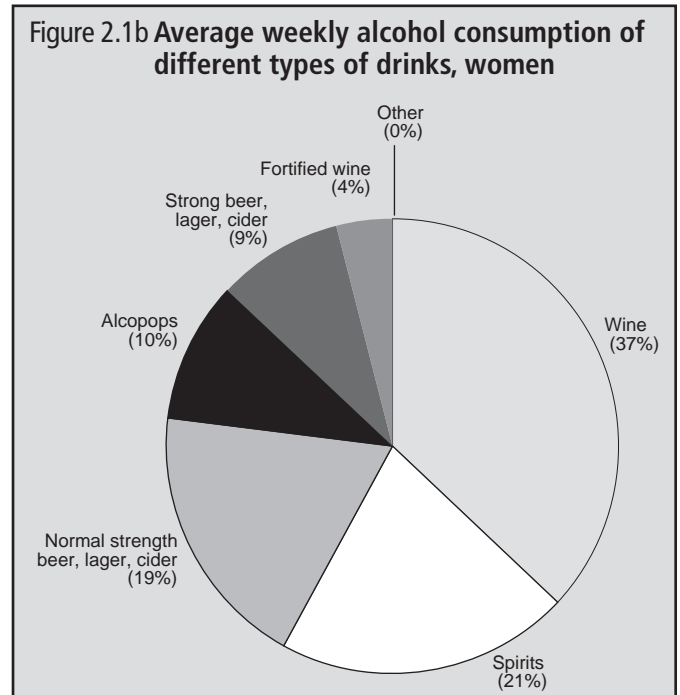
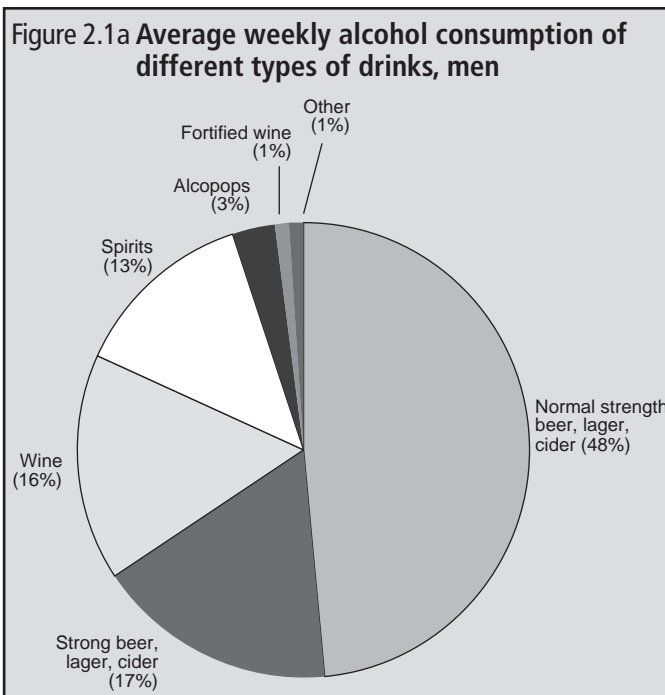
There were marked differences in the drink preferences of men and women. Compared with men, women were proportionately less likely to drink beers and more likely to drink wine, fortified wine, spirits and alcopops. In terms of amounts drunk, even though women drink much less than men overall, they drank

slightly more wine (2.6 units compared with 2.4 for men) and more alcopops (0.7 compared with 0.5 units a week). Women's beer consumption, however, was very much lower than men's – an average of 1.9 units a week, compared with 9.9 units.

In 2004, men were more likely to drink strong beer, lager and cider and less likely to drink normal beer, lager and cider compared with 2002, but the results were more in line with previous years. Among women, the relative popularity and amounts drunk of each type of alcohol changed little between 2002 and 2004. (Figure 2.1, Table 2.1)

Beers are the most popular drink among men of all ages, but decline with increasing age as a proportion of total alcohol consumed, from about two thirds (65%) of the consumption of those aged under 45 to just over half (53%) of the consumption of those aged 65 and over.

The amount of spirits as a proportion of men's total consumption was lowest among those aged 25–44 at 8%, rising to 23% for those aged 65 and over. As noted above, spirits, table wine and fortified wine form a much greater proportion of women's than of men's consumption. However, women's pattern of association with age is similar to that of men.



The consumption of alcopops showed a different association with age: alcopops formed a greater proportion of the young people's alcohol consumption compared with that of older people. For example, alcopops accounted for 35% of the alcohol consumption of women aged 16–24 compared with about 3% of those aged 45 or more. (Table 2.2)

Table 2.3 shows that there were some differences over time in the pattern of alcohol consumption for the youngest age group, those aged 16–24, but most of these fluctuations were probably due to the relatively small sample size. Among men, in 1998 alcopops accounted for 4% of the alcohol drunk by this age group, but in 2002 the proportion had increased to 17%, falling slightly (but not significantly) to 13% in 2004. The increase in the consumption of alcopops was offset by a fall in the consumption of beer, lager and cider. Among young women the proportion of their alcohol consumption that was alcopops tripled from 12% in 1998 to 35% in 2004, again offset by a fall in the proportion that was beer, lager and cider. Rather than indicating any longer term trend, these changes may just reflect changing fashions in drinks among this age group, whose behaviour is likely to be less settled than that of older people, and new drinks coming onto the market. (Table 2.3)

The total amount drunk by men in different socio-economic classes was similar, but there were differences in what they drank. Those in managerial and professional occupations were less likely to drink beers and more likely to drink wines: 27% of the alcohol drunk by men in managerial and professional occupations was wine, compared with only 7% of the consumption of men in routine and manual occupations. Nevertheless, beers were still the most popular type of drink in all occupational groups – even in managerial and professional occupations, over half of the alcohol drunk by men was beer.

Differences according to socio-economic classification were similar among women, except that wine, rather than beer, was the most popular drink among women in managerial and professional occupations, accounting for 47% of their alcohol consumption. Alcopops were most popular among women who were long-term unemployed or had never worked. (Table 2.4)

The popularity of different drinks varies greatly according to how much people drink. Beer – in particular strong beers – tended to be a greater proportion of the alcohol consumption of heavier drinkers of both sexes. Thus, strong beers accounted for 21%, and wine for 13%, of the alcohol drunk by men who were drinking more than 21 units a week in total. Among men drinking 1–10 units a week, the pattern was reversed: strong beers accounted for only 7%, but wine for 26%, of the alcohol drunk. (Table 2.5)

2.2 How often people drink

As well as being asked how often they had drunk each of the six main types of drink, respondents were asked how often, overall, they had had an alcoholic drink over the previous twelve months. About a quarter (26%) of those interviewed said that they had drunk on at least three days a week in the last twelve months – significantly lower than in 2002 (32%) but nearer to the 2000 level (28%). Ten per cent said they had had a drink almost every day in the last year. Slightly more, 15%, had not drunk any alcohol at all in the last year.

Men were more likely than women to drink frequently – 34% of men said that they drank on at least three days a week, compared with 21% of women.

Compared with older people, younger respondents were more likely to concentrate their drinking into one or two days a week – among men, for example, only 5% of those aged 16–24 drank every day, compared with 21% of those aged 65 and over. The proportion of non-drinkers was particularly high among older women – 22% of women aged 65 and over said that they had drunk no alcohol at all in the past year.

Among men, those in managerial and professional occupations were much more likely to be frequent drinkers than were those in other occupations. Among women the differences were not significant. Among both men and women, those who had never worked or were long-term unemployed were most likely not to drink at all – 22% of men and 38% of women were non-drinkers, compared with 8% of men and 12% of women in managerial and professional occupations. (Tables 2.6–2.8)

The characteristics discussed above may themselves be inter-related – for example, men are more likely to be in managerial and professional occupational groups than are women. A statistical procedure, logistic regression, was therefore used in the analysis to identify the influences that are independently associated with frequency of drinking.³ Overall, those most likely to drink frequently (at least 3 or 4 days a week) were:

- Men
- Older
- From managerial and professional occupational groups.
- In higher income brackets – for example those in the highest income group (over £31,200 per year) were nearly three times as likely to drink at least 3 or 4 days a week than those in the lowest income group (less than £4,160 a year)
- Living in England outside London. (Table B1)

Notes and references

1. Office for National Statistics (2004) *Living in Britain: Results from the 2002 General Household Survey*, TSO: London. Also available on-line at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_compendia/lib2002.pdf
2. The term 'alcopops' is used to describe flavoured alcoholic drinks and pre-mixed spirits such as Hooper's Hooch, Bacardi Breezers and Smirnoff Ice, and some ciders such as Schotts Cranberry Shock Cider. A comprehensive list was included in the briefing information given to interviewers.
3. Logistic regression is explained in detail in Appendix B and the factors included in the analysis are listed in Table B1.

Table 2.1 Average weekly alcohol consumption of different types of drink: by sex, 1997–2004

All persons

	Men					Women					Total				
	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
<i>Mean number of units per week</i>															
Types of drink															
Strong beer, lager, cider	2.6	2.5	2.3	1.8	2.6	0.9	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.6	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.1	1.5
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	8.4	8.3	8.2	8.7	7.3	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.3	1.3	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.0
Spirits	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.0	1.4	1.6	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.7	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.7
Fortified wine	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2
Wine	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.5
Alcopops	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.9	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.8	0.6
Total units*	15.9	15.7	15.5	16.2	15.2	6.9	6.4	7.9	7.5	7.0	11.1	10.7	11.5	11.7	10.7
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strong beer, lager, cider	17	16	15	11	17	13	8	9	5	9	16	13	13	9	14
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	53	53	53	54	48	22	23	22	17	19	43	43	42	41	37
Spirits	13	14	14	13	13	20	25	24	23	21	15	17	17	16	16
Fortified wine	2	1	1	1	1	7	7	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	2
Wine	12	14	15	17	16	34	34	33	37	37	19	21	22	23	23
Alcopops	3	1	1	4	3	4	3	9	12	10	3	2	4	7	6
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1707</i>	<i>2550</i>	<i>1617</i>	<i>1729</i>	<i>1580</i>	<i>1931</i>	<i>2962</i>	<i>1833</i>	<i>1883</i>	<i>1948</i>	<i>3638</i>	<i>5510</i>	<i>3450</i>	<i>3612</i>	<i>3528</i>

* Includes 'other' drinks for example cocktails.

Table 2.2 Average weekly alcohol consumption of different types of drink: by sex and age, 2004

All persons

Types of drink	Men					Women				
	16–24	25–44	45–64	65 and over	Total	16–24	25–44	45–64	65 and over	Total
<i>Mean number of units per week</i>										
Strong beer, lager, cider	6.4	2.6	2.4	0.8	2.6	0.9	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.6
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	10.2	8.3	7.0	4.8	7.3	1.4	1.6	1.2	0.5	1.3
Spirits	4.1	1.2	1.7	2.4	2.0	2.8	1.4	1.5	1.1	1.5
Fortified wine	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.3
Wine	0.9	2.8	2.8	2.2	2.4	1.4	2.7	3.6	1.5	2.6
Alcopops	3.4	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.5	3.6	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.7
Total units*	25.2	15.5	14.2	10.6	15.2	10.2	7.4	7.1	4.0	7.0
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strong beer, lager, cider	25	17	17	8	17	9	12	4	8	9
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	41	54	49	45	48	14	22	17	13	19
Spirits	16	8	12	23	13	28	19	21	28	21
Fortified wine	0	0	2	4	1	1	3	4	15	4
Wine	4	18	20	21	16	14	37	51	38	37
Alcopops	14	2	1	0	3	35	8	3	0	10
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>536</i>	<i>502</i>	<i>349</i>	<i>1580</i>	<i>234</i>	<i>709</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>358</i>	<i>1948</i>

* Includes 'other' drinks for example cocktails.

Table 2.3 Average weekly alcohol consumption of different types of drink of those aged 16–24: by sex, 1997–2004

Persons aged 16–24

	Men					Women					Total				
	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
<i>Mean number of units per week</i>															
Types of drink															
Strong beer, lager, cider	4.5	5.8	3.9	3.6	6.4	1.6	2.4	2.0	0.9	0.9	3.5	3.7	2.9	2.2	3.4
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	11.9	11.6	11.9	9.7	10.2	3.2	3.5	3.9	2.1	1.4	7.8	7.3	7.7	5.9	5.4
Spirits	1.1	2.4	3.8	2.1	4.1	2.9	1.3	3.4	2.6	2.8	1.2	2.7	3.6	2.3	3.4
Fortified wine	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1
Wine	0.8	0.9	1.3	0.8	0.9	1.4	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.3	1.2
Alcopops	1.7	0.9	1.3	3.4	3.4	1.1	1.2	3.4	4.3	3.6	1.5	1.0	2.4	3.8	3.5
Total units*	20.1	22.2	22.4	19.7	25.2	10.5	10.4	14.8	12.0	10.2	15.4	16.2	18.4	15.8	17.0
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strong beer, lager, cider	22	26	17	18	25	15	23	14	8	9	23	23	16	14	20
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	59	52	53	49	41	31	34	26	18	14	51	45	42	37	32
Spirits	6	11	17	11	16	28	13	23	22	28	8	17	20	15	20
Fortified wine	1	1	1	1	0	4	3	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
Wine	4	4	6	4	4	13	16	13	15	14	8	7	9	8	7
Alcopops	9	4	6	17	14	11	12	23	36	35	10	6	13	24	21
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>238</i>	<i>335</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>225</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>343</i>	<i>222</i>	<i>221</i>	<i>225</i>	<i>234</i>	<i>460</i>	<i>678</i>	<i>419</i>	<i>450</i>	<i>426</i>

* Includes 'other' drinks for example cocktails.

Table 2.4 Average weekly alcohol consumption of different types of drink: by sex and socio-economic classification (NS-SEC), 2004

All persons

Types of drink	Managerial and professional occupations	Intermediate occupations	Routine and manual occupations	Never worked and long-term unemployed	Total
<i>Mean number of units per week</i>					
Men					
Strong beer, lager, cider	1.4	1.9	3.6	4.9	2.6
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	6.6	7.7	8.3	5.4	7.3
Spirits	2.0	1.6	2.4	1.2	2.0
Fortified wine	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
Wine	3.9	2.5	1.2	2.4	2.4
Alcopops	0.5	0.2	0.5	1.5	0.5
Total units*	14.5	14.1	16.3	15.5	15.2
	%	%	%	%	%
Strong beer, lager, cider	10	13	22	32	17
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	46	55	51	35	48
Spirits	14	12	15	8	13
Fortified wine	1	1	1	1	1
Wine	27	17	7	16	16
Alcopops	3	1	3	10	3
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>566</i>	<i>273</i>	<i>613</i>	<i>127</i>	<i>1580</i>
<i>Mean number of units per week</i>					
Women					
Strong beer, lager, cider	0.6	0.3	0.9	0.3	0.9
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	1.3	0.9	1.6	0.4	1.4
Spirits	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.1	2.8
Fortified wine	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.1
Wine	3.7	3.1	2.0	0.8	1.4
Alcopops	0.4	0.4	0.8	1.8	3.6
Total units*	7.8	6.9	7.2	4.5	10.2
	%	%	%	%	%
Strong beer, lager, cider	8	4	13	7	9
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	17	14	22	9	14
Spirits	21	24	22	24	28
Fortified wine	3	7	4	2	1
Wine	47	45	28	18	14
Alcopops	5	6	11	40	35
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>533</i>	<i>455</i>	<i>765</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>1948</i>

* Includes 'other' drinks for example cocktails.

Table 2.5 Average weekly alcohol consumption of different types of drink: by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption, 2004

Drinkers

	Men Less than 1 unit	1–10 units	11–21 units	22 units and over	All drinkers	Women Less than 1 unit	1–7 units	8–14 units	15 units and over	All drinkers
<i>Mean number of units per week</i>										
Types of drink										
Strong beer, lager, cider	0.0	0.4	1.5	9.5	3.0	0.0	0.1	0.4	3.8	0.7
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	0.1	2.5	8.6	21.0	8.4	0.1	0.5	1.9	5.9	1.5
Spirits	0.1	0.9	2.0	5.8	2.3	0.1	1.0	2.4	6.5	1.8
Fortified wine	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.5	1.0	0.3
Wine	0.1	1.4	3.4	5.6	2.6	0.1	1.9	5.0	8.8	3.1
Alcopops	0.0	0.1	0.4	1.8	0.6	0.0	0.3	1.1	3.3	0.8
Total units*	0.3	5.4	16.1	44.6	17.3	0.3	4.0	11.3	29.4	8.3
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strong beer, lager, cider	0	7	9	21	17	0	3	4	13	8
Normal strength beer, lager, cider	33	46	53	47	49	33	13	17	20	18
Spirits	33	17	12	13	13	33	25	21	22	22
Fortified wine	0	2	1	1	1	0	5	4	3	4
Wine	33	26	21	13	15	33	48	44	30	37
Alcopops	0	2	3	4	4	0	8	10	11	10
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>538</i>	<i>321</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>1388</i>	<i>403</i>	<i>717</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>256</i>	<i>1647</i>

* Includes 'other' drinks for example cocktails.

Table 2.6 Self-reported drinking frequency: by sex, 1997–2004

All persons

Drinking frequency	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
	%	%	%	%	%
Men					
Almost every day	14	14	12	16	12
5 or 6 days a week	5	4	5	5	4
3 or 4 days a week	16	18	18	16	17
Once or twice a week	33	36	34	32	34
Once or twice a month	10	12	11	12	10
Once every couple of months	6	4	5	5	5
Once or twice a year	5	4	5	4	6
Not at all in last year	11	8	10	9	13
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1690</i>	<i>2550</i>	<i>1608</i>	<i>1728</i>	<i>1570</i>
	%	%	%	%	%
Women					
Almost every day	9	9	8	9	8
5 or 6 days a week	2	2	3	3	3
3 or 4 days a week	9	11	12	13	10
Once or twice a week	32	30	31	29	29
Once or twice a month	16	16	15	15	16
Once every couple of months	9	9	9	9	9
Once or twice a year	9	10	9	8	9
Not at all in last year	15	13	13	14	16
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1926</i>	<i>2959</i>	<i>1829</i>	<i>1881</i>	<i>1940</i>
	%	%	%	%	%
All					
Almost every day	11	11	10	13	10
5 or 6 days a week	4	3	4	4	3
3 or 4 days a week	12	14	14	15	13
Once or twice a week	32	33	33	30	31
Once or twice a month	13	14	13	14	13
Once every couple of months	8	6	7	7	7
Once or twice a year	7	7	7	6	7
Not at all in last year	13	11	12	12	15
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>3616</i>	<i>5510</i>	<i>3438</i>	<i>3606</i>	<i>3508</i>

Table 2.7 Self-reported drinking frequency: by sex and age, 2004

All persons

Drinking frequency	Men					Women				
	16–24	25–44	45–64	65 and over	Total	16–24	25–44	45–64	65 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Almost every day	5	9	13	21	12	2	4	13	13	8
5 or 6 days a week	6	3	4	5	4	1	2	4	3	3
3 or 4 days a week	19	18	18	12	17	4	10	13	5	10
Once or twice a week	38	38	34	24	34	34	32	30	20	29
Once or twice a month	8	10	10	9	10	26	17	14	9	16
Once every couple of months	7	4	4	4	5	9	10	8	10	9
Once or twice a year	3	4	6	9	6	6	7	7	18	9
Not at all in last year	14	12	11	16	13	17	17	12	22	16
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>533</i>	<i>498</i>	<i>346</i>	<i>1570</i>	<i>235</i>	<i>704</i>	<i>647</i>	<i>354</i>	<i>1940</i>

Table 2.8 Self-reported drinking frequency: by sex and socio-economic classification (NS-SEC), 2004

All persons

Drinking frequency	Managerial and professional occupations	Intermediate occupations	Routine and manual occupations	Never worked and long-term unemployed	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Men					
Almost every day	17	11	10	7	12
5 or 6 days a week	5	4	4	4	4
3 or 4 days a week	21	15	16	11	17
Once or twice a week	31	35	34	40	34
Once or twice a month	11	10	9	5	10
Once every couple of months	3	5	5	9	5
Once or twice a year	4	5	8	3	6
Not at all in last year	8	15	14	22	13
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>559</i>	<i>271</i>	<i>611</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>1570</i>
Women					
Almost every day	10	12	7	3	8
5 or 6 days a week	3	2	4	0	3
3 or 4 days a week	15	10	8	3	10
Once or twice a week	36	28	28	19	29
Once or twice a month	12	16	17	24	16
Once every couple of months	6	10	11	6	9
Once or twice a year	6	9	11	8	9
Not at all in last year	12	14	14	38	16
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>529</i>	<i>451</i>	<i>763</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>1940</i>

3 Drinking-related knowledge and behaviour

3.1 Knowledge of units

Advice on the amount that people should drink has to be given in such a way that it applies to the wide range of different types of alcohol people may drink, which can have very different alcohol contents. Advice on drinking is therefore given in terms of units, and for people to be able to monitor how much they drink, they need to understand what is meant by a unit of alcohol, and how many units different drinks contain.

Asked whether they had heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units, 83% of respondents said that they had. This was similar to the 81% who were aware of units in 2002, and higher than the 1998 figure of 75%.

Men were no more likely than women to have heard of alcohol units (84% and 83% respectively). There was a more marked difference in relation to alcohol consumption. The more people drank, the more likely they were to have heard of measuring alcohol in units: 91% of men who drank 51 units and over and women who drank 36 units and over had heard of units, compared with only 55% of those who did not drink at all.

There was also a strong association with age. Younger respondents were more likely to know about alcohol units than were older people: 88% of those aged 25–44 had heard of alcohol units, compared with only 68% of those aged 65 and over. This would be expected, given that knowledge of units was related to alcohol consumption, and young people drink more, on average, than older people in each age group, however, heavier drinkers were more likely than others to have heard of measuring alcohol in units. (Figures 3.1 and 3.2, Tables 3.1–3.3)

Although average weekly alcohol consumption is not strongly related to socio-economic classification, there were marked differences in awareness of units between those in different occupations. Those in managerial and professional occupational groupings were the most likely to have heard of measuring alcohol in units, and those in routine and manual occupations and those who had never worked were the least likely. (Table 3.4)

The characteristics discussed above may themselves be inter-related, so logistic regression was used in the analysis to identify the influences that are independently associated with knowledge of measuring alcohol consumption in units.¹ Overall, those most likely to know about units were:

- Younger.
- From managerial, professional and intermediate occupational groups.
- In higher income groups.
- Living outside London.
- Drinkers.

(Table B2)

It is especially important that people are aware of the alcohol content of drinks they themselves drink, so for each of the most common types of drink, respondents who had drunk that particular drink in the last year were asked if they knew what was a unit of that drink.

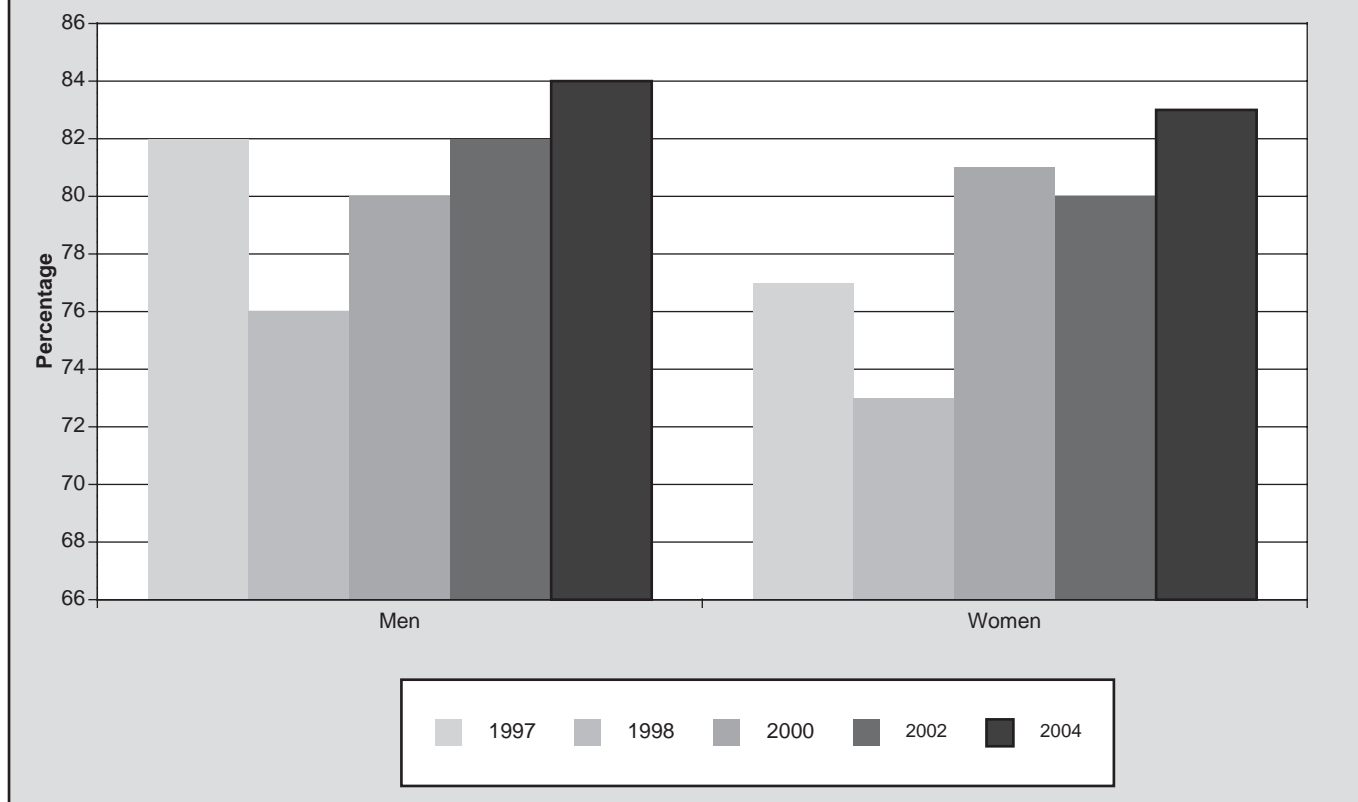
In 2004, over a half (56%) of those who had drunk beer in the last year knew that a unit of beer is half a pint, but about one in five (19%) gave an amount that was wrong. The most common wrong answer (mentioned by 16% of those who drank beer in the last year) was that a unit of beer was one pint – twice the correct amount. Twenty four per cent of beer drinkers either had not heard of units, or couldn't say what a unit of beer was.

Awareness of the alcohol content of wine and spirits was a little higher: 67% of wine drinkers knew that one glass was a unit of wine and 64% of those who drank spirits were aware that a single measure was one unit, but only 52% of those who drank fortified wines (such as sherry or martini) knew that a small glass was one unit.

Knowledge among both men and women has increased between 1998 and 2004: for example, the proportion of men who drank beer who knew that a unit of beer is half a pint increased from 49% in 1997 to 59% in 2004. Similarly, women who drank wine who knew that a unit of wine is a glass increased from 51% in 1998 to 66% in 2004.

It is perhaps particularly desirable that those who often drink a particular type of alcohol and those who drink a lot of it when they do drink, should be aware of the alcohol content of that type of drink. Those who drank beer and those who drank wine at least once a week were much more likely to know what a unit of that drink was than were those who seldom drank these drinks, but even so, about a third of these frequent beer drinkers and a quarter of these frequent wine drinkers were not aware of the number of units in what they were drinking. Differences according to frequency of consumption were much less marked for those who drank spirits and fortified wine.

Figure 3.1 Percentage who said they had heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units: by sex, 1997–2004



Given the association with average weekly alcohol consumption, it might be expected that those who usually drank more than 8 units (6 units for women) of a particular drink when they drank it would be more likely to know how much one unit was than were those who drank only small amounts. This was true on the whole in 1997, but in subsequent years there was no clear pattern of this kind, particularly for wine. (Tables 3.5–3.10)

Drinkers who had heard of units were asked whether or not they kept a check on the number of units they drank: 13% said that they did (similar to the 2002 figure of 11%). It should be noted, however, that since only around half of those who drank each type of drink knew what a unit of that drink was, it is likely that in some cases the check they were keeping was inaccurate. (Since most individuals drink more than one type of alcohol, it was not feasible to assess this directly from the survey data).

Although men are much more likely than women to drink heavily they were not significantly more likely to keep a check in terms of units on how much they drank – overall, 13% of both men and women who had heard of units did so. Those who did keep a check on units were equally likely to do so on a weekly basis as on a daily basis as suggested by the government’s current advice on sensible drinking.

The percentage of men who kept a daily check on the number of units drunk increased from 2% in 2002 to 4% in 2004. The percentage who kept a weekly check also increased significantly over the time period. This was different to the pattern found among women, where although the percentage who kept a check on the number of units drunk on a daily basis increased significantly from 2% in 2002 to 4% in 2004, the percentage who kept a check on a weekly basis decreased significantly from 6% to 4% over the same period.

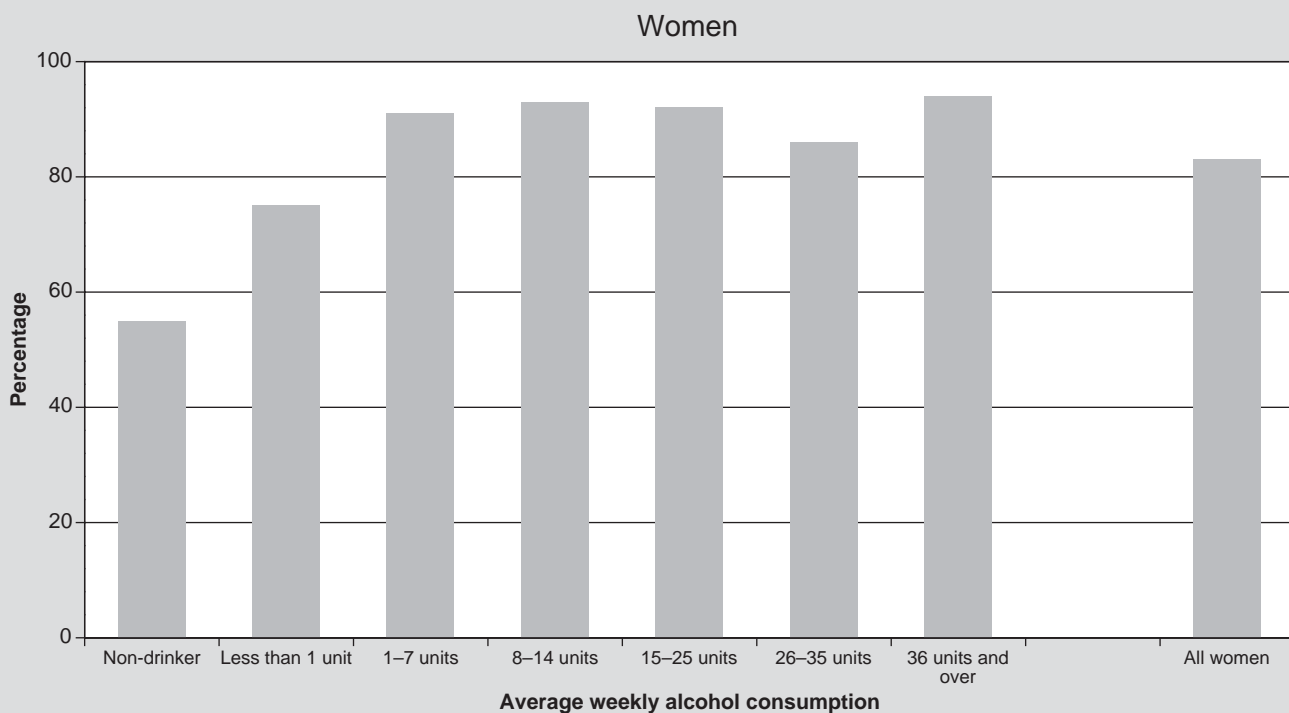
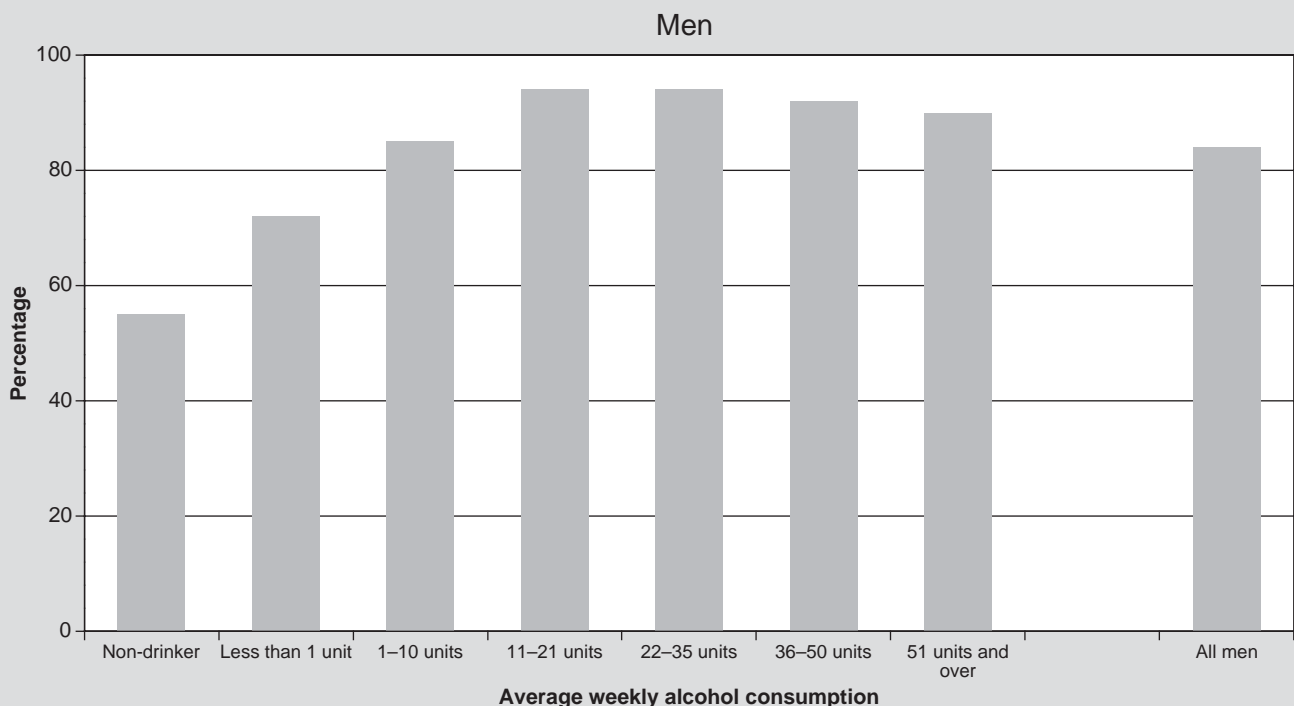
Among drinkers who had heard of units, those who drank less than one unit a week were least likely to say they kept a check on how much they drank in terms of units (6% of men and 10% of women) but there were no other significant differences.

(Tables 3.11–3.12)

3.2 Knowledge of daily benchmarks

Current government advice on drinking^{2,3} is that for men, consistently drinking 4 or more units a day is not recommended: for women the equivalent amount is 3 units a day. All respondents, regardless of how much they drank, or whether they drank at all, were asked if they had ever heard of the

Figure 3.2 Percentage who said they had heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units, by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption



recommended maximum number of alcohol units that people should drink in a day. Those who had heard of it were asked to say what this was for men and for women.

There has been an increase from 54% in 1997 to 61% in 2004 in the proportion of the sample who had heard of daily benchmarks. There was no significant difference between men and women.

Heavier drinkers were much more likely to have heard of daily benchmarks than were non-drinkers or those who drank very little. For example, among men, 71% of those who drank more than 21 units a week had heard of daily consumption levels compared with only 40% of non-drinkers.

(Figure 3.3, Tables 3.13 and 3.14)

Having heard of daily recommended levels did not necessarily mean that people knew what they were – indeed, more than a third (36%) of respondents who said they had heard of them could not attempt an answer to that question. Fifty per cent of respondents thought that for men, drinking up to 4 units a day was within the guidelines, and 54% said that for women, drinking a maximum of three units a day was recommended. However, 14% thought that the recommended daily maximum for men

was 5 units or more, and 10% thought that for women, it was 4 units or more. There was no significant change in the knowledge of benchmark levels over the survey years.

Tables 3.16 and 3.17 show how respondents' awareness of the guidelines for themselves varied according to their average weekly alcohol consumption. Generally, heavier drinkers were more likely to know the recommended daily maximum amounts than were those who drank little or nothing. (Tables 3.15–3.17)

3.3 Discussion of drinking with GPs or other health professionals

As well as being asked about their awareness of general advice on how much people should drink, respondents were also asked if they had had any discussions with their GP or someone else at the surgery, or a doctor or other medical person elsewhere about drinking in the last year.

About one male drinker in ten (11%) had had such discussions in the last year, the majority of these with their GP. Women were less likely to have had discussions – only 8% had done so – but again most discussions were with GPs. There was no significant change since 2000.

Figure 3.3 Percentage of drinkers who knew what a unit of each type of drink was, 1997–2004

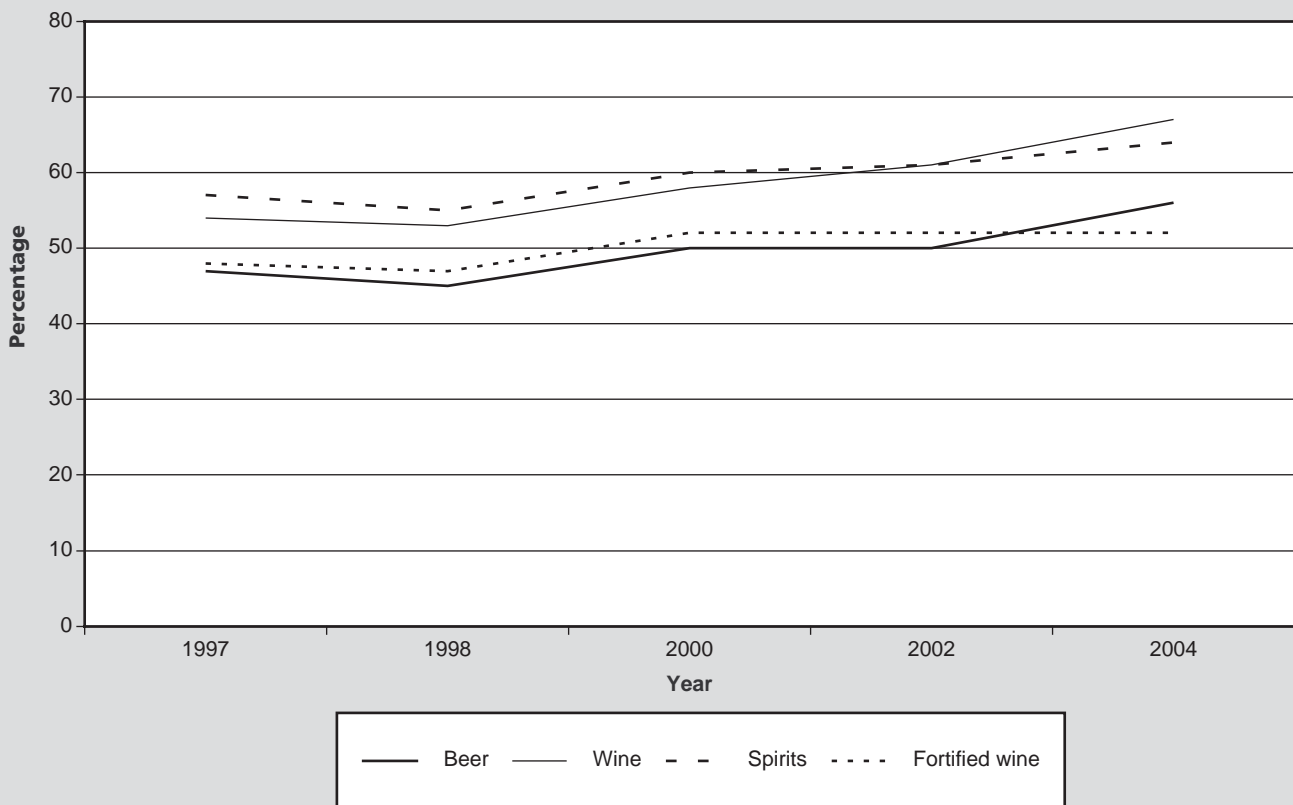
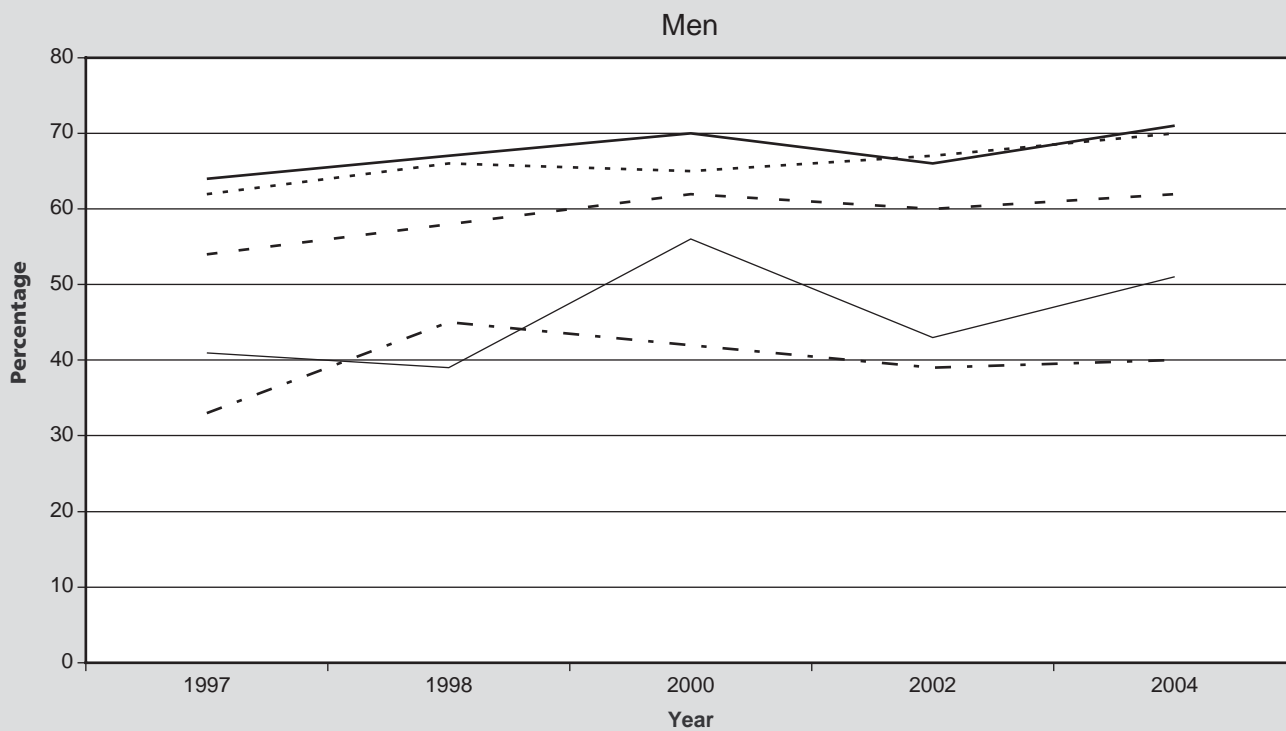
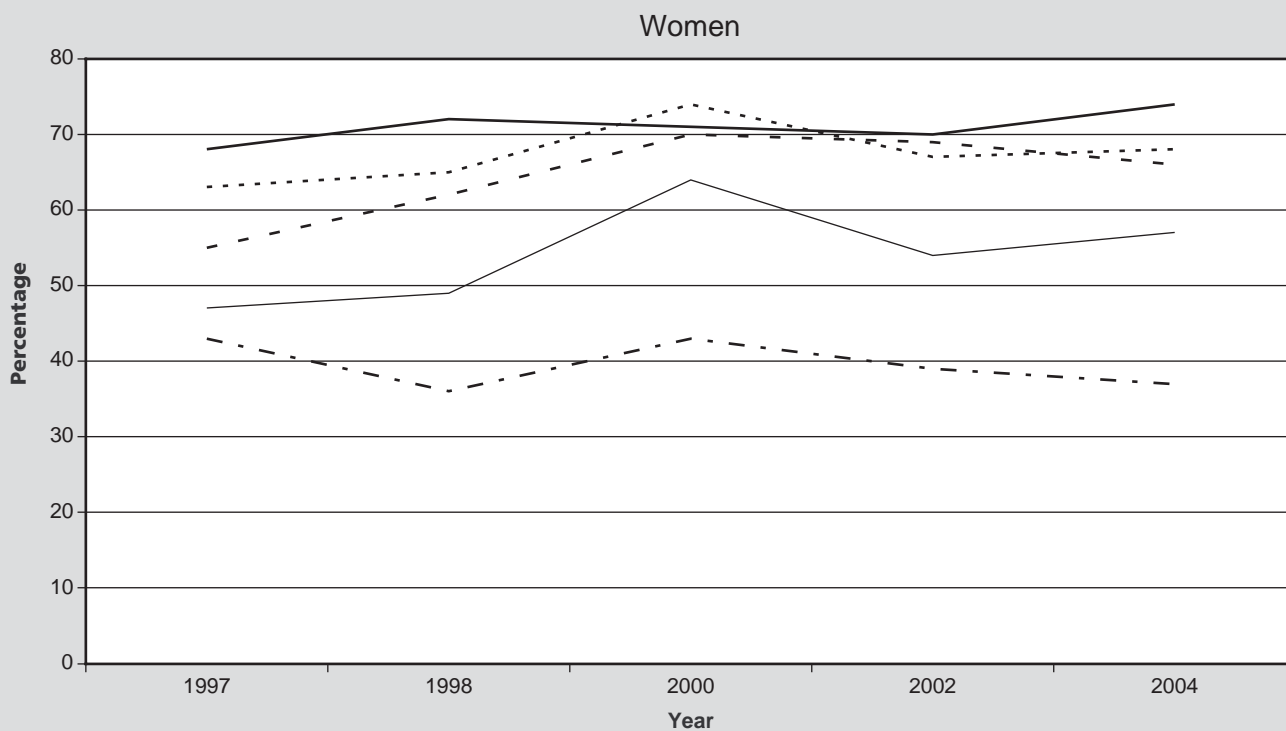


Figure 3.4 Percentage who said they had heard of daily benchmarks: by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption, 1997–2004



- . . Non-drinker
— Less than 1 unit
- - 1-10 units
. . . 11-21 units
- - - 22 units and over



- . . Non-drinker
— Less than 1 unit
- - 1-7 units
. . . 8-14 units
- - - 15 units and over

Among both men and women, older drinkers were more likely to have discussed drinking than their younger counterparts (for example, 14% of men drinkers aged 65 and over compared with only 7% of those aged 16–24).

As would be expected, heavier drinkers, both men and women, were more likely to have discussed their drinking with their GP or other medical person in the last year than light or moderate drinkers. However, these results should be interpreted with caution because it is not possible to know whether drinkers have altered their drinking habits since these discussions.

As it is possible that these characteristics are inter-related, logistic regression was used in the analysis. Overall, heavy drinkers (men drinking 22 units or more a week, and women drinking 15 units or more a week) were two to three times as likely as light drinkers to have discussed their alcohol consumption in the last year. Men were also more likely to have discussed their drinking with a GP or other medical person. Young drinkers were less likely than older ones to have discussed their drinking.

(Tables 3.18–3.21 and B3)

Notes and references

1. Logistic regression is explained in detail in Appendix B and the factors included in the analysis are listed in Tables B2 and B3.
2. Department of Health (1995) *Sensible drinking: the report of an inter-departmental working group*, Department of Health: London. Also available on-line at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/08/47/02/04084702.pdf>
3. Department of Health (2004) *Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy*, Department of Health: London. Also available on-line at <http://www.strategy.gov.uk/files/pdf/al04SU.pdf>

Table 3.1 Percentage of respondents who said they had heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units: by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption, 1997–2004

<i>All persons</i>					
Average weekly alcohol consumption	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
<i>Percentage who had heard of units</i>					
Men					
Non-drinker	55	53	56	51	55
Less than 1 unit	71	56	72	65	72
1–10 units	83	76	80	86	85
11–21 units	88	83	86	88	94
22–35 units	91	85	91	92	94
36–50 units	89	89	84	92	92
51 units and over	92	86	84	87	90
Total	82	76	80	82	84
<i>Bases=100%</i>					
Non-drinker	178	203	151	158	186
Less than 1 unit	191	267	183	190	170
1–10 units	561	903	545	548	539
11–21 units	353	568	353	392	321
22–35 units	222	347	207	259	189
36–50 units	98	113	92	89	77
51 units and over	91	150	83	95	90
Total	1695	2550	1614	1731	1571
Women					
Non-drinker	52	42	52	49	55
Less than 1 unit	71	64	75	72	75
1–7 units	81	80	86	88	91
8–14 units	90	86	91	91	93
15–25 units	87	90	92	90	92
26–35 units	95	90	94	90	86
36 units and over	90	91	91	89	94
Total	77	73	81	80	83
<i>Bases=100%</i>					
Non-drinker	271	379	242	253	294
Less than 1 unit	451	694	412	431	394
1–7 units	672	1070	611	637	717
8–14 units	261	439	299	281	278
15–25 units	181	259	152	170	166
26–35 units	43	70	49	57	42
36 units and over	48	49	67	53	49
Total	1928	2959	1830	1882	1940

Table 3.1 *continued* Percentage of respondents who said they had heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units: by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption, 1997–2004

<i>All persons</i>					
Average weekly alcohol consumption	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
<i>Percentage who had heard of units</i>					
All					
Non-drinker	53	46	54	50	55
Less than 1 unit	71	61	74	70	74
1–10 units (men), 1–7 units (women)	82	78	83	87	88
11–21 units (men), 8–14 units (women)	89	85	88	89	93
22–35 units (men), 15–25 units (women)	89	87	92	91	93
36–50 units (men), 26–35 units (women)	91	90	87	91	90
51 units and over units (men), 36 units and over (women)	91	87	88	88	91
Total	79	75	80	81	83
<i>Bases=100%</i>					
Non-drinker	449	582	395	411	480
Less than 1 unit	643	962	595	620	564
1–10 units (men), 1–7 units (women)	1233	1972	1155	1184	1255
11–21 units (men), 8–14 units (women)	614	1007	651	672	599
22–35 units (men), 15–25 units (women)	404	606	358	428	354
36–50 units (men), 26–35 units (women)	141	183	141	146	118
51 units and over units (men), 36 units and over (women)	140	198	149	148	140
Total	3623	5509	3444	3611	3510

Table 3.2 Percentage of respondents who said they had heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units: by sex and age, 1997–2004

<i>All persons</i>					
Age	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
	<i>Percentage who had heard of units</i>				
Men					
16–24	92	81	81	81	85
25–44	86	86	88	89	89
45–64	83	76	80	85	87
65 and over	63	55	66	65	70
Total	82	76	80	82	84
<i>Bases (=100%)</i>					
16–24	238	335	197	225	192
25–44	611	864	589	593	533
45–64	532	862	529	573	499
65 and over	314	489	299	338	347
<i>Total</i>	1695	2550	1614	1731	1571
Women					
16–24	86	83	84	79	81
25–44	86	83	87	90	87
45–64	79	76	85	84	87
65 and over	50	47	59	55	66
Total	77	73	81	80	83
<i>Bases (=100%)</i>					
16–24	221	343	219	224	233
25–44	750	1113	716	695	703
45–64	589	887	557	590	648
65 and over	367	617	338	371	354
<i>Total</i>	1927	2959	1830	1882	1938
Total					
16–24	89	82	82	80	83
25–44	86	84	87	89	88
45–64	81	76	82	85	87
65 and over	56	50	62	60	68
Total	79	75	80	81	83
<i>Bases (=100%)</i>					
16–24	460	677	417	451	427
25–44	1361	1977	1305	1288	1236
45–64	1121	1749	1085	1162	1147
65 and over	681	1106	637	710	701
<i>Total</i>	3622	5509	3444	3611	3510

Table 3.3 Percentage of respondents who said they had heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units: by age and average weekly alcohol consumption, 2004

<i>All persons</i>					
Average weekly alcohol consumption	16–24	25–44	45–64	65 and over	Total
	<i>Percentage who had heard of units</i>				
Non-drinker	55	59	63	43	55
Less than 1 unit	61	86	82	59	74
1–10 units (men),					
1–7 units (women)	87	92	91	76	88
11–21 units (men),					
8–14 units (women)	94	96	92	89	93
22 units and over (men),					
15 units and over (women)	95	95	93	78	92
Total	83	88	87	68	83
<i>Bases (=100%)</i>					
Non-drinker	64	175	118	123	480
Less than 1 unit	41	152	189	182	564
1–10 units (men),					
1–7 units (women)	130	474	422	230	1255
11–21 units (men),					
8–14 units (women)	73	212	222	90	599
22 units and over (men),					
15 units and over (women)	118	222	194	77	612
<i>Total</i>	426	1235	1145	702	3510

Table 3.4 Percentage of respondents who said they had heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units: by sex and socio-economic classification (NS-SEC), 2004

<i>All persons</i>					
	Managerial and professional occupations	Intermediate occupations	Routine and manual occupations	Never worked and long-term unemployed	Total
	<i>Percentage who had heard of units</i>				
Men	92	80	80	72	84
Women	93	86	78	67	82
All	92	84	79	69	83
<i>Base (=100%)</i>					
Men	561	271	612	127	1571
Women	531	451	764	196	1942
All	1090	722	1375	323	3510

Table 3.5 Knowledge of beer units: by sex, 1997–2004

<i>Those who drank beer in the last year</i>					
Amount equal to one unit	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
	%	%	%	%	%
Men					
A half pint	49	48	50	52	59
A pint	14	13	13	17	16
Any other amount	5	5	5	6	3
Don't know	21	17	18	15	14
Not heard of units	12	17	13	12	8
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1359</i>	<i>2135</i>	<i>1335</i>	<i>1444</i>	<i>1229</i>
Women					
A half pint	44	42	50	49	52
A pint	14	18	16	20	16
Any other amount	4	4	4	3	3
Don't know	25	23	21	18	20
Not heard of units	13	14	9	10	8
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>968</i>	<i>1481</i>	<i>902</i>	<i>825</i>	<i>804</i>
All					
A half pint	47	45	50	50	56
A pint	14	15	14	18	16
Any other amount	5	5	5	5	3
Don't know	22	19	19	16	16
Not heard of units	12	16	11	11	8
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>2327</i>	<i>3616</i>	<i>2238</i>	<i>2269</i>	<i>2033</i>

Table 3.6 Knowledge of wine units: by sex, 1997–2004

Those who drank wine in the last year

Amount equal to one unit	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
	%	%	%	%	%
Men					
One glass	57	54	56	61	68
Any other amount	15	14	15	13	11
Don't know	18	16	16	15	13
Not heard of units	10	15	12	10	7
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1126</i>	<i>1850</i>	<i>1149</i>	<i>1172</i>	<i>998</i>
Women					
One glass	51	51	60	61	66
Any other amount	13	12	12	11	10
Don't know	22	20	18	16	15
Not heard of units	14	16	10	12	8
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1409</i>	<i>2161</i>	<i>1344</i>	<i>1358</i>	<i>1331</i>
All					
One glass	54	53	58	61	67
Any other amount	14	13	13	12	11
Don't know	20	18	18	16	14
Not heard of units	12	16	11	11	8
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>2535</i>	<i>4011</i>	<i>2495</i>	<i>2530</i>	<i>2329</i>

Table 3.7 Knowledge of spirits units: by sex, 1997–2004

Those who drank spirits in the last year

Amount equal to one unit	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
	%	%	%	%	%
Men					
Single measure	62	57	60	63	66
Any other amount	9	8	9	9	8
Don't know	18	18	18	17	18
Not heard of units	11	17	13	11	8
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1039</i>	<i>1783</i>	<i>713</i>	<i>1120</i>	<i>975</i>
Women					
Single measure	53	53	61	59	62
Any other amount	8	8	6	7	7
Don't know	24	23	23	22	22
Not heard of units	14	16	11	12	9
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1152</i>	<i>1861</i>	<i>1175</i>	<i>1155</i>	<i>1132</i>
All					
Single measure	57	55	60	61	64
Any other amount	9	8	7	8	7
Don't know	21	20	20	20	20
Not heard of units	13	17	12	11	9
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>2191</i>	<i>3644</i>	<i>2244</i>	<i>2275</i>	<i>2107</i>

Table 3.8 Knowledge of fortified wine units: by sex, 1997–2004

Those who drank fortified wine in the last year

Amount equal to one unit	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
	%	%	%	%	%
Men					
One glass	53	50	54	50	59
Any other amount	15	16	14	14	12
Don't know	23	20	22	24	21
Not heard of units	9	14	10	12	8
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>435</i>	<i>696</i>	<i>429</i>	<i>371</i>	<i>300</i>
Women					
One glass	45	45	51	54	48
Any other amount	12	11	10	11	11
Don't know	29	25	28	23	28
Not heard of units	15	29	12	13	13
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>743</i>	<i>1203</i>	<i>618</i>	<i>597</i>	<i>509</i>
All					
One glass	48	47	52	52	52
Any other amount	13	13	11	12	11
Don't know	27	23	26	24	26
Not heard of units	13	17	11	12	11
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1178</i>	<i>1899</i>	<i>1049</i>	<i>968</i>	<i>809</i>

Table 3.9 Percentage of drinkers of each drink who knew what a unit of each type of drink was: by how often they drank that type of drink, 1997–2004

Those who drank each drink in the last year

Type of drink	At least once a week	Less than once a week	Only once or twice a year	Total	At least once a week	Less than once a week	Only once or twice a year	Total
<i>Percentage of drinkers who knew what a unit of each type of drink was</i>				<i>Bases = those who drank ..</i>				
Beer								
1997	54	41	34	47	1225	662	442	2327
1998	51	40	34	45	1936	1115	565	3616
2000	54	46	44	50	1177	708	352	2238
2002	54	48	42	50	1196	680	393	2269
2004	61	54	45	56	1031	600	401	2033
Wine								
1997	67	48	31	54	1087	973	477	2535
1998	63	48	36	53	1701	1495	815	4011
2000	69	56	35	58	1141	906	449	2495
2002	70	57	42	61	1218	878	434	2530
2004	75	62	48	67	1214	750	366	2329
Spirits								
1997	57	60	50	57	796	861	535	2191
1998	57	57	46	55	1274	1469	900	3644
2000	63	62	51	60	746	927	570	2244
2002	59	66	54	61	786	926	561	2275
2004	66	65	58	64	704	907	496	2107
Fortified wine								
1997	50	50	44	48	236	436	506	1178
1998	44	50	44	47	330	653	917	1899
2000	51	54	50	52	140	377	532	1049
2002	51	52	52	52	152	330	487	968
2004	59	48	51	52	138	258	414	809

Table 3.10 Percentage of drinkers who knew what a unit of each type of drink was: by how much they usually drank of that type of drink, 1997–2004

Those who drank each drink in the last year

Type of drink	More than 8/6 units	More than than 4/3, but less than 8/6 units	Less than 4/3 units	Total	More than 8/6 units	More than than 4/3, but less than 8/6 units	Less than 4/3 units	Total
<i>Percentage of drinkers who knew what a unit of each type of drink was</i>				<i>Bases = those who drank ..</i>				
Beer								
1997	56	48	42	46	448	667	1080	2194
1998	49	49	40	45	666	1105	1685	3456
2000	51	55	47	50	426	665	1025	2116
2002	54	55	45	50	459	686	1018	2163
2004	61	60	51	56	363	621	899	1883
Wine								
1997	66	62	50	53	55	528	1953	2535
1998	55	62	49	52	79	762	3168	4008
2000	65	66	55	58	81	530	1868	2479
2002	54	68	60	61	77	514	1939	2530
2004	56	75	65	67	78	452	1796	2326
Spirits								
1997	62	59	56	57	124	496	1563	2183
1998	58	59	52	54	242	805	2594	3640
2000	57	66	58	60	169	527	1538	2234
2002	66	61	60	61	202	546	1520	2268
2004	73	66	62	64	164	487	1440	2091
Fortified wine								
1997	[15]	42	47	47	27	86	1065	1178
1998	51	46	46	46	32	163	1704	1899
2000	[7]	54	51	52	9	107	928	1044
2002	[5]	56	52	52	11	66	890	967
2004	[6]	52	52	52	15	61	730	806

Table 3.11 Whether keeps a check on units drunk: by sex, 1997–2004

Drinkers who had heard of units

	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
<i>Percentage who kept a check on</i>					
Men					
Daily basis	5	3	5	2	4
Weekly basis	4	5	5	3	5
Both daily and weekly	2	2	1	2	1
Other	3	3	3	3	3
All who kept a check	14	13	14	10	13
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1284</i>	<i>1832</i>	<i>1211</i>	<i>1342</i>	<i>1212</i>
Women					
Daily basis	3	3	2	2	4
Weekly basis	5	5	6	6	4
Both daily and weekly	2	2	2	1	2
Other	2	2	3	4	3
All who kept a check	12	12	13	13	13
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1341</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>1352</i>	<i>1374</i>	<i>1438</i>
All					
Daily basis	4	3	4	2	4
Weekly basis	5	5	5	4	4
Both daily and weekly	2	2	2	1	2
Other	2	3	3	4	3
All who kept a check	13	12	13	11	13
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>2625</i>	<i>3847</i>	<i>2560</i>	<i>2716</i>	<i>2650</i>

Table 3.12 Whether keeps a check on units drunk: by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption, 2004

Drinkers who had heard of units

	Men					Women				
	Less than 1 unit	1–10 units	11–21 units	22 units and over	All drinkers	Less than 1 unit	1–7 units	8–14 units	15 units and over	All drinkers
	<i>Percentage who kept a check on</i>									
Daily basis	-	4	5	4	4	1	3	5	7	4
Weekly basis	1	6	5	5	5	1	4	7	8	4
Both daily and weekly	-	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Other	5	4	3	1	3	7	3	1	2	3
All who kept a check	6	15	15	11	13	10	12	14	18	13
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>460</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>330</i>	<i>1212</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>258</i>	<i>234</i>	<i>1438</i>

Table 3.13 Whether had heard of daily benchmarks: by sex, 1997–2004

All persons

Whether had heard of daily benchmarks	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
	%	%	%	%	%
Men					
Yes	54	59	62	59	62
No	38	32	32	30	29
Not sure	8	9	6	10	9
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1707</i>	<i>2550</i>	<i>1613</i>	<i>1729</i>	<i>1572</i>
Women					
Yes	54	57	66	61	61
No	37	35	27	30	29
Not sure	9	8	8	9	9
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1930</i>	<i>2960</i>	<i>1829</i>	<i>1884</i>	<i>1939</i>
All					
Yes	54	58	64	60	61
No	37	34	29	30	29
Not sure	8	8	7	10	9
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>3637</i>	<i>5510</i>	<i>3442</i>	<i>3613</i>	<i>3511</i>

Table 3.14 Percentage who had heard of daily benchmarks: by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption, 1997–2004

<i>All persons</i>										
Average weekly alcohol consumption	Men					Women				
	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
<i>Percentage who had heard of daily benchmarks</i>										
Non-drinker	33	45	42	39	40	43	36	43	39	37
Less than 1 unit	41	39	56	43	51	47	49	64	54	57
1–10 units (men), 1–7 units (women)	54	58	62	60	62	55	62	70	69	66
11–21 units (men), 8–14 units (women)	62	66	65	67	70	63	65	74	67	68
22 units and over (men), 15 units and over (women)	64	67	70	66	71	68	72	71	70	74
Total	54	59	62	59	62	54	57	66	61	61
<i>Bases (=100%)</i>										
Non-drinker	178	203	153	158	186	271	379	243	254	294
Less than 1 unit	203	267	184	189	170	455	695	412	432	394
1–10 units (men), 1–7 units (women)	561	903	545	547	538	671	1070	609	637	717
11–21 units (men), 8–14 units (women)	353	568	352	392	321	261	439	298	282	277
22 units and over (men), 15 units and over (women)	412	609	381	443	356	273	378	266	279	256
Total	1707	2550	1615	1729	1571	1930	2960	1828	1884	1938

Table 3.15 Knowledge of recommended daily benchmark levels: by sex, 1997–2004

Those who had heard of daily benchmarks

Knowledge of daily benchmark levels	Men					Women					All				
	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004	1997	1998	2000	2002	2004
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Number of units for men															
1	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	7	10	10	9	15	4	6	6	6	7	5	8	8	7	11
3	20	22	18	24	24	20	19	20	20	24	20	21	19	22	24
4	18	16	14	16	16	12	12	12	14	13	15	14	13	15	14
5 and over	15	12	12	15	11	16	14	16	14	15	16	13	14	14	14
Don't know	38	38	43	36	32	47	47	46	46	38	43	43	45	41	36
Number of units for women															
1	6	8	7	7	12	4	4	5	6	6	5	6	6	6	8
2	25	27	24	28	33	28	32	31	31	36	27	30	28	30	35
3	11	12	11	11	9	13	11	11	13	12	12	11	11	12	11
4 and over	12	10	10	12	9	11	10	12	10	11	12	10	11	11	10
Don't know	45	42	48	41	36	43	43	42	40	34	44	43	45	40	35
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>927</i>	<i>1498</i>	<i>994</i>	<i>1022</i>	<i>971</i>	<i>1050</i>	<i>1698</i>	<i>1200</i>	<i>1156</i>	<i>1186</i>	<i>1977</i>	<i>3196</i>	<i>2193</i>	<i>2178</i>	<i>2157</i>

Table 3.16 Men's knowledge of recommended daily benchmark levels for men: by average weekly alcohol consumption, 2004

All men

Knowledge of daily benchmark level for men	Non-drinkers	Less than 1 unit	1-10 units	11-21 units	22 units and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Number of units						
1	0	1	1	0	1	1
2	7	6	11	10	8	9
3	9	11	14	15	19	15
4	6	6	7	14	15	10
5 and over	4	5	7	9	8	7
Don't know	15	24	22	21	19	20
Had not heard of daily benchmarks	60	47	38	30	29	38
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>186</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>539</i>	<i>321</i>	<i>355</i>	<i>1582</i>

Table 3.17 Women's knowledge of recommended daily benchmark levels for women, by average weekly alcohol consumption, 2004

All women

Knowledge of daily benchmark level for women	Non-drinkers	Less than 1 unit	1-7 units	8-14 units	15 units and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Number of units						
1	2	4	4	3	2	4
2	8	17	24	31	31	22
3	4	5	7	11	10	7
4 and over	6	5	7	6	9	7
Don't know	16	27	23	16	20	21
Had not heard of daily benchmarks	63	42	34	32	26	39
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>293</i>	<i>404</i>	<i>717</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>256</i>	<i>1947</i>

Table 3.18 Discussion of drinking in the last year: by sex, 2000-2004

All drinkers

Discussed drinking with...	2000	2002	2004
<i>Percentage who had discussed drinking with ...</i>			
Men			
GP	8	8	8
Someone else at the surgery	1	1	1
Doctor elsewhere	2	1	1
Other medical person elsewhere	1	2	1
Not discussed drinking	90	89	89
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1461</i>	<i>1572</i>	<i>1384</i>
Women			
GP	4	4	5
Someone else at the surgery	1	1	1
Doctor elsewhere	0	1	1
Other medical person elsewhere	1	1	1
Not discussed drinking	94	94	92
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1585</i>	<i>1628</i>	<i>1645</i>

Percentages sum to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer.

Table 3.19 Discussion of drinking in the last year: by sex and age, 2004
All drinkers

Discussed drinking with...	16-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	Total
<i>Percentage who had discussed drinking with ...</i>					
Men					
GP	6	5	10	12	8
Someone else at the surgery	0	1	1	2	1
Doctor elsewhere	0	1	2	1	1
Other medical person elsewhere	1	1	2	1	1
Not discussed drinking	93	93	86	86	89
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>166</i>	<i>472</i>	<i>452</i>	<i>294</i>	<i>1384</i>
Women					
GP	2	5	5	9	5
Someone else at the surgery	2	1	1	3	1
Doctor elsewhere	0	1	1	1	1
Other medical person elsewhere	2	1	1	0	1
Not discussed drinking	95	93	92	88	92
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>576</i>	<i>284</i>	<i>1645</i>

Table 3.20 Men drinkers who had discussed drinking in the last year, by average weekly alcohol consumption, 2004
Men drinkers

Discussed drinking with...	Less than 1 unit	1-10 units	11-21 units	22 units and over	Total
<i>Percentage who had discussed drinking with ...</i>					
GP	8	7	6	14	8
Someone else at the surgery	0	2	0	1	1
Doctor elsewhere	1	1	0	1	1
Other medical person elsewhere	2	1	0	2	1
Not discussed drinking	90	90	93	83	89
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>169</i>	<i>538</i>	<i>321</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>1384</i>

Percentages sum to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer.

Table 3.21 Women drinkers who had discussed drinking in the last year, by average weekly alcohol consumption, 2004
Women drinkers

Discussed drinking with...	Less than 1 unit	1-7 units	8-14 units	15 units and over	Total
<i>Percentage who had discussed drinking with ...</i>					
GP	3	4	6	11	5
Someone else at the surgery	1	1	1	1	1
Doctor elsewhere	1	0	1	1	1
Other medical person elsewhere	0	1	2	2	1
Not discussed drinking	95	94	89	86	92
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>394</i>	<i>717</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>256</i>	<i>1645</i>

Percentages sum to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer.

4 Places where people buy alcohol

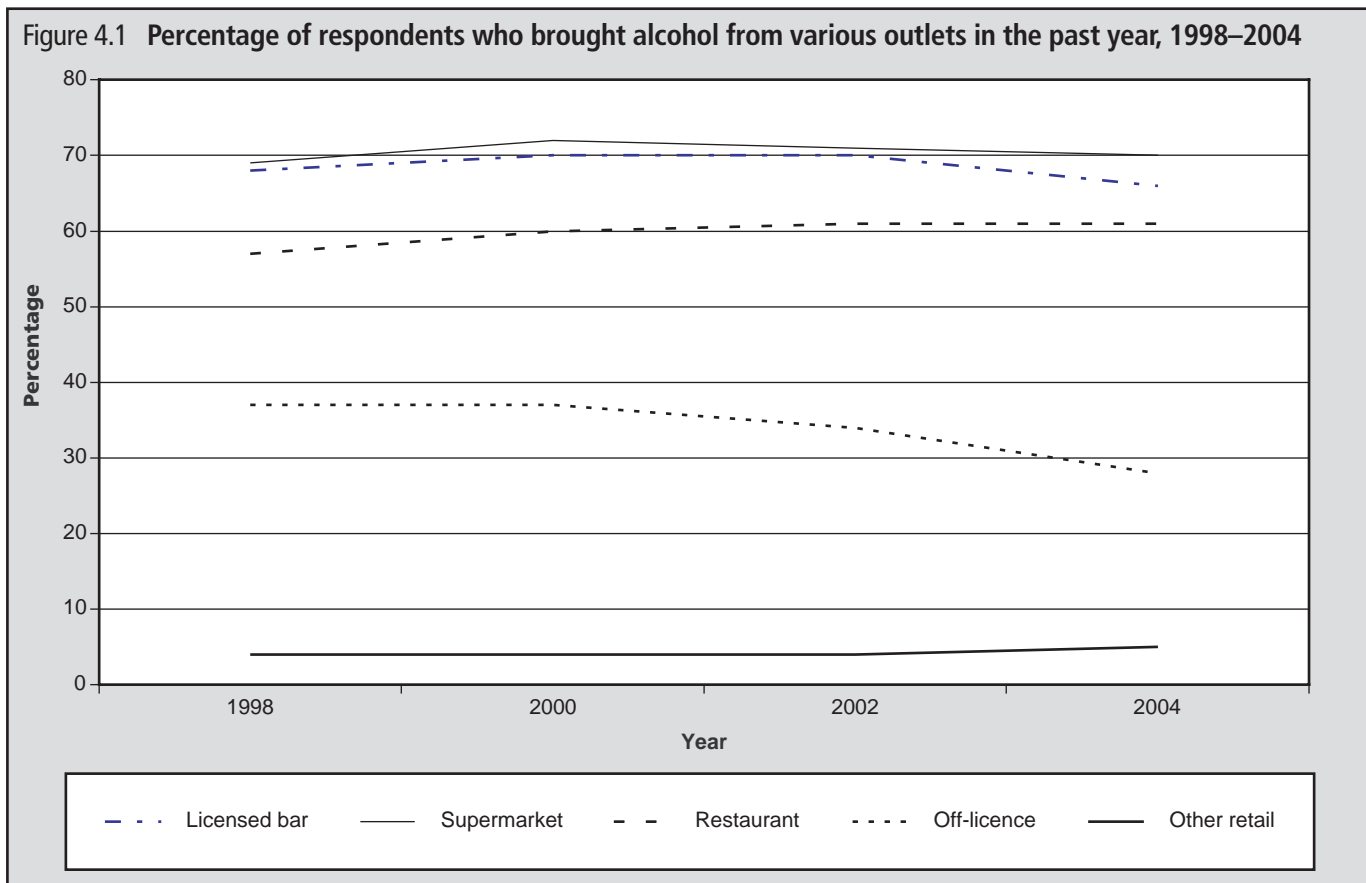
As noted earlier, alcoholic drinks can vary widely in their alcoholic content. This is particularly the case for beers, lagers, and ciders, where the ABV (percentage alcohol by volume) can vary from less than 3% to more than 9%. Since such drinks are now sold in a much wider range of can and bottle sizes than used to be the case, it is not easy for most purchasers to know how much alcohol is in what they are buying.

From 1998, a number of the UK's largest drinks companies introduced unit labelling on a voluntary basis, to support the Government's 'Sensible Drinking' messages and to make it easier for drinkers to associate those messages with the actual amount of alcohol they are buying. Initially, unit labelling was introduced on cans and bottles which are sold in off licences and retail outlets: it will mean that, for example, a 440ml can of lager with an ABV of 5.3% will have a label indicating that the can contains 2.3 units of alcohol. The Government has supported the manufacturers' initiative by making complementary information about sensible drinking available, including in outlets where the products are sold.

To establish what proportion of drinkers – and which types of drinker – were likely to buy alcohol from places where unit labelled drinks could be bought, some questions were included about the frequency with which people buy alcohol from different types of outlet. Respondents were asked about their purchase of alcohol, regardless of whether it was bought for their own consumption, or for someone else to drink, so the questions were addressed to non-drinkers as well as drinkers. Alcohol purchased by someone else for the respondent to drink was not included.

Since some sources of alcohol, such as purchase abroad, were likely to be used relatively infrequently, respondents were asked how often they had bought alcohol in the last year from each source, and also about where they had bought alcohol in the previous week.

As the use of the internet has been increasing over the survey period, in 2004 it was felt necessary to clarify where internet purchases of alcohol should be coded. The question referring to



'somewhere other than a retail outlet (eg boot sale)' was amended to include internet purchases and an interviewer instruction was added at the questions referring to specific retail outlets reminding interviewers to exclude internet purchases.

4.1 Purchases in the last twelve months

Over two-thirds (70%) of respondents had bought alcohol from a supermarket and a similar proportion (66%) had done so from a licensed bar at some time during the year. Six out of ten (61%) had bought alcohol to drink with food at a restaurant and just over a quarter (28%) from an off-licence. Very few (5%) had purchased alcohol from somewhere other than a retail outlet (such as a car boot sale or from the Internet).

The percentage of respondents who had bought alcohol from an off-licence or from a licensed bar in the past year fell over the survey period. Purchases from a restaurant increased from 57% to 61% over the same time period. The percentages for purchases from a branch of a supermarket or from other retail outlets were very similar to those found in previous survey years. It should be noted, however, that the questions in 2004 were amended slightly to ensure that Internet purchases were only recorded in the question referring to 'somewhere other than a retail outlet', and so the decrease in purchases from 2002 to 2004 may reflect the change to the questions. (Figure 4.1)

As would be expected, people were much more likely to make frequent purchases from some types of outlet than from others, and a higher proportion of people frequently bought alcohol from a licensed bar than from any other type of outlet. About a fifth of all respondents (22%) had purchased alcohol from a bar at least once a week either for themselves or others to drink. Seventeen per cent had bought alcohol from a supermarket at least once a week but rather more (26%) had done so once or twice a month. Not surprisingly, perhaps, very few (5%) respondents had bought alcohol from a restaurant as often as once a week but 21% had done so at least once or twice a month. Men were more than twice as likely as women to have bought alcohol from a bar at least once a week (33% of men and 13% of women had done so). (Tables 4.1 and 4.2)

It was found in previous years that nearly all purchases abroad or from a duty free shop were made only a few times a year. In 2004, therefore, a new answer category of 'only once' was added to the question about purchases abroad or from a duty free shop. Table 4.3 shows that only a third of respondents had bought alcohol from duty free outlets or abroad in the past year, and of these two-thirds (20% of all respondents) had done so only once. There were no significant differences between men and women or over the survey years. (Table 4.3)

4.2 Purchases in the previous week

In the week prior to the survey, just under a third (29%) of all respondents had bought alcohol from a licensed bar, and one in four had done so from a supermarket or shop. Other outlets were much less likely to have been used in the previous week – 17% of respondents had bought alcohol in a restaurant, 5% in an off-licence and 2% had bought alcohol abroad or from a duty free shop.

There was very little change between over time in the percentages of people who had bought alcohol from different outlets in the previous week. (Figure 4.2)

There were marked differences between men and women in where they had bought alcohol in the previous week. Men were nearly twice as likely to have bought alcohol in a licensed bar – 38% of men compared with 22% of women had done so. This may just be because men are more likely than women to drink in bars, but it may also be the case that men are more likely than women to buy drinks if in mixed company. Men were also more likely than women to have bought alcohol at an off-licence, but similar proportions of men and of women had bought alcohol at a supermarket or to drink with a meal at a restaurant. (Table 4.4)

Purchase from a licensed bar

In the week prior to the survey, 45% of all young people aged 16–24 had bought alcohol from a licensed bar. The proportion of this age group who did so was higher among men than women (51% compared with 40%). Although there appeared to be a little variation according to occupation, generally the differences were not statistically significant.

There was more variation in relation to alcohol consumption. Among both men and women, the heaviest drinkers were the most likely to have bought alcohol from a bar – over two-thirds of men and a half of women with an average weekly alcohol consumption of more than 21 units (men) and 14 units (women) had done so in the previous week.

As it is possible that these characteristics may themselves be inter-related, logistic regression was used in the analysis.¹

Overall, those who were most likely to have bought alcohol from a licensed bar were:

- Men.
- Under 65.
- Heavier drinkers - for example, the odds of a man who drank more than 21 units of alcohol a week buying alcohol from a licensed bar in the past week were over three and a half times those of a man who had drunk less than 11 units.

- Living alone or married/cohabiting without dependent children. (Table B4)

Purchase from a supermarket

Overall, there was no difference in the proportion of men and women who purchased alcohol from a supermarket in the previous week. Among both men and women, those aged 25–64 were among the most frequent purchasers. Men in managerial and professional occupations were more likely than those in other occupational groups to have purchased alcohol from a supermarket in the previous week.

In relation to alcohol consumption level, two-fifths of men drinking 11 or more units a week, on average, and women drinking 8 or more units, had bought alcohol in a supermarket in the last week.

It should be noted that respondents may not have bought the alcohol to drink themselves, and so any differences between subgroups may reflect shopping patterns rather than drinking patterns.

As discussed above, logistic regression was used in the analysis. Overall, those most likely to have bought alcohol from a supermarket were:

- Women.
- Aged 25 or more.
- Heavy or moderate drinkers.
- Living with others.

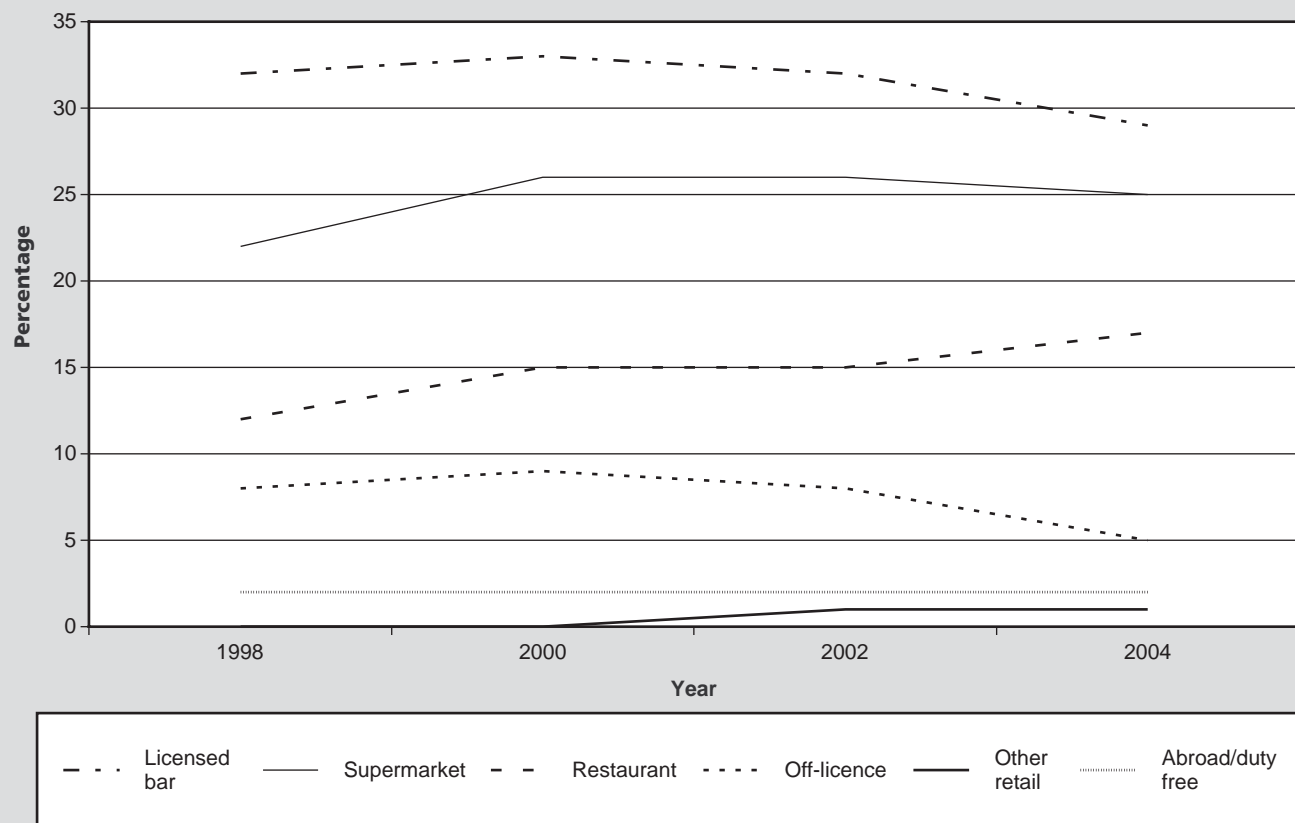
Purchase in a restaurant

There was very little difference in the proportion of men and women in different age groups who had bought alcohol to drink with food in a restaurant in the last week. There was considerable variation, however, in relation to occupational group: 24% of men and 27% of women in managerial and professional occupations had done so, compared with only 12% of men and 9% of women in routine and manual occupations. About a quarter of the heaviest group of drinkers had bought alcohol in a restaurant in the previous week: 28% of men drinking more than 21 units a week, and 29% of women drinking more than 14 units, had done so.

Purchase from an off-licence

Men were more likely than women to have bought alcohol from an off-licence in the previous week (8% compared with 4%). The most likely age group to have done so were aged 16–24: 17% of men in this age group had bought alcohol from an off-licence last week. There was no clear pattern in relation to occupational grouping, but in relation to alcohol consumption, it was again the

Figure 4.2 Percentage of respondents who brought alcohol from various outlets in the past week, 1998–2004



heaviest drinkers who were most likely to have bought alcohol from an off-licence in the last week: 20% of men and 12% of women in the heaviest drinking category had done so.

(Tables 4.5-4.7)

Table 4.8 shows that there was virtually no difference in the proportion of respondents who had heard of measuring alcohol in units according to where they bought alcohol last week. Since the aim of unit labelling is to increase awareness of the alcoholic content of different drinks through shop and off-licence sales, it will be interesting to see if this changes in the future. (Table 4.8)

4.3 Awareness of unit labelling

Drinkers who said previously that they had heard of measuring alcohol in units were asked if they had seen any alcoholic drinks with the units of alcohol on the label, and if so, where.

Nearly a third (31%) of drinkers who had heard of units, had seen unit labelling on alcohol, a significant increase from 23% in 2000. Men were more likely than women to say they had seen unit labelling (35% and 28% respectively). The percentage of both men and women who had seen unit labelling had increased since 2000, and the increase was sharper for men (11 percentage points) than for women (5 percentage points). (Table 4.9)

The most frequently mentioned place where unit labelling had been seen was a supermarket or shop (71%). Pubs were mentioned by a fifth, 12% mentioned off-licences, 6% mentioned restaurants and 4% nightclubs. 10% of drinkers who had heard of measuring alcohol in units mentioned other places. The proportions were similar for men and women.

(Tables 4.9 and 4.10)

Note

1. Logistic regression is explained in detail in Appendix B and the factors included in the analysis are listed in Table B4.

Table 4.1 How often respondents bought alcohol from various outlets: in the last twelve months, 1998–2004

All persons

Frequency of purchase	1998	2000	2002	2004
	%	%	%	%
Licensed bar				
At least once a week	26	26	26	22
Once or twice a month	19	20	19	20
A few times a year	23	23	24	23
Not at all in the last year	32	30	30	34
Any time in the last year	68	70	70	66
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>5510</i>	<i>3451</i>	<i>3613</i>	<i>3528</i>
Supermarket				
At least once a week	15	16	17	17
Once or twice a month	22	25	25	26
A few times a year	33	30	30	27
Not at all in the last year	31	28	29	30
Any time in the last year	69	72	71	70
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>5510</i>	<i>3451</i>	<i>3613</i>	<i>3530</i>
Restaurant				
At least once a week	3	5	4	5
Once or twice a month	17	19	21	21
A few times a year	37	36	36	35
Not at all in the last year	43	40	39	39
Any time in the last year	57	60	61	61
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>5510</i>	<i>3451</i>	<i>3613</i>	<i>3529</i>
Off-licence				
At least once a week	5	6	5	4
Once or twice a month	10	12	9	7
A few times a year	23	20	20	17
Not at all in the last year	63	63	66	72
Any time in the last year	37	37	34	28
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>5510</i>	<i>3451</i>	<i>3613</i>	<i>3529</i>
Other retail				
At least once a week	0	0	0	0
Once or twice a month	0	1	1	1
A few times a year	3	3	3	4
Not at all in the last year	96	96	96	95
Any time in the last year	4	4	4	5
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>5510</i>	<i>3451</i>	<i>3613</i>	<i>3529</i>

Table 4.2 How often respondents bought alcohol from various outlets in the last twelve months: by sex, 2004

All persons

Frequency of purchase	Licensed bar	Supermarket	Restaurant	Off-licence	Other retail
	%	%	%	%	%
Men					
At least once a week	33	18	7	6	1
Once or twice a month	19	26	23	8	1
A few times a year	21	27	38	20	3
Not at all in the last year	26	28	32	66	95
Any time in the last year	74	72	68	34	5
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1580</i>	<i>1581</i>	<i>1581</i>	<i>1581</i>	<i>1580</i>
Women					
At least once a week	13	16	3	2	0
Once or twice a month	21	26	20	6	1
A few times a year	25	27	32	15	4
Not at all in the last year	41	31	44	76	95
Any time in the last year	59	69	56	24	5
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1948</i>	<i>1949</i>	<i>1948</i>	<i>1948</i>	<i>1949</i>
All					
At least once a week	22	17	5	4	0
Once or twice a month	20	26	21	7	1
A few times a year	23	27	35	17	4
Not at all in the last year	34	30	39	72	95
Any time in the last year	66	70	61	28	5
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>3528</i>	<i>3530</i>	<i>3529</i>	<i>3529</i>	<i>3529</i>

Table 4.3 **How often respondents bought alcohol from abroad or duty free outlets: in the last twelve months: by sex, 1998–2004**

All persons

Frequency of purchase	Men	Women	Total
	%	%	%
1998			
At least once a week	0	1	0
Once or twice a month	1	1	1
A few times a year	31	26	28
Not at all in the last year	67	72	70
Any time in the last year	33	28	30
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>2550</i>	<i>2960</i>	<i>5510</i>
2000			
At least once a week	0	0	0
Once or twice a month	1	1	1
A few times a year	28	27	27
Not at all in the last year	71	73	72
Any time in the last year	29	28	28
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1618</i>	<i>1833</i>	<i>3451</i>
2002			
At least once a week	0	1	0
Once or twice a month	2	0	1
A few times a year	29	27	28
Not at all in the last year	70	72	71
Any time in the last year	30	28	29
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1729</i>	<i>1885</i>	<i>3613</i>
2004			
At least once a week	1	0	0
Once or twice a month	1	1	1
A few times a year	14	11	12
Only once	20	20	20
Not at all in the last year	65	67	66
Any time in the last year	35	33	34
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>1580</i>	<i>1949</i>	<i>3529</i>

Table 4.4 Percentage who had bought alcohol from various outlets in the last week: by sex, 1998–2004

All persons

Outlet	1998	2000	2002	2004
<i>Percentage who had bought alcohol in the last week</i>				
Men				
Licensed bar	45	44	43	38
Supermarket	22	25	26	26
Restaurant	15	19	19	18
Off-licence	10	12	10	8
Other retail	1	1	1	1
Abroad/duty free	2	2	2	2
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>2550</i>	<i>1618</i>	<i>1729</i>	<i>1581</i>
Women				
Licensed bar	21	24	22	22
Supermarket	22	26	26	24
Restaurant	10	12	12	16
Off-licence	5	6	6	4
Other retail	0	0	0	1
Abroad/duty free	2	2	1	2
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>2960</i>	<i>1833</i>	<i>1884</i>	<i>1948</i>
All				
Licensed bar	32	33	32	29
Supermarket	22	26	26	25
Restaurant	12	15	15	17
Off-licence	8	9	8	5
Other retail	0	0	1	1
Abroad/duty free	2	2	2	2
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>5510</i>	<i>3451</i>	<i>3613</i>	<i>3529</i>

Table 4.5 Percentage who had bought alcohol at the four main types of outlet in the last week: by sex and age, 2004

All persons

Age	Licensed bar	Supermarket	Restaurant	Off-licence	Base (=100%)
<i>Percentage who had bought alcohol in the last week</i>					
Men					
16–24	51	16	13	17	193
25–44	40	30	19	11	537
45–64	39	28	22	4	503
65 and over	25	22	11	2	349
All men	38	26	18	8	1582
Women					
16–24	40	12	15	5	233
25–44	24	28	18	5	708
45–64	22	29	18	2	648
65 and over	6	17	8	1	357
All women	22	24	16	4	1946
All					
16–24	45	13	14	10	427
25–44	31	29	19	8	1245
45–64	29	28	20	3	1150
65 and over	16	20	10	2	707
All	29	25	17	5	3529

Table 4.6 Percentage who had bought alcohol at the four main types of outlet in the last week: by sex and socio-economic classification (NS-SEC), 2004

All persons

Social-economic classification	Licensed bar	Supermarket	Restaurant	Off-licence	Base (=100%)
<i>Percentage who had bought alcohol in the last week</i>					
Men					
Managerial and professional occupations	41	30	24	7	566
Intermediate occupations	34	22	20	7	273
Routine and manual occupations	38	25	12	8	613
Never worked and long-term unemployed	37	19	12	10	127
All men	38	26	18	8	1582
Women					
Managerial and professional occupations	26	26	27	4	533
Intermediate occupations	22	26	17	3	455
Routine and manual occupations	19	26	9	4	765
Never worked and long-term unemployed	22	7	9	3	195
All women	22	24	16	4	1946
All					
Managerial and professional occupations	34	28	26	6	1099
Intermediate occupations	27	25	19	4	729
Routine and manual occupations	27	26	10	6	1379
Never worked and long-term unemployed	28	12	10	6	322
All	29	25	17	5	3529

Table 4.7 Percentage who had bought alcohol at the four main types of outlet in the last week: by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption, 2004

All persons

Weekly alcohol consumption	Licensed bar	Supermarket	Restaurant	Off-licence	Base (=100%)
<i>Percentage who had bought alcohol in the last week</i>					
Men					
Non-drinker	1	3	0	1	187
Less than 1 unit	4	6	5	2	179
1–10 units	31	22	17	3	539
11–21 units	53	39	24	8	321
22 units and over	71	41	28	20	356
All men	38	26	18	8	1582
Women					
Non-drinker	1	3	1	0	295
Less than 1 unit	5	6	6	1	403
1–7 units	23	28	18	2	718
8–14 units	39	40	28	6	278
15 units and over	50	48	29	12	256
All women	22	24	16	4	1950

Table 4.8 Whether respondents who had bought alcohol were aware of units: by sex, 2004

Those who had bought alcohol at each outlet last week

	Licensed bar	Supermarket	Restaurant	Off-licence
<i>Percentage who were aware of units</i>				
Men	91	91	94	94
Women	94	93	96	90
All	92	92	95	93
<i>Bases (=100%)</i>				
Men	600	406	280	119
Women	426	472	314	70
All	1026	877	594	189

Table 4.9 Percentage of drinkers who had seen unit labelling: by sex, 2000–2004

<i>Drinkers who had heard of units</i>			
	2000	2002	2004
<i>Percentage who had seen unit labelling</i>			
Men	24	28	35
Women	23	26	28
All	23	27	31
<i>Bases (=100%)</i>			
Men	1210	1340	1211
Women	1345	1370	1435
All	2555	2710	2646

Table 4.10 Where drinkers had seen unit labelling: by sex, 2000–2004

<i>Drinkers who had seen unit labelling</i>			
	2000	2002	2004
<i>Percentage who had seen unit labelling in...</i>			
Men			
Supermarket	78	74	74
Off-licence	19	16	14
Public house	14	25	20
Restaurant	4	5	6
Nightclub/club	3	5	5
Other	11	4	10
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	278	354	409
Women			
Supermarket	76	78	68
Off-licence	15	12	10
Public house	19	24	23
Restaurant	3	5	6
Nightclub/club	3	5	3
Other	10	5	10
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	302	343	396
All			
Supermarket	77	76	71
Off-licence	17	14	12
Public house	16	25	21
Restaurant	4	5	6
Nightclub/club	3	5	4
Other	10	4	10
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	580	697	806

Percentages sum to more than 100% as respondents could give more than one answer.

Appendix A

Estimating alcohol consumption

Obtaining reliable information about drinking is difficult, and surveys record lower levels of alcohol consumption than would be expected from data on alcohol sales. In addition to deliberate or unconscious under-reporting of consumption, the amount of alcohol drunk at home is likely to be under-estimated because the quantities are not measured and are likely to be larger than those dispensed on licensed premises.

There are alternative ways of obtaining survey information to provide estimates of how much people drink: the most appropriate depends on the requirements of the survey. This survey required a measure which reflected behaviour over a period of time, not to provide precise estimates of consumption, but rather to enable people to be classified into broad groups according to how much they drank. The measure included on this survey was the one that has been used by the General Household Survey since 1978 and, more recently, by the Health Survey for England. Respondents were asked how often over the last year they had drunk each of six different types of drink (strong beers, normal strength beers, table wine, fortified wine, spirits, and alcopops), and how much they had usually drunk on any one day.

The method used for calculating alcohol consumption is to multiply the number of units of each type drunk on a usual drinking day by the frequency with which it was drunk, using the factors shown below and totalling across all drinks to give the individual's average weekly consumption.

Drinking frequency	Multiplying factor
Almost every day	7.0
5 or 6 days a week	5.5
3 or 4 days a week	3.5
Once or twice a week	1.5
Once or twice a month	0.375
Once every couple of months	0.115
Once or twice a year	0.029

A half pint of ordinary strength beer, lager or cider, a glass of wine, a small glass of fortified wine, and a single measure of spirits were taken as one unit. Large cans of ordinary strength beer, lager or cider were counted as 1.5 units. A half pint of strong beer or lager was counted as 1.5 units.

The 2004 survey found that men were drinking 15.2 units of alcohol a week on average – about seven and a half pints of beer or the equivalent in other types of drink. Women's consumption was much lower, at 7.0 units, on average.

Younger people drink much more, on average, than do older people – average weekly consumption in 2004 among young men aged 16–24, for example, was just over 25 units, about twice as much as among men aged 65 and over. Differences according to age among women are, if anything even more marked: average weekly consumption was 10 units for young women aged 16–24, compared with only 4 units among those aged 65 and over.

Among both men and women, those who had never worked or who were long-term unemployed were more likely than others not to drink at all, but there were no other statistically significant differences in alcohol consumption between those in different occupational groupings. (Tables A1–A2)

Table A1 Usual weekly alcohol consumption: by sex and age, 2004

All persons

Average usual weekly alcohol consumption	16–24	25–44	45–64	65 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Men					
Non-drinker	14	11	9	15	12
Less than 1 unit	4	7	15	17	11
1–10 units	29	35	34	36	34
11–21 units	18	22	21	17	20
22–35 units	9	16	11	9	12
36–50 units	10 } 35	4 } 25	5 } 20	3 } 15	5 } 23
51 units and over	15	5	5	3	6
Mean consumption	25.2	15.5	14.2	10.6	15.2
Standard error of mean	2.43	0.87	0.89	0.79	0.54
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>536</i>	<i>502</i>	<i>349</i>	<i>1580</i>
Women					
Non-drinker	16	16	11	20	15
Less than 1 unit	14	18	18	36	21
1–7 units	32	40	39	29	37
8–14 units	17	13	18	9	14
15–25 units	12	7	11	4	8
26–35 units	4 } 21	2 } 12	2 } 14	2 } 7	2 } 13
36 units and over	5	3	2	1	2
Mean consumption	10.2	7.4	7.1	4.0	7.0
Standard error of mean	1.13	0.53	0.36	0.42	0.28
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>234</i>	<i>709</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>358</i>	<i>1948</i>

Table A2 Usual weekly alcohol consumption: by sex and socio-economic classification (NS-SEC), 2004

All persons

Average usual weekly alcohol consumption	Managerial and professional occupations	Intermediate occupations	Small employers and own account workers	Lower supervisory and technical occupations	Semi-routine and routine occupations	Never worked and long-term unemployed	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Men							
Non-drinker	7	16	11	8	17	22	12
Less than 1 unit	9	10	15	12	14	8	11
1–10 units	36	38	32	34	31	34	34
11–21 units	24	16	18	22	16	16	20
22–35 units	15	9	11	12	10	9	12
36–50 units	4 } 23	6 } 21	7 } 23	4 } 25	5 } 22	5 } 20	5 } 23
51 units and over	4	5	5	9	8	6	6
Mean consumption	14.5	13.4	14.4	17.4	15.7	15.5	15.2
Standard error of mean	0.72	1.84	1.43	1.50	1.33	2.49	0.54
Base (=100%)	566	97	177	226	387	127	1580
Women							
Non-drinker	11	12	19	12	14	35	15
Less than 1 unit	16	23	20	17	25	20	21
1–7 units	40	39	31	46	36	27	37
8–14 units	19	13	14	9	13	12	14
15–25 units	10	9	12	11	7	4	8
26–35 units	2 } 14	2 } 14	2 } 17	0 } 16	3 } 13	2 } 6	2 } 13
36 units and over	2	3	2	5	3	1	2
Mean consumption	7.8	6.8	7.3	8.5	6.9	4.5	7.0
Standard error of mean	0.45	0.54	1.18	1.39	0.55	0.85	0.28
Base (=100%)	533	360	95	119	645	195	1948

Appendix B

Logistic regression

Logistic regression was used in the analysis to assess the influence of a number of variables (for example, age, sex, social-economic classification and household formation) on people's drinking patterns. The procedure took account of inter-relationships between the variables to:

- identify the variables that are independently associated with the behaviour; and
- quantify the influence of each of the independent variables.

The influence of an independent variable is expressed in terms of odds. The odds of doing a particular behaviour are the ratio of the proportion of respondents doing the behaviour to the proportion not doing it. Logistic regression estimates the influence of each category of an independent variable by producing a coefficient which represents the factors by which the odds of doing a particular behaviour differs from those of a reference group. The reference group has a coefficient of 1.0. The choice of the reference groups is arbitrary and varies from analysis to analysis.

Tables B1–B4 present the results of the logistic regression. The variables examined in the analysis are set out in the first column of each table and the factors that measure the relative influence of each category of the independent variables – the odds ratios – are shown in the columns headed 'odds ratios'. Those variables not selected into the final model are marked as being not significant (NS). The usual conventions are used to show which odds ratios are significantly different from 1.0.

Table B1 shows that men have a multiplying factor of 1.78 for frequent drinking. This means that, all things being equal, the odds of a man drinking at least 3 or 4 days a week is about one and three quarter times those of a woman (the reference group in this case).

In the main body of this report, the commentary is based on the original 'raw' data and relationships are illustrated using two-way tables. Very occasionally, the results of the logistic regression differ slightly from the associations revealed in the two-way tables. This is because two-way tables consider only the relationship between an opinion and one factor whereas logistic regression takes account of the effect of the other independent factors.

Note

1. The independent variables were identified by developing statistical models. The models were developed using a stepwise procedure starting with the variable that was the most strongly related to the behaviour being studied.

Table B1 **Socio-demographic correlates of frequent drinking**

Variables in the model	Odds ratios for drinking at least 3 or 4 days a week	95% confidence intervals
Sex		
Men	1.78 **	(1.49–2.11)
Women (reference group)	1	
Age		
16–24	0.56 **	(0.38–0.84)
25–44	0.58 **	(0.46–0.74)
45–64	1.04	(0.83–1.30)
65 and over (reference group)	1	
Socio-economic classification		
Managerial and professional occupations	1.45 **	(1.17–1.80)
Intermediate occupations	1.15	(0.91–1.45)
Never worked and long term unemployed	0.82	(0.51–1.33)
Routine and manual occupations (reference group)	1	
Region		
The North	1.82 **	(1.32–2.51)
Midlands and East Anglia	1.70 **	(1.23–2.36)
South East	1.81 **	(1.28–2.55)
South West	1.77 **	(1.20–2.61)
Wales	1.12	(0.70–1.82)
Scotland	0.88	(0.57–1.35)
London (reference group)	1	
Gross income		
£31,200 or more	2.83 **	(1.95–4.11)
£18,720 less than £31,200	1.71 **	(1.23–2.38)
£11,440 less than £18,720	1.39 *	(1.02–1.90)
£8,230 less than £11,440	0.95	(0.67–1.36)
£4,160 less than £8,230	1.09	(0.80–1.48)
Less than £4,160 (reference group)	1	
Household type		
One person only	NS	
Married/cohabiting with no dependent child		
Lone parent with dependent child(ren)		
Others		
Married/cohabiting with dependent child(ren)		
Marital status		
Married/cohabiting	NS	
Single		
Widowed		
Divorced/separated		

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01

Table B2 Socio-demographic correlates of awareness of alcohol units

Variables in the model	Odds ratios for having heard of measuring alcohol consumption in units	95% confidence intervals
Sex		
Men	NS	
Women		
Age		
16–24	3.34 **	(2.09–5.34)
25–44	3.11 **	(2.34–4.13)
45–64	2.54 **	(1.92–3.36)
65 and over (reference group)	1	
Socio-economic classification		
Managerial and professional occupations	2.64 **	(1.92–3.63)
Intermediate occupations	1.42 *	(1.07–1.87)
Never worked and long term unemployed	0.83	(0.54–1.27)
Routine and manual occupations (reference group)	1	
Region		
The North	3.01 **	(2.09–4.33)
Midlands and East Anglia	3.34 **	(2.31–4.82)
South East	3.24 **	(2.12–4.97)
South West	3.54 **	(2.21–5.67)
Wales	3.15 **	(1.84–5.38)
Scotland	2.45 **	(1.57–3.84)
London (reference group)	1	
Gross income		
£31,200 or more	2.01 *	(1.09–3.70)
£18,720 less than £31,200	2.09 **	(1.33–3.28)
£11,440 less than £18,720	1.45 *	(1.01–2.08)
£8,230 less than £11,440	1.19	(0.82–1.72)
£4,160 less than £8,230	0.98	(0.72–1.33)
Less than £4,160 (reference group)	1	
Average weekly alcohol consumption		
51 units and over (men), 36 units and over (women)	4.20 **	(2.17–8.13)
36–50 units (men), 26–35 units (women)	5.57 **	(2.64–11.76)
22–35 units (men), 15–25 units (women)	5.87 **	(3.59–9.60)
11–21 units (men), 8–14 units (women)	7.74 **	(4.97–12.07)
1–10 units (men), 1–7 units (women)	3.98 **	(2.97–5.34)
Less than 1 unit	2.27 **	(1.67–3.08)
Non-drinker (reference group)	1	
Household type		
One person only	NS	
Married/cohabiting with no dependent child		
Lone parent with dependent child(ren)		
Others		
Married/cohabiting with dependent child(ren)		
Marital status		
Married/cohabiting	NS	
Single		
Widowed		
Divorced/separated		

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01

Table B3 Socio-demographic correlates of discussion of drinking with a health professional†

Variables in the model	Odds ratios for having discussed drinking with a health professional	95% confidence intervals
Sex		
Men	1.32 *	(1.01–1.71)
Women (reference group)	1	
Age		
16–24	0.45 *	(0.24–0.85)
25–44	0.59 **	(0.40–0.87)
45–64	0.87	(0.61–1.25)
65 and over (reference group)	1	
Socio-economic classification		
Managerial and professional occupations	NS	
Intermediate occupations		
Never worked and long term unemployed		
Routine and manual occupations		
Region		
The North	NS	
Midlands and East Anglia		
South East		
South West		
Wales		
Scotland		
London (reference group)		
Gross income		
£31,200 or more	NS	
£18,720 less than £31,200		
£11,440 less than £18,720		
£8,230 less than £11,440		
£4,160 less than £8,230		
Less than £4,160		
Average weekly alcohol consumption		
51 units and over (men), 36 units and over (women)	3.61 **	(2.07–6.29)
36–50 units (men), 26–35 units (women)	2.39 **	(1.28–4.47)
22–35 units (men), 15–25 units (women)	2.38 **	(1.51–3.73)
11–21 units (men), 8–14 units (women)	1.38	(0.89–2.15)
1–10 units (men), 1–7 units (women)	1.07	(0.73–1.58)
Less than 1 unit (reference group)	1	
Household type		
One person only	NS	
Married/cohabiting with no dependent child		
Lone parent with dependent child(ren)		
Others		
Married/cohabiting with dependent child(ren)		
Marital status		
Married/cohabiting	0.78	(0.53–1.16)
Single	1.07	(0.66–1.73)
Widowed	1.48	(0.88–2.49)
Divorced/separated (reference group)	1	

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01

† Includes GP, someone else at the surgery, a doctor elsewhere or another health professional in the last year.

Table B4 Socio-demographic correlates of buying alcohol from a licensed bar or from a supermarket in the last week

Variables in the model	Odds ratios for having bought alcohol from a licensed bar	95% confidence intervals	Odds ratios for having bought alcohol from a supermarket	95% confidence intervals
Sex				
Men	2.05 **	(1.68–2.52)	0.77 **	(0.64–0.94)
Women (reference group)	1		1	
Age				
16–24	4.44 **	(2.94–6.72)	0.27 **	(0.17–0.44)
25–44	2.83 **	(2.05–3.92)	0.96	(0.71–1.29)
45–64	2.15 **	(1.59–2.91)	1.00	(0.76–1.31)
65 and over (reference group)	1		1	
Socio-economic classification				
Managerial and professional occupations	NS		NS	
Intermediate occupations				
Never worked and long term unemployed				
Routine and manual occupations				
Region				
The North	NS		NS	
Midlands and East Anglia				
South East				
South West				
Wales				
Scotland				
London (reference group)				
Gross income				
£31,200 or more	1.4	(0.95–2.07)	NS	
£18,720 less than £31,200	0.92	(0.64–1.31)		
£11,440 less than £18,720	1.28	(0.91–1.82)		
£8,230 less than £11,440	1.10	(0.68–1.50)		
£4,160 less than £8,230	0.9	(0.63–1.30)		
Less than £4,160 (reference group)	1			
Average weekly alcohol consumption				
22 units and over (men), 15 units and over (women)	4.26 **	(3.39–5.36)	3.01 **	(2.40–3.78)
11–21 units (men), 8–14 units (women)	2.26 **	(1.79–2.84)	2.35 **	(1.87–2.95)
1–10 units (men), 1–7 units (women) (reference group)	1		1	
Household type				
One person only	1.83 **	(1.36–2.47)	0.59 **	(0.44–0.78)
Married/cohabiting with no dependent child	1.64 **	(1.25–2.15)	0.79	(0.61–1.04)
Lone parent with dependent child(ren)	1.68 *	(1.13–2.49)	0.87	(0.59–1.29)
Others	2.32 **	(1.52–3.54)	1	(0.66–1.52)
Married/cohabiting with dependent child(ren) (reference group)	1		1	
Marital status				
Married/cohabiting	NS		NS	
Single				
Widowed				
Divorced/separated				

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01

Appendix C

The ONS Omnibus Survey

The Omnibus survey is a multi-purpose survey carried out by the Office for National Statistics most months on behalf of a range of government departments and other public or non-profit making bodies.

The sample

Interviews are conducted with adults aged 16 or over throughout Great Britain using a probability sample. Addresses are selected from the Postcode Address File of 'small users': the most complete sampling frame of addresses in the country. One hundred new postal sectors are selected each month and are stratified by region, the proportion of households renting from the local authorities, and the proportion in which the head of household is in Socio-Economic Groups 1-5 or 13 (that is a professional, employer, or manager). Postal sectors are selected with probability proportional to size and within each sector, 30 addresses are selected randomly.

At multi-household addresses, interviewers use a standard ONS procedure to select just one household randomly. In households with more than one adult member, one person aged 16 or over is randomly selected for interview. No proxy interviews are taken.

Weighting

As only one household member is interviewed at each address, people in households containing few adults have a higher probability of selection than those in households with many. Where the unit of analysis is individual adults, as it is for this module, a weighting is applied to correct for this unequal probability of selection.

Fieldwork

Interviews are carried out in respondents' homes by interviewers who have been trained to carry out a range of ONS surveys. Advance letters are sent to all addresses giving a brief account of the survey. Interviewers must make at least three to four calls at an address at different times of the day and week.

As with all ONS surveys, a quality check on fieldwork is carried out through recall interviews with a proportion of respondents.

Questions

The module of questions (shown in Appendix D) was developed in conjunction with the Department of Health.

Response Rates

The small users' Postal Address File includes some business addresses and other address, such as new and empty properties, at which no private households are living. During February and March 2004 this amounted to 8% of the set sample. This figure is removed before the response rate is calculated.

The response rate for the February and March 2004 Omnibus surveys was as follows:

Set sample	6,000	100%
Ineligible addresses	484	8%
Eligible addresses	5,516	100%
Refusals	1,392	25%
Non-contacts	596	11%
Respondents	3,528	64%

Appendix D

The questions

ASK ALWAYS:**INTRO1**

The next set of questions is about drinking alcohol.

- (1) PRESS <ENTER> CONTINUE

ASK ALWAYS:**M192_1**

Do you ever drink alcohol nowadays, including drinks you brew or make at home?

- (1) Yes
(2) No

ASK IF: Does not drink alcohol nowadays**M192_2**

Could I just check, does that mean you never have an alcoholic drink nowadays, or do you have an alcoholic drink very occasionally, perhaps for medicinal purposes or on special occasions like Christmas Day or New Year?

- (1) Very occasionally
(2) Never

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally**STBREW****SHOWCARD C192_4**

I'm now going to ask you about the different alcoholic drinks you have drunk over the last 12 months and I'd like to ask you first about strong beer which has 6% or more alcohol.

How often have you had a drink of strong BEER,LAGER,STOUT,CIDER during the last 12 months, that is since February 2003?

STRONG = 6% and over Alcohol by volume

- (1) Almost every day
(2) 5 or 6 days a week
(3) 3 or 4 days a week
(4) Once or twice a week
(5) Once or twice a month
(6) Once every couple of months
(7) Once or twice a year
(8) Not at all in last 12 months

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally**AND: Has drunk STBREW in last 12 months****STBREWAM**

How many HALF PINTS of strong BEER,LAGER,STOUT,CIDER have you usually drunk on any one day during the last 12 months, that is since February 2003?

STRONG = 6% and over Alcohol by volume

ENTER NO. OF HALF PINTS (CODE PINTS AS 2 HALVES)

IF NUMBER OF HALF PINTS IS NOT KNOWN, CODE 97 AND

SPECIFY TYPE & NO. OF UNITS AT NEXT QUESTION

1..97

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally**AND: Has drunk STBREW in last 12 months****AND: Some other amount****SPECSTB**

Specify amount of strong BEER,LAGER,STOUT,CIDER usually drunk on any one day during the last 12 months, that is since February 2003.

SPECIFY NUMBER AND TYPE OF UNITS – IF BOTTLE OR CAN – RECORD SIZE

STRING[20]

SIMILAR QUESTIONS FOR:

Normal strength beer, lager and cider

Spirits or liqueurs (eg gin, whisky, rum, brandy, vodka, advocaat, Bailey's, Archer's, tequila)

Sherry or Martini (including port, vermouth,cinzano, dubonnet)

Wine (including babycham, champagne)

Alcoholic lemonade (including alcoholic lemonades, alcoholic colas or other alcoholic fruit or flavoured drinks)

Any other types of alcoholic drink

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally**DROFTEN****SHOWCARD C192_4**

[*] (Thinking now about all kinds of drinks) how often have you had an alcoholic drink of any kind during the last 12 months?

- (1) Almost every day
(2) 5 or 6 days a week
(3) 3 or 4 days a week
(4) Once or twice a week
(5) Once or twice a month
(6) Once every couple of months
(7) Once or twice a year
(8) Not at all in last 12 months

ASK ALWAYS:**M192_40****SHOWCARD C192_40**

In the last 12 months, that is since February 2003 how often have you bought alcohol in each of the following places.

INCLUDE alcohol bought for others to drink

EXCLUDE alcohol bought by others for you to drink ...licensed bar (in a pub, hotel, club, wine bar)?

- (1) At least once a week, on average
(2) Once or twice a month, on average
(3) A few times a year
(4) Not at all in the last year

ASK IF: Has bought alcohol at a licensed bar in the last year

M192_41

May I just check, have you bought alcohol from a licensed bar in the last week?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

SIMILAR QUESTIONS FOR ALCOHOL BOUGHT:

...to drink with food at a restaurant

...at a branch of a supermarket chain

...at an off-licence

...somewhere other than a retail outlet (eg a boot sale, internet)

...abroad/from a duty free shop

ASK ALWAYS:

M192_10

Some drinks contain more alcohol than others. The amount is sometimes measured in terms of 'units of alcohol'.

Have you heard about measuring alcohol in units?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Not Sure/Don't know

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Heard about or not sure if heard about measuring alcohol in units

AND: Has drunk BEER in last 12 months

M192_11

Approximately how much BEER/LAGER/CIDER do you think makes up one unit of alcohol?

THE CORRECT ANSWER IS CODED AS 1.

RECORD OTHER ANSWERS AS APPROPRIATE.

- (1) A half pint
- (2) A pint
- (3) Any other amount
- (4) Don't know

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Heard about or not sure if heard about measuring alcohol in units

AND: Has drunk WINE in last 12 months

M192_12

Approximately how much WINE do you think makes up one unit of alcohol?

THE CORRECT ANSWER IS CODED AS 1.

RECORD OTHER ANSWERS AS APPROPRIATE.

- (1) One glass
- (2) Any other amount
- (3) Don't know

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Heard about or not sure if heard about measuring alcohol in units

AND: Has drunk SPIRIT in the last 12 months

M192_13

Approximately how much SPIRIT do you think makes up one unit of alcohol?

THE CORRECT ANSWER IS CODED AS 1.

RECORD OTHER ANSWERS AS APPROPRIATE.

- (1) Single measure
- (2) Any other amount
- (3) Don't know

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Heard about or not sure if heard about measuring alcohol in units

AND: Has drunk SHERRY in the last 12 months

M192_14

Approximately how much SHERRY/FORTIFIED WINE do you think makes up one unit of alcohol?

THE CORRECT ANSWER IS CODED AS 1.

RECORD OTHER ANSWERS AS APPROPRIATE.

- (1) One glass
- (2) Any other amount
- (3) Don't know

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Heard about or not sure if heard about measuring alcohol in units

M192_52

Have you seen any alcoholic drinks with the units of alcohol on the label?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Heard about or not sure if heard about measuring alcohol in units

AND: Seen alcoholic drinks with the units of alcohol on the label

M192_53

Where have you seen these alcoholic drinks?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

SET [6] OF

- (1) In a supermarket
- (2) In an off-licence
- (3) In a pub
- (4) In a restaurant
- (5) In a night club/club
- (6) Other (specify)

ASK IF: OTHER SPECIFIED IN M192_53

SPEC53

What other place have you seen these alcoholic drinks?

STRING[200]

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Drinks alcohol once or twice a week

M192_20

You have told me what you have drunk over the last 12 months, but we know that what people drink can vary a lot from week to week, so I'd like to ask you a few questions about last week.

Did you have an alcoholic drink in the seven days ending yesterday?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Drinks alcohol once or twice a week

AND: Had a drink last week

M192_23

On how many days out of the last seven did you have a drink?

1..7

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Drinks alcohol once or twice a week

AND: Had a drink last week

AND: M192_23 > 1

M192_24

Did you drink more on some days than others, or did you drink about the same on each of those days?

- (1) The amount varied from day to day
- (2) The amount was the same every day

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Drinks alcohol once or twice a week

AND: Had a drink last week

AND: Drink varied from day to day

M192_25

On which day did you have [your drink/most to drink]?

- (1) Sunday
- (2) Monday
- (3) Tuesday
- (4) Wednesday
- (5) Thursday
- (6) Friday
- (7) Saturday

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Drinks alcohol once or twice a week

AND: Had a drink last week

M192_54

Thinking about [that day/the most recent drinking day], where did you have your drink(s)?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

SET [7] OF

- (1) At home
- (2) At someone else's home
- (3) In a pub/pubs
- (4) In a restaurant
- (5) In a night club/club
- (6) Outside in a public place (eg park, street)
- (7) Other

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Drinks alcohol once or twice a week

AND: Had a drink last week

M192_55

Thinking about [the last time you drank on that day/the most recent time], with how many people did you have your drink(s)?

- (1) Alone
- (2) One other person
- (3) 2–5 people
- (4) 6–10 people
- (5) More than 10
- (6) Other

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Drinks alcohol once or twice a week

AND: Had a drink last week

AND: (((M192_55 = one) OR (M192_55 = two)) OR (M192_55 = six)) OR (M192_55 = q55oth)) OR (M192_55 = ten)

M192_56

And with whom did you have your drink(s)?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

SET [6] OF

- (1) Spouse/partner
- (2) Boy/girlfriend
- (3) With friends
- (4) Family
- (5) Work colleagues
- (6) Other (specify)

ASK IF: Other specified in M192_56

SPEC56

With who else did you have your drinks?

STRING[200]

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Drinks alcohol once or twice a week

AND: Had a drink last week

M192_26

SHOWCARD C192_26

Thinking about [that day], what types of drink did you have that day?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

ALCOPOPS – Include: Cooler/Mixer/Blender drinks such as Bacardi Breezer, Smirnoff Ice, Hooch, Archers Aqua or WKD or Reef.

Alcola Alcoholic Cola, Castaway, Diamond Zest Decoda Soda, MA

Alcoholic Springwater, Hoolahams, Hoopers Ginger Brew, Hoopers

Hooch, Jammins Alcoholic Caribbean Crush, Jealous Lover, Jeffs

Lime Clear Beer, Moo Macaulays, Max Black, Mrs Puckers Citrus

Brew, Pulse Cider, Schotts Cranberry Shock Cider, Shooter, Skinny

Puckers Citrus Brew, Sunstroke, TNT Cider, Two Dogs, Vault

Alcoholic Cider, White Lightening, Woody's Pink Grapefruit Drink,

Zanzibi Sling

SET [7] OF

- (1) Strong Beer/Lager/Cider (6% or stronger)
- (2) Normal strength Beer/Lager/Cider/Shandy (less than 6%)
- (3) Wine/include Champagne and Babycham
- (4) ALCOPOPS (i.e. Alcoholic lemonades, alcoholic colas or other alcoholic fruit-or-herb flavoured drinks eg Bacardi Breezer, Smirnoff Ice, Hooch, Archers Aqua or WKD or Reef)
- (5) Spirits
- (6) Sherry/fortified wines
- (7) Low alcohol drinks only

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Drinks alcohol once or twice a week

AND: Had a drink last week

AND: Drinks strong brew

BSTAM

How many HALF PINTS of strong BEER, LAGER, STOUT and CIDER did you drink that day?

STRONG = 6% and over Alcohol by volume

ENTER NO. OF HALF-PINTS, OR CODE 97 AND SPECIFY AT NEXT QUESTION.

1..97

ASK IF: Some other amount

BSPECST

Specify amount of strong BEER, LAGER, STOUT, CIDER you drank that day?

STRING[20]

SIMILAR QUESTIONS FOR:

Normal strength beer, lager and cider
Spirits or liqueurs (eg gin, whisky, rum, brandy, vodka, advocaat)
Sherry or Martini (including port, vermouth, cinzano, dubonnet)
Wine (including babycham, champagne)
Alcoholic lemonade (including alcoholic colas)
Any other types of alcoholic drink

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Heard about or not sure if heard about measuring alcohol in units

M192_35

You told me earlier that you have heard /may have heard about measuring alcohol in units. Do you keep a check of how many **units** of alcohol you drink ?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

ASK IF: Does drink or drinks occasionally

AND: Heard about or not sure if heard about measuring alcohol in units

AND: keeps a count of units

M192_36

Do you keep this check on the amount of alcohol you drink on a ...

RUNNING PROMPT

- (1) daily basis
- (2) a weekly basis
- (3) or both daily and weekly?
- (4) Other

ASK ALWAYS

M192_37

Have you ever heard of the recommended maximum number of alcohol units that people should drink in a DAY?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Not sure/Don't know
- (4) SPONTANEOUS Only know a weekly figure

ASK IF: Has heard about recommended units per DAY

AND: Ask women about females first

M192_38

Can you tell me how many units **per day** is that for **women**?

CODE 999 FOR DON'T KNOW

0..999

ASK IF: Has heard about recommended units per DAY

AND: Ask women about females first

M192_39

Can you tell me how many units **per day** is that for **men**?

CODE 999 FOR DON'T KNOW

0..999

ASK IF: Has heard about recommended units per DAY

AND: NOT (Ask women about females first)

M192_39a

Can you tell me how many units **per day** is that for **men**?

CODE 999 FOR DON'T KNOW

0..999

ASK IF: Has heard about recommended units per DAY

AND: NOT (Ask women about females first)

M192_38a

Can you tell me how many units **per day** is that for **women**?

CODE 999 FOR DON'T KNOW

0..999

ASK ALWAYS:

M192_57M

In the last year, have you discussed drinking alcohol with your GP, another member of staff at your GP's surgery or with a doctor or other medical person elsewhere?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

SET [4] OF

- (1) Yes, GP
- (2) Yes, other member of staff at surgery
- (3) Yes, doctor elsewhere
- (4) Yes, other medical person elsewhere, eg nurse
- (5) No

Appendix E

Reports in the Omnibus Series

- The prevalence of back pain in Great Britain. Val Mason. HMSO (1994)
- National fire safety week and domestic fire safety. Amanda Wilmot and Joy Dobbs. HMSO (1994)
- Cooking: attitudes and behaviour. Gerry Nicolaas. HMSO (1995)
- Food Safety in the Home. Alison Walker. HMSO (1996)
- Residual Medicines. Myra Woolf. HMSO (1996)
- Smoking-related behaviour and attitudes. Fiona Dawe and Eileen Goddard. TSO (1997)
- Drinking: adults' behaviour and knowledge. Eileen Goddard. TSO (1997)
- The prevalence of back pain in Great Britain, 1996. Tricia Dodd. TSO (1997)
- Smoking-related behaviour and attitudes, 1997. Stephanie Freeth. Office for National Statistics (1998)
- Drinking: adults' behaviour and knowledge in 1998. Eileen Goddard. Office for National Statistics (1998)
- Contraception and Sexual Health, 1997. Tricia Dodd and Stephanie Freeth. Office for National Statistics (1999)
- The prevalence of back pain in Great Britain, 1998. Department of Health Statistical Bulletin. Available at www.doh.gov.uk/public/backpain.htm
- Food safety in the home, 1998. Deborah Lader. Office for National Statistics (1999)
- Contraception and Sexual Health, 1998. Laura Rainford and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2000)
- Smoking Related Behaviour and Attitudes, 1999. Deborah Lader and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2000)
- Drinking: adults' behaviour and knowledge in 2000. Deborah Lader and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2001)
- Contraception and Sexual Health, 1999. Fiona Dawe and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2001)
- Smoking Related Behaviour and Attitudes, 2000. Deborah Lader and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2001)
- Smoking Related Behaviour and Attitudes, 2001. Deborah Lader and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2001)
- Contraception and Sexual Health, 2000. Fiona Dawe and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2002)
- Drinking: adults' behaviour and knowledge in 2002. Deborah Lader and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2002)
- Contraception and Sexual Health, 2001. Fiona Dawe and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2003)
- Smoking Related Behaviour and Attitudes, 2002. Deborah Lader and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2003)
- Contraception and Sexual Health, 2002. Fiona Dawe and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2003)
- Smoking Related Behaviour and Attitudes, 2003. Deborah Lader and Howard Meltzer. Office for National Statistics (2004)
- Contraception and Sexual Health, 2003. Fiona Dawe and Laura Rainford. Office for National Statistics (2004)

