# ALCOHOL

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#### WHAT IS IT?

Alcohol contains the chemical ethanol (a clear liquid) which the intoxicating ingredient found in beers, wines and spirits.

#### HOW IS IT USED?

Alcohol comes in a whole range of different drinks and strengths. Lower strength drinks include beers, ciders and alcopops, medium strength is for wine and higher strength drinks includes spirits such as vodka and whiskey. Therefore you would need a lot less quantity of spirits than beer to feel the same effects of the alcohol.

## WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS AND RISKS?

Drinking in moderation can reduce feelings of anxiety and inhibitions and make you feel more sociable and relaxed. However, drinking too much can lead to all sorts of dodgy consequences like getting into fights, anti-social behaviour, having unprotected sex and putting on weight due to all the calories in alcohol! There are also loads of long term health problems too such as stroke, liver disease, high blood pressure and cancers.

#### WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

You have to be 18 years or older to buy alcohol legally from a pub, off-licence, supermarket or online. Many pubs and shops operate 'Challenge 21' which means they will ask for proof of age if they believe that person looks under that age. It is illegal for anyone 18 or over to buy alcohol for an under 18 unless it is in a licenced restaurant and the young person is 16 or 17 and drinks beer, cider or wine with a table meal. If it not for a meal and more for a party for example, a person found to be committing this offence can face a fine of up to £5,000 if convicted!