

What's a Standard Drink?

A standard drink in the United States is any drink that contains about 14 grams of pure alcohol (about 0.6 fluid ounces or 1.2 tablespoons). Below are U.S. standard drink equivalents. These are approximate, since different brands and types of beverages vary in their actual alcohol content.

<p>12 oz. of beer or cooler</p>  <p>~5% alcohol</p> <p>12 oz.</p>	<p>8–9 oz. of malt liquor 8.5 oz. shown in a 12-oz. glass that, if full, would hold about 1.5 standard drinks of malt liquor</p>  <p>~7% alcohol</p> <p>8.5 oz.</p>	<p>5 oz. of table wine</p>  <p>~12% alcohol</p> <p>5 oz.</p>	<p>3–4 oz. of fortified wine (such as sherry or port) 3.5 oz. shown</p>  <p>~17% alcohol</p> <p>3.5 oz.</p>	<p>2–3 oz. of cordial, liqueur, or aperitif 2.5 oz. shown</p>  <p>~24% alcohol</p> <p>2.5 oz.</p>	<p>1.5 oz. of brandy (a single jigger)</p>  <p>~40% alcohol</p> <p>1.5 oz.</p>	<p>1.5 oz. of spirits (a single jigger of 80-proof gin, vodka, whiskey, etc.) Shown straight and in a highball glass with ice to show the level before adding a mixer*</p>  <p>~40% alcohol</p> <p>1.5 oz.</p>
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Many people don't know what counts as a standard drink and so they don't realize how many standard drinks are in the containers in which these drinks are often sold. Some examples:

- For **beer**, the approximate number of standard drinks in
 - 12 oz. = 1
 - 16 oz. = 1.3
 - 22 oz. = 2
 - 40 oz. = 3.3
- For **malt liquor**, the approximate number of standard drinks in
 - 12 oz. = 1.5
 - 16 oz. = 2
 - 22 oz. = 2.5
 - 40 oz. = 4.5
- For **table wine**, the approximate number of standard drinks in
 - a standard 750-mL (25-oz.) bottle = 5
- For **80-proof spirits**, or “hard liquor,” the approximate number of standard drinks in
 - a mixed drink = 1 or more*
 - a pint (16 oz.) = 11
 - a fifth (25 oz.) = 17
 - 1.75 L (59 oz.) = 39

**Note:* It can be difficult to estimate the number of standard drinks in a single mixed drink made with hard liquor. Depending on factors such as the type of spirits and the recipe, a mixed drink can contain from one to three or more standard drinks.