

# Alcohol



## Young people and the law

### Buying alcohol

In South Australia, you must be 18 years or older to buy alcohol. It is a **crime** to:

- buy alcohol if you are under 18
- sell alcohol to someone under 18.

If you try to buy alcohol or enter a place that is restricted to adults (like a pub or a bar), staff can ask you to show proof of age. Police can also ask for proof of age. Using a fake ID or giving false details to the police is a crime.

### Drinking alcohol

It is usually illegal to drink alcohol if you are under 18, but it depends on whether you are at home, in licensed premises or in public.

### Drinking at home

It is usually illegal for someone under 18 to drink alcohol at a private home. However, you can drink alcohol at your home or a friend's home in some circumstances.

The alcohol must be given to you by your **parent** or **carer** or by an adult who has **permission** from your parent or carer.

The adult giving you alcohol must be able to **responsibly supervise** you. Whether supervision is "responsible" will depend on:

- whether the adult, or the young person, is drunk
- the type and amount of alcohol
- the age of the young person.

It is illegal for someone under 18 to be given or to drink alcohol on private property that is not residential (like warehouses, halls, or industrial buildings).

## Drinking at licensed premises

Licensed premises are places that sell or serve alcohol. They include bottle shops, pubs, bars, clubs, and some restaurants.

If you are under 18, it is illegal to drink, buy, have or be given alcohol on licensed premises. It is a crime even if you are with your parent or carer. If you ask an adult to buy you alcohol and they do it, then you and that adult both commit a crime.

There are also laws that ban young people from certain licensed premises at certain times of the night. If you are asked to leave a licensed premises and you refuse, you may be removed from the premises.

## Support services

If you are charged with an offence related to alcohol, or need legal advice about anything else, call our free Legal Helpline between 9:00 am and 4:30 pm Monday to Friday.

If you or someone you know is struggling with alcohol, help is available. Visit the Alcohol and Drug Foundation at [adf.org.au](http://adf.org.au) or call **1800 250 015**.

## Drinking in public places

Public places are places that the public can access. Public places can include footpaths, parks, beaches, and roads.

It is illegal for you to have, drink or be given alcohol in a public place if you are under 18 unless you are with your parent or carer or a responsible adult who has permission from your parent or carer. You must be responsibly supervised by an adult.

If you are drunk in a public place, the police can take you home, to a police station, or to a sobering up centre if they think you are too drunk to take care of yourself. Police can also ask for proof of age if they think you may be underage. Using a fake ID or giving false details to the police is an offence.

It is a crime for **anyone** of any age to drink alcohol in a public area declared to be a **dry zone**. Police can take your alcohol and it will not be returned.



Legal help for all South Australians

**1300 366 424** Legal Helpline



**Prefer to text?**

Use our Legal Chat at [lsc.sa.gov.au](http://lsc.sa.gov.au)