

What is Legal drinking age (LDA)?

In many countries, a minimum age is set at which it becomes legal to drink or purchase alcohol.

This drinking age provides a legally enforceable tool in preventing access to alcohol by those under a certain age on or off premise.

- *Drinking* age may be distinct from the minimum legal age at which a person may *purchase* alcohol. For example, in the UK, 16 and 17 year olds may drink wine, beer or cider with a meal in a licensed premises when with adults, but may not purchase the alcohol themselves until aged 18.
- Most legal drinking age legislation does not cover drinking in the home with parental permission and supervision (legal from age 5 in the UK for example).

Last updated January 2015

Country	Drinking Age: On premise	Purchasing Age: Off premise
Albania	18	18
Algeria	18	18
Argentina	18	18
Australia	18	18
Austria	16/18 (For spirits, the age limit is 16 in three Federal States and 18 in six Federal States - 12% ABV or higher can only be consumed by 18 and over in some states.)	16/18 (For spirits, the age limit is 16 in three Federal States and 18 in six Federal States - 12% ABV or higher can only be consumed by 18 and over in some states).
Azerbaijan	18	18
Bahamas	18	18
Bahrain	Illegal (18 for non-muslims)	Illegal (18 for non-muslims)
Barbados	18 (Those aged 10–17 are allowed to consume alcohol provided they are with a parent or guardian)	18
Belarus	18	18
Belgium	16 beer and wine; 18 for spirits	None for beer and wine; 18 for spirits
Belize	18	18
Bolivia	18	18
Bosnia and Herzegovina	16	18
Botswana	18	18
Brazil	18	18
Brunei	Illegal	Illegal
Bulgaria	18	18
Burundi	18, unless accompanied by parents	18, unless accompanied by parents
Cambodia	None	None
Cameroon	18	21
Canada	18 in Manitoba, Alberta, and Quebec. 19 in British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, and Yukon	18 in Manitoba, Alberta, and Quebec. 19 in British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, and Yukon
Cape Verde	18	18

Country	Drinking Age: On premise	Purchasing Age: Off premise
Central African Republic	18	18
Chile	18	18
China, People's Republic of	18	18
China, Republic of (Taiwan)	18	18
Colombia	18	18
Comoros	None	None
Congo, Republic of	18	18
Costa Rica	18	18
Croatia	18	18
Cyprus	17	17
Czech Republic	18	18
Denmark	There is no drinking age, only a purchase age, and an adult can buy alcohol for a minor.	16 to buy alcohol over 1.2% ABV, however for all bars, restaurants and discos the limit is 18. To buy alcohol over 16.5% ABV the age minimum age is 18.
Dominican Republic	18	18
Ecuador	18	18
Egypt	18 for beer; 21 for wine and spirits	18 for beer; 21 for wine and spirits
El Salvador	18	18
Equatorial Guinea	18	18
Eritrea	18	18
Estonia	18	18
Ethiopia	18	18
Fiji	21	21
Finland	18	18 (up to 22% ABV in stores and all alcohol in bars), 20 (all alcohol)
France	18	18
Gabon	Illegal (18 for non-Muslim population)	Illegal (18 for non-Muslim population)
Gambia	Illegal (18 for non-Muslim population)	Illegal (18 for non-Muslim population)
Georgia	16	16
Germany	16 for beer and wine; 18 spirits, 14 together with parents	16 for beer and wine; 18 spirits
Ghana	18	18
Gibraltar	None	16
Greece	18 – may be 17 for beer	None
Guatemala	18	18
Guinea-Bissau	None	None
Guyana	18	18
Hong Kong	18	18
Hungary	18	18
Iceland	20	20
India	18 to 25, depending on state	18 to 25, depending on state
Indonesia	21	21
Ireland	18	18
Israel	18	18

Country	Drinking Age: On premise	Purchasing Age: Off premise
Italy	18	18
Jamaica	16	16
Japan	20	20
Kazakhstan	21	21
Kenya	18	18
Korea, Republic of (South Korea)	19	19
Kyrgyzstan	18	18
Latvia	18	18
Leichtenstein	16 for wine, beer and cider, 18 for spirits	16 for wine, beer and cider, 18 for spirits
Lesotho	18	18
Libya	Illegal	Illegal
Lithuania	18	18
Luxembourg	16	None
Macedonia	18	18
Maldives Republic of	Illegal (18 for tourists)	Illegal (18 for tourists)
Malawi	18	18
Malaysia	Illegal (18 for non-muslim population).	Illegal (18 for non-muslim population).
Malta	17	17
Mauritius	18	18
Mexico	18	18
Micronesia	21	21
Moldova	18	18
Morocco	None	16
Mozambique	18	18
Namibia	18	18
Netherlands	16, in pubs or cafes 18 from Jan 2014	16 (under 15% ABV), 18 (15% ABV and over) 18 from Jan 2014
New Zealand	18	18
Nicaragua	18	18
Niger	18	18
Nigeria	18	18
Norway	18, but 20 for spirits over 22% ABV	18, but 20 for spirits over 22% ABV
Pakistan	Illegal (21 for non-Muslim population)	Illegal (21 for non-Muslim population)
Palau	21	21
Panama	18	18
Papua New Guinea	18	18
Paraguay	20	20
Puerto Rico	18	18
Peru	18	18
Philippines	18	18
Poland	18	18

Country	Drinking Age: On premise	Purchasing Age: Off premise
Portugal	16 for beer and wine, 18 for spirits	16 for beer and wine, 18 for spirits

Qatar	Illegal (18 for non-Muslim population)	Illegal (Permit needed and over 18 for non-Muslim population)
Romania	None	18
Russia	18	18
Samoa	21	21
Serbia	18	18
Seychelles	18	18
Singapore	18	18
Slovakia	18	18
Slovenia	18	18
Solomon Islands	21	21
South Africa	18	18
Spain	18 (16 in Asturias)	18 (16 in Asturias)
Sri Lanka	21	21
Swaziland	18	18
Sweden	18	20 (Systembolaget stores), 18 (beer with 2.25%–3.5% ABV in normal shops), none (less than 2.25% ABV)
Switzerland	16/18, depending on the canton, for beer and wine; 18 in all cantons for spirits	16/18, depending on the canton, for beer and wine; 18 in all cantons for spirits
Thailand	20	20
Togo	18	18
Tonga	18	18
Trinidad and Tobago	18	18
Tunisia	18	18
Turkey	18	18
Turkmenistan	18	18
Uganda	18	18
Ukraine	18	18
United Kingdom	18 (with the exception for age 16+ where beer, cider, and wine with a meal and bought by and accompanied by an adult is legal. This does not apply in Northern Ireland).	18
United States	21	21
Uzbekistan	None	20
Uruguay	18	18
Vanuatu	18	18
Venezuela	18	18
Vietnam	none	18 for wine and spirits
Zambia	18	18
Zimbabwe	18	18