

A safer uni life

This helpful guide covers everything you need to enjoy a safe university experience, filled with tips and advice on things you may have forgotten after over a year of lockdown.

**TURNING
POINT**
inspired by possibility



On the back page we've included a handy screengrab with tips & things to remember for a safe weekend.



Clubbing

- It might make you late but waiting an extra half an hour so your phone is fully charged will be worth it in the long run. Why not invest in a battery pack too, just in case!

Keep an eye on how much you're spending to avoid any unpleasant surprises in the morning.

Say no to rounds. Know your limits, it's okay to stick to them.

- At the start of the night, pre-arrange a meeting point. It can be easy to find yourself on your own so be sure to stay close to people you know, you can always go to the bar or a security guard for help.
- Remember to stay hydrated, especially if you're drinking other drinks like beer and spritzers.



- If you're on the receiving end of rowdy behaviour then walk away and alert a member of staff or security to what is going on, much better that they deal with it.

Never leave your drink unattended. Ever.

- Enjoy meeting new people but remember that they are strangers so beware of trusting them with anything valuable or finding yourself alone with them.

- Always book a taxi or get a lift with someone you trust. It's worth that extra expense to take a ride in a cab and get home safely. Share your location with your friends too so they can keep an eye on you.
- Never get into a car with a driver who is under the influence of drink or drugs.

Morning after

- Hangover
- Anxiety
- Feeling low
- Forgetting the previous night
- Unknown costs
- Craving for junk foods
- Waking up next to a stranger

House parties

- Not ready for big gatherings again? Honesty is the best policy, just explain that you'd love to see everyone and celebrate, but you simply aren't ready for that yet.
- If you're taking drugs, then start in small amounts and only build up if you feel comfortable. There is no safe level of drug use but it's important to know the risks of what you're taking and plan your next few hours.

Respect your own boundaries and look after others.

Eat! Carbs and protein are best for helping your body process alcohol

- Blending multiple drugs can often bring about really nasty consequences. If something goes wrong, loosen clothing and go to a less crowded space, try to calm down and call 999, stop others crowding round.



In the event of an overdose, use the recovery position and call 999 immediately.

- If you think you might end up having sex later then remember to bring a condom with you, it's always handy to keep one in your wallet just in case (although check the expiry date!).

- Remember that cocaine is an upper so can impair your ability to realise how drunk you are. It's also going to make you sweat so you'll get dehydrated if you haven't drunk enough water.

Share your location with friends & preserve charge (airplane mode)

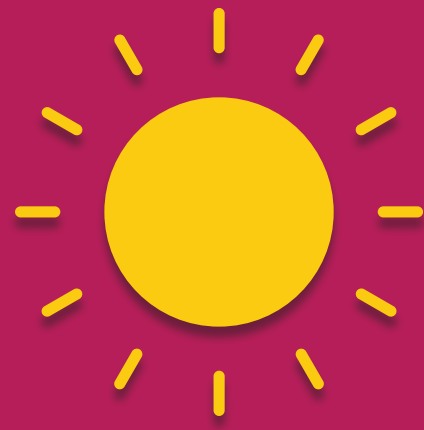
Mental health

- The dreaded 'hangxiety'. It's okay to feel bad or remorseful but remember that alcohol is a depressant so will be contributing to your negative feelings in a big way.

You can't go back in time and change what happened the night before, so be kind to yourself and think about what you might change in the future.

If you are worried that you or someone you know is at risk of seriously harming themselves then call 999 immediately.

- Starting university and leaving home for the first time is an exciting and new experience, of course, like anything new it will bring with it a whole roster of emotions. It's okay to feel emotional, miss your home and be nervous about new surroundings. It's important to talk about how you're feeling, don't bottle it up.



- Binge drinking a few nights a week will start to have a knock-on effect to your mental and physical health. Try having alcohol-free days or space out drinks with non-alcoholic ones.
- Stress can manifest itself in lots of ways, check in with yourself regularly to make sure it isn't having too big an impact on your daily life. Things like poor sleep, lack of focus, tension headaches, low moods or overeating.

Samaritans are open 24/7 for free by calling 116 123.

Sharing your worries and concerns with housemates or friends may allow you to support each other, it's likely they will be feeling similar.

- It's important to speak to someone if you're struggling with your mental health. Your university will have a pastoral carer and a mental health support team you can reach out to, otherwise you could visit your GP.

Covid 19

- If possible, you want to strike a good balance between enjoying your uni experience to the fullest whilst also being considerate of the situation with the continuing pandemic.

Even if you feel less people are doing it, it's a good idea to continue wearing face coverings inside where possible.

Don't let anyone make you feel uncomfortable for wanting to wear a mask or practise social distancing.

Remember, it's about socialising in an environment which makes you feel comfortable.



- Brits do love a drunk singsong! Get into the groove and join in but be aware of people's boundaries and that after being isolated for so long it could be intimidating.

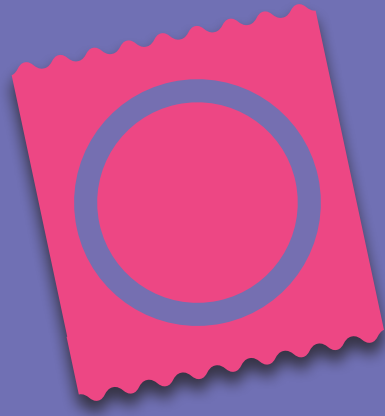
When on a night out, we know sometimes it's hard to pass up sharing a bottle but not sharing or accepting drinks from strangers is even more important now!

- If you're worried about going back home to see elderly or vulnerable relatives try to cut back on socialising a week or so before hand and pick up a lateral flow test (although it's important to remember these are not always accurate).
- Everyone is in the same boat; it is totally normal to feel worried about social situations after such a long time apart. Be yourself and don't feel the need to meet other's expectations, only your own.

Sexual health

Most importantly, sex should make you feel good about yourself.

- If something doesn't feel right or that this isn't you, or you feel pressured into having sex, then you should put on the brakes until you feel comfortable.
- Sex may be a big topic among your friends, but you can set your own limits and go at your own pace, you have your entire life to explore sex!
- If your partner is reluctant to wear a condom "because it feels better" maybe let them know why you think it's necessary, that sex feels good for you when you don't have to worry about unwanted pregnancy or STIs.
- Most universities will have an active and engaging LGBTQ+ community, it can be a great way to meet other underrepresented students and get additional support.



If you're sexually active it is important to get tested every few months or so (maybe take a friend for moral support).

- Getting an STI does not make you 'dirty' and you shouldn't feel ashamed and is more common than you think. The most important thing is you get it treated to protect yourself and others.

- If you do find out you're pregnant, first things first is to remember that you're not alone – many women have found themselves in your position. It will be scary, but with the right support you can do this, many universities provide sexual health and pregnancy support for women.

Safety first - always wear a condom.

Ten tips to a safe weekend

Take a screenshot and share with your friends

- Charge your phone to 100% before you leave
- Wallet, ID, keys
- Make sure you've eaten a carby meal
- Enough bottles of water for the day
- Pack enough layers for later
- Share location with friends
- Let someone else know where you're going, like a housemate or family member
- Plan your way home and let others know when you've arrived
- Drink a big glass of water before bed
- Have your carb and protein heavy food ready for tomorrow morning

For more information, visit www.turning-point.co.uk