



# Know Your No's

If you want to say no, you'll need to stay in control of the situation and, of course, stay alcohol free (or free of whatever the pressure may be).

Your friend says, "Hey, do you want to come over to drink with us after school?"

What are some ways to say "no"? There are several ways to say no, but one is more effective than the others. Find out which ones are the most effective.

## No Option A:

"UM, NO, I DON'T THINK I CAN. I ... UM ... AH ... YOU KNOW."

This is a **passive** answer. It is **NOT** the most effective way to say no. Being passive means saying no weakly, mumbling, or making excuses.

## No Option B:

"NO WAY! WHAT ARE YOU—STUPID?"

This is an **aggressive** answer. It is **NOT** the most effective way to say no. Being aggressive means pushing people around, threatening or blaming them, putting them down, or acting angry.

## No Option C:

"NO, THAT STUFF CAN MAKE YOU SICK."

This is a **know-it-all** answer. It is **NOT** the most effective way to say no. Being a know-it-all means giving a lot of facts, acting superior, judging people, or telling them what they are feeling.

## No Option D:

"NO THANKS, I DON'T WANT TO. BUT I'LL SEE YOU AT THE GAME SATURDAY."

This is an **assertive** answer. It **IS** the most effective way to say no. Being assertive means standing up straight; looking the person you are talking to right in the eye; speaking in a firm voice, saying it quickly and being polite; and choosing words well. This answer's best but check out the rest so you know the "no's" to avoid.

## No Option E:

"DID YOU STUDY FOR THE QUIZ TODAY?"

This is an **avoiding** answer. It is **NOT** the most effective way to say no. Avoiding means: changing the subject, staying away from the issue, or trying to distract the person.



National Institute  
on Alcohol Abuse  
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# What were those ways to say no again? Here they are:

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## Most Effective



### Being *assertive*, which means:

- Standing up straight
- Looking directly at the person or group who is pressuring you
- Speaking in a firm voice
- Saying it quickly and being polite
- Choosing words well and owning your decision—Instead of “I can’t,” say, “I don’t want to.”

## Less Effective



### Being *passive*, which means:

- Saying no weakly
- Mumbling
- Making excuses and not standing behind your decision



### Being *aggressive*, which means:

- Threatening or blaming them
- Putting them down
- Acting angry



### Being a *know-it-all*, which means:

- Giving lots of facts
- Acting superior
- Judging people
- Telling them what they are feeling



### *Avoiding*, which means:

- Changing the subject
- Staying away from the issue

**Remember** that saying no is the most important part – You might not say it perfectly and might have to say it more than once.