

U.S. EDITION

# Alcohol Online Ordering Trends

Learn how to attract alcohol delivery customers  
and boost your business's sales all year long.

2023



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# Introduction

## The rise in alcohol delivery and why we made this report

Consumer convenience has been the driving force behind all retail efforts and business growth decisions over the past few years. Local merchants are meeting this demand with omnichannel strategies and online ordering options so they can thrive in a digital economy.

What initially felt like a luxury, occasional expense has become part of the daily routine, and for many consumers, **delivery is now their preferred way to safely purchase alcohol.**

In 2023, consumers are continuing to look for convenience. More and more people choose to work from home and rely on delivery options to maintain a better work-life balance. And as delivery apps become part of consumers' everyday routine, they're branching out from food delivery to alcohol, flowers, household items, gifts, and more.

We wanted to find out how the alcohol delivery industry has evolved over the past few years and share where things stand now. [Among surveyed consumers:](#)



54%

of consumers prefer online shopping for alcoholic beverages.



100%+ 

Year over year growth in alcohol orders for pickup and delivery on DoorDash from 2021 to 2022.



1 in 10

consumers have ordered alcohol delivery in the past 6 months.

But there's lots more to learn about alcohol delivery in 2023 and beyond. How has alcohol consumption changed since the onset of the pandemic? How are people buying it and why? We'll get into all the alcoholic beverage industry trends you need to know to boost your business this year.





CHAPTER 2

# Alcohol consumption behaviors

How habits have changed post-pandemic

There have been a lot of changes when it comes to trends in consumer alcohol sales over the past three years. Even though younger generations are drinking less than previous generations<sup>1</sup>, they're still interested, but more selective about how and when they consume alcohol. Turns out that convenience is key for every generation. As of early 2023, our data shows:

60% 

**of consumers report using on-demand alcohol delivery more than last year.**

Drinking at restaurants has stayed almost level, and drinking at bars is down 18%.



69%

of consumers report ordering alcohol online at least monthly.



This could be the industry settling down after a post-COVID boom, or it could indicate a shift in consumer preferences. People are interested in trying new things, like ready-to-drink (RTD) cocktails, hard ciders, and local craft beers. And the craft beer craze has stayed strong.



The global craft beer industry is projected to double by 2028<sup>2</sup>, reaching over \$200B in annual revenue.

Today, people are balancing drinking at home with drinking out, and when they drink at home, it's safe and convenient to get their drinks delivered.

Another contributor to the growth in online alcohol delivery is the current inflation crisis and economic downturn — people still want to gather and drink with friends, but are looking to do so in a more affordable way at home. **18% of survey respondents order on-demand alcohol delivery to save money.**

Consumers developed new shopping habits during the height of COVID, and they seem to be sticking with them, given their positive experiences. **Among people who order alcohol delivery, nearly 7 in 10 order alcohol online at least monthly** — so tapping into the delivery market can mean repeat sales for your business.



## CHAPTER 3

# Alcohol online ordering trends

Inside online ordering and delivery preferences



**67%**

of shoppers reported that they order alcohol online as a treat.

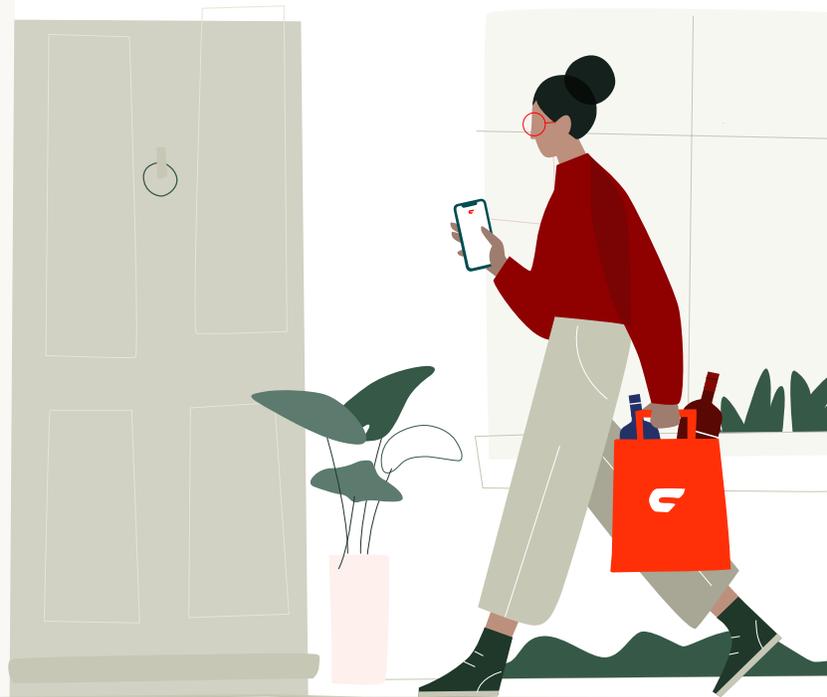
**42%**

of shoppers cited comfort, convenience, and time-savings as their reason for using alcohol delivery services.

**20%**

of shoppers cited the ease of not having to carry alcoholic beverages home as their reason for ordering delivery.

Depending on where a person lives, procuring alcoholic beverages can be an easy walk down the block or a 45-minute ordeal including a drive and a parking lot. No matter where they're ordering from, though, people love the convenience of not having to carry their beverages home.



## When do consumers buy alcohol online?

In the U.S., DoorDash consumers most frequently order alcohol for delivery or pickup at 6 pm local time, around dinnertime. In 2022, most consumers ordered alcohol delivery orders on Saturday, which changed from Friday in 2021. For pickup orders, the most popular day to order online is Fridays, suggesting that consumers want to quickly grab some drinks to enjoy at home after a long work week. Among DoorDash users:



**6PM**

The most popular time to order alcohol for delivery.



**3-9PM**

The most popular time window to order alcohol for delivery.



**Saturday**

The most popular day of the week to order alcohol pickup and delivery.

**Friday**

The most popular day to order alcohol for pick up.



We also found some other surprising and interesting reasons why consumers love ordering alcohol delivery in our survey results.

As restrictions on gatherings were rolled back, consumers started **ordering alcohol online for parties and celebrations**. It's one of the most popular reasons for ordering online, and it's way up since 2021. On the day of a party, there's always plenty to do – cooking or getting takeout, cleaning, setting up, moving furniture, getting the playlist together – and since consumers often know exactly what they want when shopping for alcohol, they're happy to pay someone else to pick it up and bring it to their home. **They don't need to spend time on the day of the party browsing in a store, loading up a grocery cart or the car, and bringing it home.** With alcohol delivery, it's one thing off the list.

A similarly celebratory reason for ordering alcohol online is **gift giving**. More and more, consumers are buying alcoholic gifts online and having them delivered, from a special bottle of wine to a bottle of brandy a friend mentioned loving. Experience gifts are growing in popularity<sup>3</sup> – like trips, special dinners out, or concert tickets – and a special bottle of their favorite type of drink falls somewhere between a traditional gift and an experience gift. They still get to open a package and hold a physical gift in their hands, but drinking it is a special experience that can make any celebration more special.

Lastly, consumers are using alcohol delivery because it's **safe**. If you've already consumed alcohol, not having to leave your house to buy more prevents you from putting yourself at risk. DoorDash also ensures that alcohol is not delivered to anyone underage with our [two-step ID verification process](#). This allows alcohol delivery recipients to consume safely and responsibly.



Why else are people shopping online? Health and safety continues to be a big concern.

### Why consumers shop online instead of in-store

Shop from comfort of home



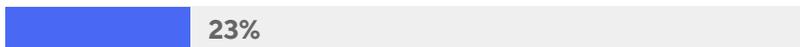
Saves me time



Don't have to leave my house at an inconvenient time



Avoid bad weather



Don't have to worry about parking/ transportation to store



### Occasions for ordering delivery alcohol

To treat myself/ indulge myself



For a party / celebration



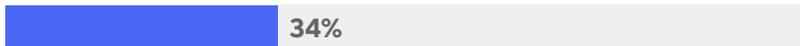
To avoid having to leave the house after I've had a drink or two



Regular replacement of items



Ran out of items unexpectedly



# 16%

of surveyed shoppers buy alcohol online in order to continue to keep themselves safe from COVID-19.





## CHAPTER 4

# Consumer alcohol sales trends

What people are buying from alcohol retailers

## What are people ordering to drink?

Almost 7 in 10 survey respondents purchase alcohol online at least monthly. But what are they ordering?



### Most popular alcoholic beverages our survey respondents purchased online for delivery:

- 1 Flavored malt beverages (like White Claw) and hard cider.
- 2 Whiskey, bourbon, scotch + ready-to-drink cocktails
- 3 Vodka and tequila
- 4 Wine and champagne

### Top three fastest-growing alcoholic beverages ordered for delivery among DoorDash users in 2022:

(compared to 2021)

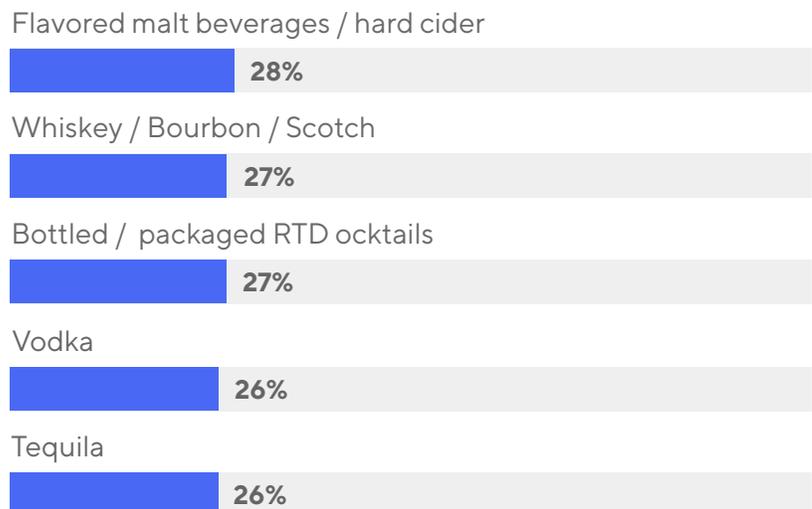
- 1 Vodka
- 2 Ready-to-drink (RTD) cocktails\*
- 3 Tequila



# 5X

growth in online delivery orders of ready-to-drink (RTD) cocktails, vodka, and tequila from 2021-2022.

### Beverage type, by how likely they are to be ordered for delivery



\*Ready to drink cocktails only sold in applicable jurisdictions

And since most people are going for convenience when it comes to ordering alcohol online, it makes sense that most alcohol orders are same-day or last-minute.



**24%**

of consumers are ordering one or two days in advance.

**10%**

of consumers are opting for an alcoholic beverage subscription service.

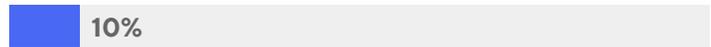
**57%**

of alcohol delivery orders are classified as urgent or same-day.

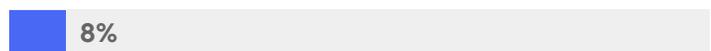
It's important to partner with a [delivery service](#) that can reliably and quickly fill these on-demand alcohol delivery orders.

### Delivery timing

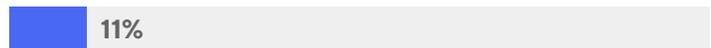
Repeating / subscription service



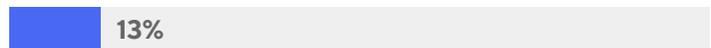
Weeks in advance



Two+ days in advance



One day in advance



Same day



Last minute / urgent



You can use [DoorDash](#) to fulfill both last minute and pre-planned orders — quickly, easily, and accurately.





## CHAPTER 5

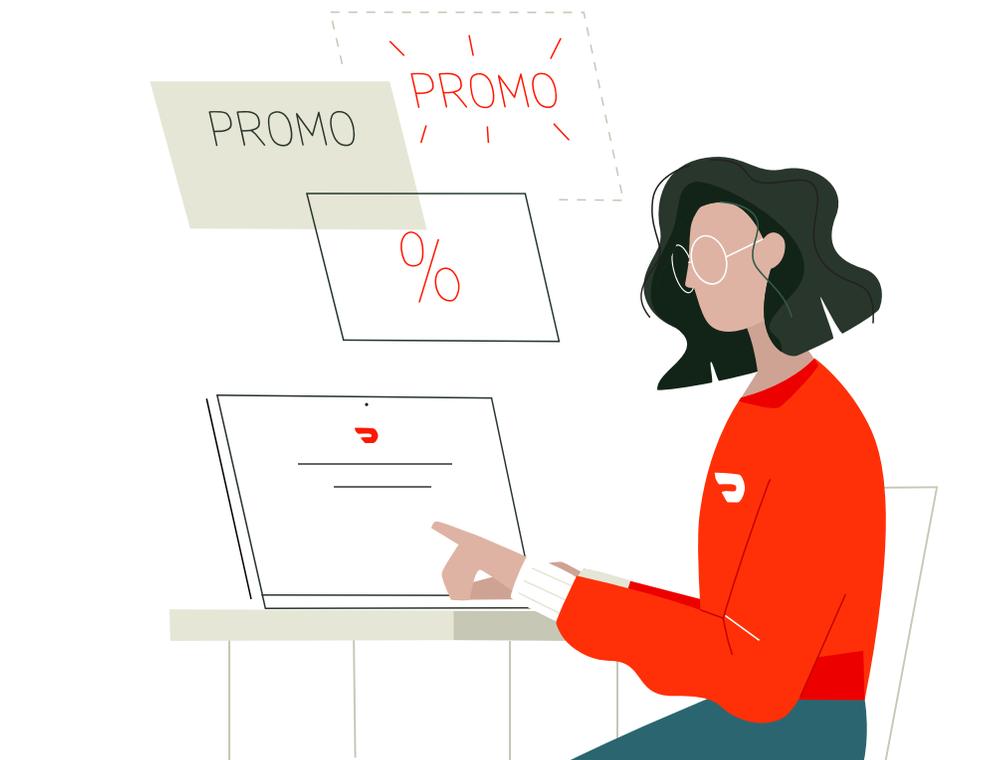
# Key takeaways

Ways retailers can set themselves up for success

There's so much that alcohol retailers and business owners can do to boost sales and prepare for a strong 2023.



- 1** One of the most important things for any business is to have an [up-to-date Google listing](#) and a good website. The website doesn't have to be fancy: just ensure your hours of operation and any online ordering links are placed prominently. Your website is where customers expect to find out information about how to order your products, so ensure you're providing everything they need to know.
- 2** Make sure you've got signage around your physical store that highlights your delivery options. Place a DoorDash sticker on your door, and put signs up around the inside of the store encouraging people to try delivery.
- 3** Getting onto social media and posting regularly is an easy way to boost sales generally and drive customers to try online alcohol delivery. [Instagram and Facebook](#) especially can help you reach new customers and engage your existing ones, so start posting!



## How alcohol retailers can safely offer alcohol delivery & reach new customers



### **Invest in product photography.**

Nothing looks appealing in poor lighting, and unfortunately, many alcohol retailers are equipped with only fluorescent lighting. When spotlighting new or exciting products or deals with ads on social media or on your delivery platform's order page, [take the time to get photos of your offerings](#) in natural light with a simple background.



### **Offer cocktail kits.**

Go beyond just selling beer, wine, and spirits — offer customers with ready-made kits\* that have what they need to make their favorite cocktails, from citrus to simple syrup to mixers.



### **Offer ready-to-drink cocktails.**

This alcohol trend is picking up steam, as alcoholic beverage producers are growing their offerings to include canned vodka sodas, palomas, and other cocktails\*. Make sure your business is up to date by bringing these new drinks to the table.



### **Sell safely by occasion.**

Whenever people in your community are getting ready to celebrate, plan to market around that occasion. Alcohol sales spike around the winter holidays, but consider occasions like graduation time, summer long weekends, St Patrick's Day, Valentine's Day, and any local celebrations.



### **Promote it all on social media.**

Alcohol retailers haven't always needed social media — people tend to just go to the business or store nearest to their home. However, in an increasingly competitive market, it's always a good idea to have an online presence where you share promotions, spotlight products, and provide information about your business.

\*Ready to drink cocktails only sold in applicable jurisdictions

## Alcoholic beverage types to spotlight in online marketing

When it comes to deciding **what kinds of products to market**, we found several major opportunities for 2023.



### Wine and champagne

In order to capitalize on celebratory opportunities, be ready to market and sell **wine and champagne**, as well as other top-shelf options. However, know that people who haven't ordered wine online are often hesitant to do so, as they don't always know what they want. Take a tailored approach to your promotions, like sharing your top five wines of the month on social media, or sharing the best champagne options at every price point for Valentine's Day.



### Whiskey and vodka

Spotlight your various **whiskey and vodka offerings**. We know consumers love these products, so show them the range of brands, sizes, and flavors you offer.



### Hard ciders and seltzers

Appeal to those looking for a lighter, easy-to-drink beverage with **hard ciders and seltzers** – they were at the top of the list of heavy hitters within alcohol delivery sales trends.



### Tequila

The tequila soda has steadily grown in popularity in recent years. Let your customers know that you offer a range of **tequilas** that they can offer at parties.



### Ready-to-drink (RTD) cocktails

Ready-to-drink cocktails\* aren't a new phenomenon, but they are newly popular. Beverage companies have recently created lighter, less-sweet, higher-quality bottled and canned cocktails, and they've been a hit. Ensure your customers know you've got the best brands ready for them to order.



### Beer

You can help grow online **beer** sales by highlighting craft cans and bottles from local breweries, as well as the go-to standards from major beverage companies.

\*Ready to drink cocktails only sold in applicable jurisdictions

## What elements of delivery service keep online alcohol delivery customers coming back?

When ordering alcohol, it's a luxury expense, and consumers are mostly concerned with speed and accuracy.

Order accuracy (e.g., right product, price, and size)



Delivery as soon as possible



Access to the products / brands I want



Delivery accuracy (e.g., to correct address, etc.)



However, online alcohol delivery customers also want to make sure their delivery service covers their favorite products. Make sure you're stocking local preferred products – for example, do the consumers in your city prefer a certain type of drink? Find out and stock what they love.

Promote your online ordering offerings on your website, on social media, and in-store, and choose a delivery partner that can help you fulfill orders safely, quickly, and accurately to exceed your customers' expectations of how easy it can be to get alcohol delivered.

It's important to choose a delivery partner that your customers already use, as more than half of survey respondents only use one delivery app on a regular basis. Just like finding out which products your customers prefer, do your research and find out which ordering services they use.





CHAPTER 6

# Conclusion

How retailers can reach more customers

Consumers' top priority is convenience, and their alcohol ordering and consumption habits show that the preference for stress-free shopping isn't going anywhere. People are using delivery services for everything these days, and now they're looking for new ways to treat themselves, friends, and coworkers.

DoorDash has customizable solutions to help your alcohol retail business grow. No need to set up delivery services or a whole new web presence from scratch – [partner with DoorDash](#) and reach more customers in the ways that they want to browse and shop.

## Reach new customers with the DoorDash App



### Delivery

Leverage our full-service logistics platform to attract new customers and power your deliveries.



### Merchant Portal

Manage your sales on DoorDash and get actionable data.

## Manage your business with new technology



### Pickup

Give nearby customers a way to order ahead, pay online, and skip the line.



### Tablet

Streamline your operations and manage orders in real time.

**Learn more about growing your business on DoorDash**

**Explore the Merchant Product Guide**

## CHAPTER 6

# Methodology

For this study, [we surveyed 500 U.S.-based people](#) who had used on-demand delivery in the past six months. We spoke to people with a range of on-demand delivery usage levels, ranging from light (less than monthly) to heavy (at least weekly). 91% have used DoorDash in the past. We also analyzed anonymized consumer data from the DoorDash app.

### Key stats

500

Respondents



55%

Male

44%

Female

1%

Non-binary

25 - 39

Median age range

\$50,000 - \$75,000

Median household income

Participants were not compensated or incentivized by DoorDash.

## Sources

<sup>1</sup> Benson, A. (2023, January 21). Alcohol consumption on the decline for gen Z, studies suggest. Global News. Retrieved February 10, 2023, from <https://globalnews.ca/news/9411516/alcohol-consumption-decline-gen-z>

<sup>2</sup> Craft beer market size, share, analysis: Industry trends [2028]. Craft Beer Market Size, Share, Analysis | Industry Trends [2028]. (n.d.). Retrieved February 10, 2023, from <https://www.fortunebusinessinsights.com/industry-reports/craft-beer-market-100736>

<sup>3</sup> How to market your tickets as the ultimate gift. Eventbrite Blog. (2022, December 21). Retrieved March 3, 2023, from <https://www.eventbrite.com/blog/event-gifts-for-christmas-ds00/>



## About DoorDash

DoorDash (NYSE: DASH) is a technology company that connects consumers with their favorite local businesses in 27 countries across the globe. Founded in 2013, DoorDash builds products and services to help businesses innovate, grow, and reach more customers. DoorDash is building infrastructure for local commerce, enabling merchants to thrive in the convenience economy, giving consumers access to more of their communities, and providing work that empowers. With DoorDash, there is a neighborhood of good in every order.

