

HARM REDUCTION

IN NIGHTLIFE SPACES, EVENTS AND VENUES



CREW 2000
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WHAT IS NIGHTLIFE HARM REDUCTION?

“Harm reduction refers to policies, programmes and practices that aim to minimise the negative health, social and legal impacts associated with drug use, drug policies and drug laws” (*Harm Reduction International, 2025*).

Worldwide, many nightlife spaces now (knowingly or unknowingly) enact some level of harm reduction, with some measures being mandatory requirements for operating - whether that’s free water points, temperature and crowd control, welfare teams, drug alerts, chill-out spaces, or even on-site drug checking.

Bristol Nights (2022) attest that “harm reduction empowers our businesses to adopt policy centred on welfare and safety, and helps our audience”.

Crew 2000's (Crew) mission is to reduce drug and sexual health related harms and stigma, and improve mental and physical health without judgement, by providing a range of services for young people, their families, friends and communities. We neither condemn nor condone drug use. Since 1992, we've grown from a purely volunteer-led organisation, to a mixed professional and volunteer team achieving the 'Investing in Volunteers' award and the GSK 'IMPACT Award' twice.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Of festival attendees surveyed by Crew...

77%

At one 2024 event, 37% said they had taken drugs other than alcohol on the day (N=140). At the same event in 2025, this number grew to 56% (N=162).

said they had taken drugs or alcohol on the day of the event (N=515).

73%

said they have never spoken to a professional about their drug and alcohol use (N=140).

95%

were aged 25 or under (N=302).

It's vital that nightlife spaces, festivals and social venues are equipped with the tools and information to better keep their audiences safer, and reduce the risks of drug-related harm.

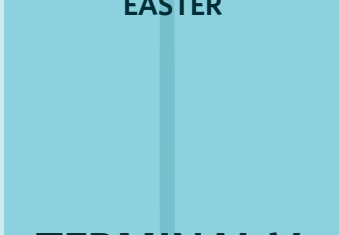
A significant majority of surveyed festival attendees took 1 or more drugs on the day of the event, yet have never spoken to a professional about their drug use. With the audience consisting primarily of young people (16-25), there is a need for innovative information sharing about how to stay safer in nightlife, while also increasing opportunities for non-judgemental support.

HOW CAN CREW 2000 SUPPORT AT EVENTS?

Crew provides Nightlife Harm Reduction at venues, events and festivals to keep people safe and well by offering welfare, advice, harm reduction information and immediate crisis support.

Our highly trained staff and volunteers deliver one to one support using active listening, brief interventions, motivational interviewing and violence reduction techniques, and we work collaboratively with security, welfare teams, paramedics and the police.

Crew can manage a staffed 'chill-out' tent/space/area with capacity of up to 200.



HOW CAN CREW 2000 SUPPORT AT EVENTS?

Crew's Nightlife Harm Reduction support can be adapted and customised to best suit the individual needs of each event we attend. Experienced in a range of nightlife settings, our highly trained teams understand the multifaceted landscape of the night time/ events industry, and can respond effectively to high pressure situations.

ATTENDEE EXPERIENCE

Assisting in providing support for attendee wellbeing and safety, Crew can contribute greatly to improving customer experience. Evidenced by the popularity of our 'chill-out' space at events, there is a clear customer demand for safe spaces in nightlife.

TRAINING AND BRIEFINGS

Training hundreds of professionals per year, Crew can also provide specialised training for venue staff, upskilling teams and increasing the understanding of drug trends and general harm reduction. Crew can also provide vital contributions to safety/ welfare briefings and broader event team briefings by providing information on (relevant emerging) drug trends and alerts, fact checking misinformation, or answering questions.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Venue staff and management have highlighted the stretched capacity of staff when trying to provide wellbeing support, or information, to patrons alongside their standard job roles. Crew can therefore increase staff capacity by taking on the wellbeing responsibilities of the venue.

BRAND IMAGE

Alongside providing a proactive response to the global support of harm reduction from event attendees (*Measham and Turnbull, 2021; Day et al, 2018*), organisations collaborating with Crew are likely to strengthen their image and be recognised by patrons, licensing boards, and stakeholders as prioritising attendee wellbeing.

DATA GATHERING

Crew gathers prevalence data at events, to monitor wider drug trends at Scottish events - while also being able to provide organisers with an idea of the overall wellbeing and harm reduction efforts at their event. We can work with organisers to explore how their venue could increase safety measures based on the trends of their audiences.

DE-ESCALATION AND TRIAGE

Crew can act as a triage before situations are escalated to venue management, security, or first aid responders. With all staff and volunteers having completed de-escalation training, we find that some nightlife incidents are often manageable without escalation. Where escalation is needed, we can gather information and support the individual/s, whilst seeking the availability of the relevant staff member.

THE IMPACT

Crew staff and volunteers supported **8,986** nightlife attendees in 2024.

After speaking with us at the event...

80%

report knowing more about the *risks* of alcohol and other drugs (N=604).

78%

report knowing more about how to *reduce* the risks of alcohol and other drugs (N=602).

81%

report that they intend to *share* this information with others e.g. friends (N=597).

65%

report that they intend to make *changes* to the way they take drugs including alcohol (N=551).

What changes do respondents intend to make?



THE IMPACT

“Overall the success of the event was very well received... send on my sincere thanks to all the Crew 2000 team.”

- FEEDBACK FROM TERMINAL V, APRIL 2024

"Thanks so much to you and the team for joining us. It felt so right to have you as part of the celebrations, and I was glad to see people chatting with you and taking the resources home after you left. It would be great to have you at more events in the future or find other ways to collaborate."

- FEEDBACK FROM RHUBABA X MISERY EVENT (A SOBER PARTY FOR QUEER PEOPLE OF COLOUR), JANUARY 2024

“We really appreciate that you could be there. We would really like to get you back in for similar events if possible.”

- FEEDBACK FROM GLASGOW NIGHTCLUB, FEBRUARY 2025

ROCKSTAR TRNSMT 19-21 JUNE 2026 GLASGOW GREEN • TRNSMTFEST

- > LOCATION
- > KEY TIMES
- > AGE POLICY
- > ID
- > ITEMS TO BRING
- > CASHLESS

Need a calm space to relax?
If you're feeling overwhelmed, we have wellbeing support for you onsite.

- Visit our Wellbeing Area away from the crowd.
- Managed by Crew 2000, this safe spot lets you recharge before getting back to the festival. Support is always available if you need it.

INFORMATION SOURCED FROM AND DEVELOPED WITH THE LOOP AND CREW2000

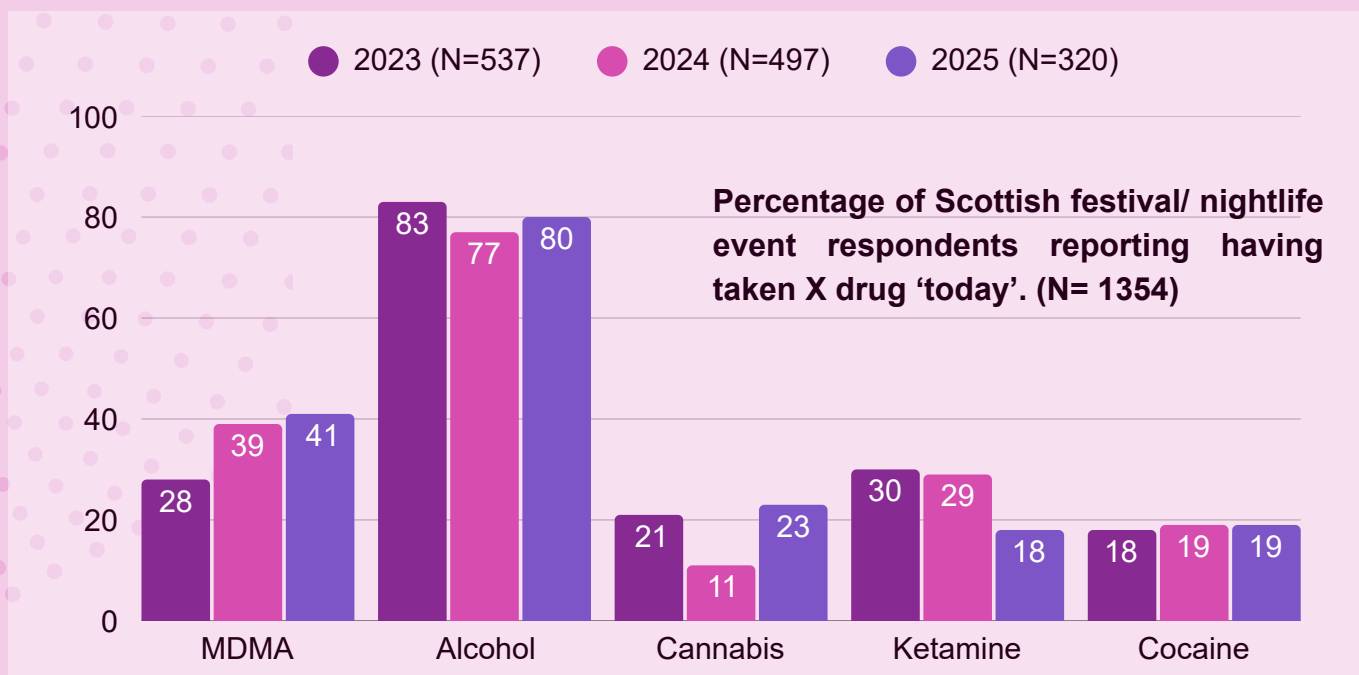
CREW **NTIA** NIGHT TIME INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

BE SOUND to yourself. to everyone. Be Sound asset toolkit



WHAT DRUGS ARE PEOPLE TAKING AT EVENTS?

Crew gathers data on prevalence of drugs taken at the festivals we attend across Scotland, enabling us to monitor trends which can be shared with organisers and partners before, during, and after the event.



We work closely with a range of partners in Scotland, the wider UK and Europe, to share and compare information, allowing us and fellow organisations to develop impactful and reliable resources, reports, alerts and campaigns.

HSE drug alert

District X, Friday 19 September 2025

High strength MDMA pills in circulation at DX

- Tested Only Fans pills were over 300mg of MDMA. Over 3 times the average adult dose.
- 50% of pills tested by HSE in 2025 > 200mg.
- Higher strength MDMA = higher risk of a drug emergency.

Recommendations

- It is safer not to use drugs at all.
- Treat all pills, powders and crystals with caution.
- Pills may look the same but vary in content.
- Start low, go slow, avoid mixing, and don't be afraid to get medical help.
- Chat with HSE drugs.ie at DX.
- Drop in & drop off to support HSE drug trend analysis.

Front
Back

HSE #StartLowGoSlow DRUGS.ie

MDMA Pill Update - 2025

Year	Avg. Pill Strength	Range* (in mg)	MDMA products with no MDMA
2019	194 mg	74-320	7%
2021	157 mg	70-287	45%
2022	167 mg	66-285	11%
2024	187 mg	78-313	<1%
2025	192 mg	93-339	4%

Source: The Loop Drug Checking Service. *Excluding outliers (under 1% and over 99% percentiles)

Testing by The Loop in 2025 indicates an **increase** in average MDMA pill strength, with **37%** of pills containing **over 200mg MDMA** (-2x a common adult dose). Even similar looking MDMA pills may vary significantly in strength.

A single pill is **not** a single dose.
#TakeQuarterSipWater

THE LOOP

Take Ket? Let's Chat!

Practical harm reduction strategies for people who take ketamine from people who know. We do not condone or condemn drug-taking.

What is in your ketamine? Check your drugs where possible, using Wadiposucca or a reagent test.

#Ket/Key/Key, FLOOR! Remember, all those little bumps add up! Start low, go slow.

Use your own clean equipment to avoid rave-flu + other nasties.

Best not to mix ket with other drugs, including alcohol! If you do, avoid mixing it all up in one dose.

2024 Ketamine resource co-created by Crew and Newcastle University, developed with young people, as recent increase in UK lifetime ketamine use among 16-24-year-olds.

PLEASE JUST SAY

Check in with yourself, your friends, and those around you.

If you're worried about anyone, ask any staff member for help straight away. They're there to help, and they'll know what to do. It's safe to do so, and no-one's judging.

Inform yourself: besound.club

BE SOUND to yourself, to everyone.

Crew assisted in developing harm reduction information and language for the 2024 Be Sound campaign, piloted in SWG3 Glasgow.

MDMA infographics produced by The Loop (UK) and HSE Drugs.ie (Ireland) in 2025. The HSE Drugs.ie alert (left) details warnings about high strength pills at one festival, after the on-site testing service detected MDMA over 300mg. The Loop Pill Update (right) gathers testing data, showing the increase in MDMA pill strength in recent years. While drug checking in Scotland remains in development, Crew can carefully utilise these alerts to better understand the wider drug market.

MIXING DRUGS

Mixing substances is often described as polydrug taking, where someone takes two or more different drugs in a session. People often take their primary drug such as alcohol, cannabis, cocaine or amphetamine (speed) and will re-dose, come down, or may take with another. This kind of drug taking is very common, however combining drugs can create unexpected, unwanted and unpredictable effects.

CASE STUDY

Of the 85 who completed the Crew Survey at one 2024 event:

8% said they *hadn't* taken a drug* 'today' (N=7).

92% people said they *had* taken a drug* 'today' (N=78).

68% (53) of these respondents said they had taken 2 or more drugs 'today', of which...

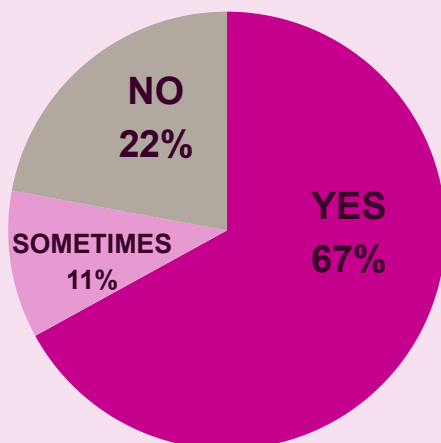
- 79% report taking both alcohol and MDMA 'today' (N=42).
- 42% report taking alcohol, ketamine and MDMA 'today' (N=22).
- 13% report taking alcohol, ketamine, MDMA and cocaine 'today' (N=7).
- 30% report taking alcohol and cocaine 'today' (N=16).
- 17% report taking ketamine and cocaine 'today' (N=9).

* including alcohol.

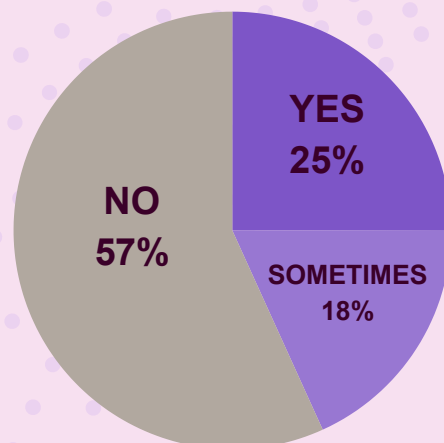
Crew staff and volunteers educate nightlife attendees of the risks associated with polydrug taking, and offer ideas of harm reduction strategies they could take, such as: allowing the effects of one drug to wear off before taking another, avoid taking a drug for the first time if already taking another in the same session, or finding different ways of coming down that don't involve taking more drugs.

SMOKING & VAPING

Nightlife event attendee responses to being asked "Do you vape?" (N=806)



Nightlife event attendee responses to being asked "Do you smoke?" (N=789)



DRUG-RELATED RISKS AND EMERGENCIES

STIMULANT DRUG EMERGENCIES

■ Cocaine, amphetamines, mephedrone, MDMA

SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Seizures/fitting/rigid
- Hyperthermia (overheating)
- Severe nausea and vomiting
- Rapid heart rate/chest pains
- Hallucinations
- Difficulty breathing
- Anxiety/fear/panic

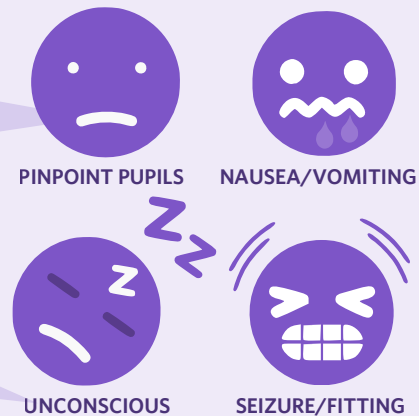


DEPRESSANT DRUG EMERGENCIES

■ Benzodiazepines (e.g. diazepam), GHB/GBL, Opioids* (e.g. heroin, codeine)

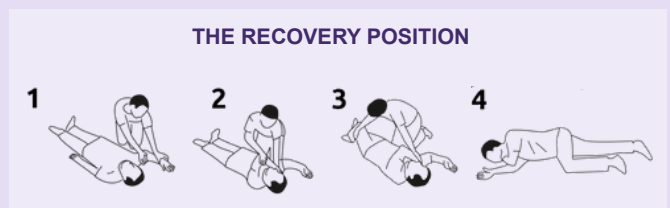
SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Unconsciousness - won't wake with a shake
- Confusion
- Severe nausea and vomiting
- Seizures/fitting
- Slow or erratic pulse
- Difficulty breathing/ snoring/ raspy breathing
- Blue/pale tingeing of knees, hands and lips
- Pale, cold and clammy skin
- Pin-point pupils (in opioid overdose)



RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

- If the person is unconscious, put them in the recovery position (or on their side) and monitor breathing.
- If they stop breathing, call 999 and start chest compressions. The call handler will provide guidance and support on what to do.



Naloxone is a life-saving drug that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose and can help to prevent overdose deaths.

It is FREE and anyone aged 14 or over, likely to witness an opioid overdose, can be trained at the Crew Drop-in. Anyone aged 16+ can access injectable (Prenoxad) naloxone kits after training. We can advise on where to get nasal (Nyxoid) kits.



DRUG-FACILITATED SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SPIKING

DRINK & DRUG SPIKING

Drink spiking is someone adding alcohol or another drug to someone's drink **without their knowledge or consent**.

Spiking can also be when someone is given a drug without their knowledge, i.e. knowingly giving someone ketamine but telling them it was cocaine.

Alcohol is the most common drug used in spiking.

GHB/GBL, ketamine and flunitrazepam (Rohypnol) are other drugs that *may* be used for spiking - or be thought to have been used.

SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Sudden change in behaviour
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Being unable to stand up, issues with balance, coordination or really unsteady on their feet.
- Difficulty talking or heavy slurring
- Vomiting
- Losing consciousness

DRUG FACILITATED SEXUAL ASSAULT (DFSA)

Not all DFSA involves spiking, and not all spiking is followed by DFSA. DFSA more often occurs out with nightlife settings.

Victims may face difficulties reporting (e.g. stigma from voluntary consumption of drugs).

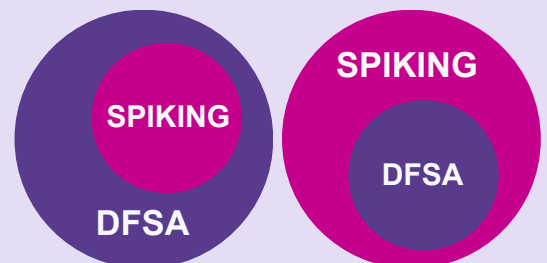
DFSA would be prosecuted under Section 61 of Sexual Offences act 2003.

REPORT & SUPPORT WITH SPIKING / DFSA

Many venues operate 'Ask for Angela' or similar practices, though not all patrons are aware of such measures. Resources and information on set-up is FREE at <https://askforangela.co.uk/resources/>.

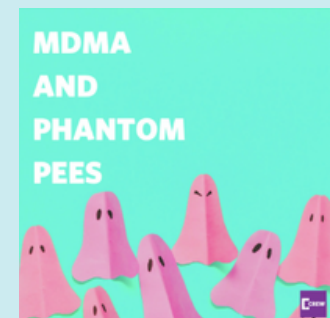
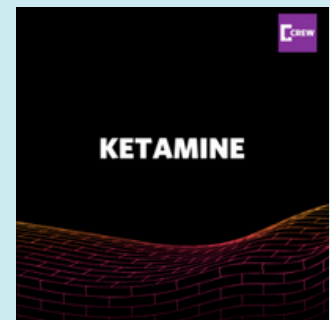
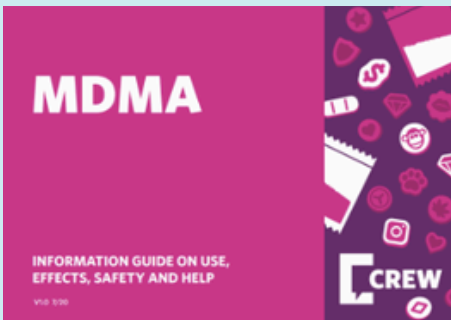
Victims of spiking / DFSA can be referred or self refer to:

- A&E
- Police Scotland
- NHS SARCS
- Safer.Scot/SPIKING/



HARM REDUCTION RESOURCES

Crew drug information and harm reduction resources available for order or free download at crew.scot/drugs-information/get-our-stuff/.



HARM REDUCTION RESOURCES

We offer a range of booklets, posters and postcards containing up-to-date information and harm reduction advice about drugs. Our resources are brought to all nightlife events we attend, free for anyone to take home or keep on the venue premises. Crew team members often explain and talk through the resources with event attendees, bar or management staff, welfare and medical teams, etc.

THESE ARE REAGENTS
you can use them to test your drugs

WHAT YOU NEED

- The instructions sheet that came with the test kit
- A brightly lit space
- A non porous surface (i.e. a ceramic plate)

Wait for a few seconds to see a colour change, and compare it to your instructions sheet.

Add a small amount of reagent to your sample so that it is covered.

Some reagents turn the same colour when they mix with different drugs...

2CB! **MESCALINE!**

Repeat the process with different reagents to rule out any other possibilities!

Once finished, either neutralise your plate with bicarbonate of soda or water; then wash the plate thoroughly with hot, soapy water.

TEST YOUR DRUGS **CREW**

TEST YOUR DRUGS

www.crew.scot

Take opioid drugs? Know someone who does?

If you or someone you know takes drugs like heroin, methadone or codeine or there is a chance you could witness an opioid overdose, you should carry naloxone.

Naloxone is a life-saving medicine that temporarily reverses the effects of an opioid overdose. Naloxone is free and anyone over the age of 16 can grab a naloxone kit from the Crew Drop-in.

Visit **CREW.SCOT** to book a slot for naloxone collection and training, or stop by our Drop-in (opening times may be affected by pandemic restrictions).

Where to find us:
32 Cockburn Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1PB
Email: Dropin@crew2000.org.uk
Text: 07860047501
Website: www.crew.scot/get-naloxone

TEST YOUR DRUGS

mcat

HOW TO TEST YOUR DRUGS WITH WEDINOS

- Print (from www.WEDINOS.org), or pick up from Crew's Drop-in, a WEDINOS "Sample and Effects" form.
- Fill out the form, providing details of the drug that was purchased and how it felt (if it was taken).
- Place the sample secured in a plastic bag or leak proof container, with the form, in an envelope for posting.
- Post the sample to WEDINOS to be lab-tested.
- Check online in a few days to see if your sample results have been shared.

You can never be completely safe when taking drugs. However, checking to make sure you have what you think you have can significantly reduce the harm if you plan to take them anyway!

WEDINOS

TEST YOUR DRUGS

GHB / GBL

Drugs on you?

DUMP IT, DON'T DUNT IT

Please avoid swallowing all your drugs, use the amnesty bins provided. Seek medical attention if you start to feel unwell and be honest about what you have taken, how much and when!

SLOW DOWN

Tolerance to benzos can build up quickly.

If you choose to take drugs: **Start low. Go slow.**

crew.scot

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Crew 2000 is actively looking to expand our reach, by building new partnerships and working relationships in the events & nighttime industry.

Together we can create safer spaces to help the nighttime industry flourish, and continue to reduce drug related harms in clubs, festivals and venues.

We are always open to new ideas, collaborative projects and involvement with campaigns, research, and community development.

If you are interested in increasing harm reduction support for venue attendees, artists and staff, please get in touch:



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We'd like to thank all of our volunteers, partners and funders for their invaluable contributions towards Crew 2000 nightlife harm reduction.



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