

# Independent Drug Expert Alliance (IDEA) 2025 Price Index

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# **1 Initial Remarks**

## **1.1 The Purpose of the Price Index**

The Independent Drug Expert Alliance (IDEA) was established in 2022 as an inclusive, impartial and independent network to support collaboration, knowledge exchange and continuous professional development for drug expert witnesses. IDEA has since expanded its council and membership, offering the same to expert witnesses specialising in modern slavery, CCE, gangs and digital forensics.

The 2025 Price Index provides a concise, evidence-based overview of current drug prices and trends from wholesale to street-level markets in England and Wales. The purpose is clear; it is a vital tool in supporting the consistency, credibility, and transparency within the criminal justice system, by keeping drug expert witnesses, law enforcement practitioners, analysts, and all those with a footprint within drug arenas informed.

## **1.2 Disclosure and Disclaimer**

This price index, reassessed annually, is created to assist with the valuation of the most commonly encountered illicit drugs, controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, across England and Wales.

This index is not intended to serve as a replacement for expert knowledge, and it must not.

The pricing information contained within this index is derived from a combination of case-specific price data extracted from evidential exhibits, communications data, financial / transactional information examined during criminal investigations and price information disclosed in prosecution expert reports across England and Wales.

The drug values provided are not specific to any region and consist of a range (where possible), to reflect average pricing across England and Wales. We do not populate all data points unnecessarily, and ranges are provenanced and ratified, from, and by, different sources.

IDEA explicitly does not support its use by anyone other than trained, suitably qualified and experienced Drug Expert Witnesses who are fully familiar with the content and context. When used, it should always be cross-referenced with case-specific material (e.g. SMS messages detailing pricing or deal sizes).

For specific drug values or weights not contained within this price index, contact one of the IDEA team who may be able to assist.

Those with additional validated pricing data are encouraged to contact the IDEA committee directly at [independentdrugexpertalliance@mail.com](mailto:independentdrugexpertalliance@mail.com)

## 2 The Drug Market

### 2.1 2025 Market Overview

The UK illicit drug market has remained highly dynamic through 2025, with several commodity-specific price shifts driven by evolving supply chain pressures, fluctuating wholesale availability, varying adulteration practices, law enforcement intervention, societal attitudes and the increasing emergence of alternative substances.

### 2.2 Quick Reference Price Guide 2025

The following table identifies price ranges for a variety of commonly seen trade weights. IDEA uses price ranges to reflect regional differences, purity variations and pricing fluctuations during 2025. The most significant changes in pricing ranges, with respect to 2024 data, will be examined and further discussed in section 2.3.

#### 2.2.1 Legend

When referring to the Quick Reference Price Guide, which can be found on page 4, certain cells contain either “-”, “N/A” or “(x5).” The legend below defines what each of these means.

N/A	This indicates that it is not a commonly encountered trade weight for the commodity. This does NOT mean the substance NEVER appears in this weight, but that it is not typically observed within drug markets.
-	This indicates that data was not available for this weight.
(x5)	This indicates the price per listed weight when purchasing five units of that weight. Where other multipliers appear, for example (x10), the same principle applies.

Figure 1: Quick Reference Price Guide Legend

Commodity	0.1g	0.5g	1g	3.5g	7g	14g	28g	1kg
Amphetamine	N/A	-	£5 - £10	-	-	-	£60 - £80	£800 - £1.6k
Cannabis FFH (UK)	N/A	N/A	£10	£20 - £35	£40 - £60	£70 - £120	£130 - £250	£2.7k - £6k <sup>1</sup>
Cannabis FFH (US Import)	N/A	N/A	-	£30 - £60	£70 - £100	£130 - £160	£230 - £300 / £180 (x5)	-
Cannabis Resin and Herbal	N/A	N/A	£3 - £5	£10 - £20	£35	£60 - £100	£110 - £300	£700 - £1.2k
Cocaine (Adulterated)	£10	£20 - £30	£40 - £60	£100 - £150	-	-	£650 - £1k	-
Cocaine (Unadulterated)	£10	£40 - £50	£70 - £120	£190 - £350	-	£600 - £800	£700 - £1.8k	£16k - £28k
Crack Cocaine	£10	£30 - £40	£60 - £100	£150 - £300	£250 - £350	£500 - £700	£1k - £1.8k	-
Heroin	£10	£30 - £35	£40 - £80	£100 - £175	£250 - £350	-	£600 - £1.5k	£18k - £26k
Ketamine	N/A	N/A	£20 - £35	£40 - £80	-	£110 - £340	£180 - £500	£2k - £3.3k / £2.2k (x10)
MDMA (Powder/Crystal)	N/A	-	£20 - £40	£50 - £60	-	£180 - £200	£300 - £600	£2.4k - £3k
Commodity (Pills)	1 pill	2 pills	3 pills	10 pills	12 pills	20 pills	30 pills	50 pills
MDMA	£10 <sup>2</sup>	-	£20 - £35	£60	-	£100	-	£200
Diazepam (10mg)	-	£5	-	-	£25	-	£50	-

Figure 2: Quick Reference Price Guide 2025 (England & Wales)

<sup>1</sup> The lower value of £2.7k is evidenced as the 'per kilo' price for a multi kilo purchase (bulk discount). Cannabis prices also vary significantly depending on strain.

<sup>2</sup> Individual pill price may vary. Previously seen as £5 - £10 (2024); however, no 2025 data observed to corroborate any lower values.

## 2.3 Notable Movements

### 2.3.1 Cocaine

At the wholesale level, cocaine has shown clear signs of pricing volatility since 2024. In the 2024 Quick Reference Price Guide, kilogram quantities ranged between £28,000 and £36,000. In 2025, this band fell sharply to £16,000 - £28,000. The UNODC World Drug Report stated that global cocaine manufacture reached a record high of 3,078 tons in 2023; a 34% increase from 2022 [U1]. This growing trend has likely led to increased supply-side saturation in the UK market, possibly contributing to the dramatic downward price shift. However, this wholesale volatility has not translated into meaningful change at the consumer end of the market. Street-level prices for 0.5-gram and 1-gram deals remain stable at £40 - £50 and £70 - £120 respectively, suggesting that retail-level pricing is insulated by high levels of demand.

### 2.3.2 Heroin

Heroin has moved in the opposite direction, with wholesale values increasing markedly. Kilogram pricing has risen from £12,500 - £22,000 in 2024 to £18,000 - £26,000 in 2025, indicating a tightening of supply into the UK. This upward movement aligns with increased scarcity, which is likely influenced by the continued restrictions on opium cultivation imposed by the Taliban in Afghanistan, which in turn has reduced the volume of heroin reaching international markets [U2]. As with cocaine, these supply-side pressures have not materially affected retail prices; 0.1-gram and 0.5-gram deals remain consistent with 2024 at £10 and £30 - £35, respectively. This stability suggests that consumer-level pricing remains largely decoupled from upstream constraints, with local markets maintaining established price points despite pressures higher up the supply chain.

### 2.3.3 Ketamine

Ketamine has seen a sharp drop in wholesale prices of approximately 60%, falling from £5,000 - £8,000 per kilogram in 2024 to £2,000 - £3,300 in 2025. The European Drug Trends Monitor produced by Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime (GI-TOC) noted increasing ketamine prevalence in Europe through a higher number of law enforcement seizures [G1]. Such a trend would have likely contributed to this downward price shift in wholesale markets. This price shift appears to have influenced retail markets, with half ounce ranges widening significantly from 2024 to 2025, indicating increased volatility and greater variation in retail pricing.

Figure 3 provides a graphical representation of the changes in wholesale (kg) price ranges from 2024 to 2025 of the above 3 commodities.



Figure 3: Wholesale (kg) Price Ranges, 2024 vs 2025

## 2.4 Emerging Substances

### 2.4.1 Synthetic Opioids

In recent years, there has been an emerging and concerning presence of harmful adulterants in the UK heroin market, most notably highly potent synthetic opioids such as nitazenes [C1]. Nitazenes are particularly problematic, with many compounds having a potency equal to or often several times greater than fentanyl [S1], which is already one of the most powerful opioids encountered in illicit markets. These substances may have started to appear as drug traffickers attempt to stretch diminishing heroin supplies, a scarcity that is driven predominantly by the continued Taliban restrictions on opium cultivation [U2] and the resulting reduction in wholesale availability and purity.

Synthetic drug production is underpinned by the very legitimate global chemical industry, with most precursors and chemicals having a commercial use or demand. This leads to a regulatory contradiction, where any stringent policy change risks damaging lawful supply chains [I1]. For heroin suppliers facing reduced opium yields and tightening supply, this blurred boundary makes synthetic substances an attractive adulterant option, where chemicals can be sourced through seemingly legitimate channels and added to heroin to maintain perceived potency and profitability whilst stretching supply.

## 3 Closing Remarks

### 3.1 Price Index Summary

The 2025 IDEA Price Index highlights the yearly trends and movements in wholesale and street-level pricing of the illicit drugs, which remain dynamic as a result of evolving supply chains, societal attitudes, consumer demand and law enforcement intervention. Our analysis underscores the importance of clear, evidence-based reporting to support expert witnesses, law enforcement, and wider criminal justice partners in understanding these developments and their operational implications. The IDEA Council remains committed to enhancing the accuracy, reach and analytical depth of this Index, ensuring it reflects the most current and verifiable data available to practitioners across England and Wales.

Looking ahead, IDEA will continue to innovate and strengthen this Index year on year, expanding its analytical capability and refining its presentation as the landscape changes. The next edition of the IDEA Price Index will be published in January 2027, and thereafter every January, forming a consistent annual reference point for those working within drug markets, enforcement, academia, and the courts. We look forward to building on this year's work and delivering an increasingly robust and publicly accessible resource.

## References

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