

Ready to Quit

Have You Built a Quit Plan?

One of the keys to a successful quit is preparation. A great way to prepare to quit smoking is to create a quit plan. Quit plans:

- Combine quit smoking strategies to keep you focused, confident, and motivated to quit
- Help you identify challenges you will face as you quit and ways to overcome them
- Can improve your chances of quitting smoking for good

The following steps will help you to create your own customized quit plan. As you move through the steps, keep a record of your plan and have it readily available during your quit.

Pick a Quit Date

When it comes to choosing a quit date, sooner is better than later. Many smokers choose a date within two weeks to quit smoking. This will give you enough time to prepare. Really think about your quit date. Avoid choosing a day where you know you will be busy, stressed, or tempted to smoke (e.g., a night out with friends or days where you may smoke at work).

Next Step: Circle your quit day on your calendar. Write it out somewhere where you will see it every day. This will remind you of your decision to become smokefree and give you time to prepare to quit.

Let Loved Ones Know You Are Quitting

Quitting smoking is easier with support from important people in your life. Let them know ahead of your quit date that you are planning to quit. Explain how they can help you quit. We all need different things, so be sure you let friends and family know exactly how they can help.

Next Step: Support is one of the keys to successfully quitting. However, it can be hard to ask for help, even from the people closest to you. Review tips on getting support ^[1] to make sure you get the help you need.

Remove Reminders of Smoking

Getting rid of smoking reminders can keep you on track during your quit. Smoking reminders

can include your cigarettes, matches, ashtrays, and lighters. It may also help to make things clean and fresh at work? in your car? and at home. Even the smell of cigarettes can cause a cigarette craving.

Next Step: Throw away all your cigarettes and matches. Give or throw away your lighters and ashtrays. Don't save one pack of cigarettes "just in case."

Identify Your Reasons to Quit Smoking

Everyone has their own reasons for quitting smoking. Maybe they want to be healthier, save some money, or keep their family safe. As you prepare to quit, think about your own reasons for quitting. Remind yourself of them every day. They can inspire you to stop smoking for good.

Next Step: Make a list of all the reasons you want to quit smoking. Keep it in a place where you can see it every day. Any time you feel the urge to smoke, review your list. It will keep you motivated to stay smokefree.

Identify Your Smoking Triggers

When you smoke, it becomes tied to many parts of your life. Certain activities, feelings, and people are linked to your smoking. When you come across these things, they may "trigger" or turn on your urge to smoke. Try to anticipate these smoking triggers and develop ways to deal with them.

Next Step: Make a list of everything that makes you feel like smoking. Now, write down one way you can deal with or avoid each item on your list. Keep this list nearby during your quit.

Develop Coping Strategies

Nicotine is the chemical in cigarettes that makes you addicted to smoking. When you stop smoking, your body has to adjust to no longer having nicotine in its system. This is called withdrawal. Withdrawal can be unpleasant, but you can get through it. Developing strategies to cope with withdrawal ahead of your quit can help ensure you stay smokefree for good!

Next Steps: Medications and behavior changes can help you manage the symptoms of withdrawal. Many quit smoking medications are available over the counter. Make sure you have them on hand prior to your quit. While medications will help, they can't do all the work for you. Develop other quit smoking strategies to use with medications. Remember that withdrawal symptoms? including cravings? will fade with every day that you stay smokefree.

Have Places You Can Turn to For Immediate Help

Quitting smoking is hardest during the first few weeks. You will deal with uncomfortable feelings, temptations to smoke, withdrawal symptoms, and cigarette cravings. Whether it is a quitline, support group, or good friend, make sure you have quit smoking support options available at all times.

Next Steps: Plan on using multiple quit smoking support options. Keep them handy in case you need them during your quit. Here a few options you may want to consider:

- SmokefreeTXT ^[2]: A mobile text messaging service designed for adults and young

adults across the United States who are trying to quit smoking.

- [Quitlines \[3\]](#): If you want to talk to a quit smoking counselor right away, call 1?800?QUIT?NOW (1?800?784?8669).
- [Quit Smoking Apps \[4\]](#): Mobile phone applications can help you prepare to quit, provide support, and track your progress.
- [Support Groups](#): Visit your county or state government's website to see if they offer quit smoking programs in your area.
- [Friends and Family](#): Getting support [1] from the important people in your life can make a big difference during your quit.
- [Medications](#): If you are using a quit smoking medication [5], such as the patch, gum, or lozenges, make sure you have them on hand.

Set Up Rewards for Quit Milestones

Quitting smoking happens one minute, one hour, one day at a time. Reward yourself throughout your quit. Celebrate individual milestones, including being 24 hours smokefree, one week smokefree, and one month smokefree. Quitting smoking is hard, be proud of your accomplishments.

Next Steps: You should be proud every time you hit a quit smoking milestone. Treat yourself with a nice dinner, day at the movies, or any other smokefree activity. Plan out your milestones ahead of time and set up a smokefree reward for each one.

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<https://smokingcessationleadership.ucsf.edu>

Source URL: <https://smokingcessationleadership.ucsf.edu/ready-quit>

Links

- [1] <http://smokefree.gov/getting-support>
- [2] <http://smokefree.gov/smokefreetxt>
- [3] <http://smokefree.gov/talk-to-an-expert>
- [4] <http://smokefree.gov/apps-quitstart>
- [5] <http://smokefree.gov/explore-medications>