

# R.E.A.L Goal<sup>SM</sup>: Tobacco Quit Plan

(Realistic, Easy, Attainable, Life Goals)

**Example:** I will prepare for quitting tobacco by building a quit plan.

**NOTE:** Sign up for a [nicotine cessation program](#) (open to all, regardless of insurance). Health Plan members 18 years and older may receive 12 weeks of nicotine replacement (e.g., gum, patches) and or medications for free.

## The benefits:

One of the keys to a successful quit plan is preparation. Thinking ahead becomes your roadmap and allows you to get ready emotionally, physically, and spiritually for your quitting journey. It will provide you with strategies to keep you focused, motivated, and confident that you can quit. A quit plan will help you identify challenges you will have along the way and ideas for how to overcome them.

## The following steps will help you create your own quit plan:

### Step one: Pick a quit date \_\_\_\_\_

- Many tobacco users choose a date within two weeks to allow enough time to prepare.
- Avoid choosing a date when you know you will be busy, stressed, or especially tempted to use tobacco products.
- Consider posting your quit date where you will see it every day.

### Step two: Identify your reason(s) to quit tobacco.

Make a list and keep it in a place you can see it every day to reinforce your commitment to quit.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I am ready for a positive change.</li><li>• I want to improve my health.</li><li>• It is too expensive/a waste of money.</li><li>• It's a hassle.</li><li>• It's negatively affecting my relationships.</li><li>• I'm planning on having a baby.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I feel judged by others.</li><li>• I want to set an excellent example for my kids.</li><li>• I don't want to expose my family and friends to secondhand smoke.</li><li>• _____</li><li>• _____</li></ul> |
|--|--|

### Step three: Identify your tobacco use triggers.

Identifying the situations ahead of time allows you to plan for ways to deal with them or avoid the situation.

#### Habit triggers

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talking on the phone</li><li>• Drinking alcohol</li><li>• Watching TV</li><li>• Eating</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Driving</li><li>• Before bed</li><li>• Following sex</li><li>• Work break</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drinking coffee/tea</li><li>• _____</li><li>• _____</li><li>• _____</li></ul> |
|--|---|---|

### Emotional triggers

- Stressed
- Anxious
- Sad/depressed
- Excited/happy
- Bored
- Lonely
- Satisfied
- Cooling off after an argument

### Social triggers

- At work
- At home
- At the bar
- Party/social event
- Being with friends who smoke
- Seeing someone else smoking

### Withdrawal triggers

- Craving the taste
- Smelling the smoke
- Feeling restless
- Need to do something with your hands or mouth
- Handling a tobacco product, lighter, or matches

**Trigger:** The situation, event, or behavior that sets off the urge to use tobacco (e.g., thoughts, feelings, habits, social, withdrawal).

### Avoid:

- Skip the morning routine of coffee.
- Avoid social situations involving alcohol.
- Stay away from former use “hangouts.”
- Leaving the dinner table immediately after a meal.

### Alter:

- Drink tea or juice instead of coffee.
- Hold your cup/mug in the opposite hand.
- Walk, run, or bike right away in the morning or instead of T.V.
- Remind yourself that tobacco will not change a difficult situation.

### Alternatives:

- Relaxation technique in a stressful situation or call a friend.
- Chew sugarless gum.
- Eat sugarless candy, fruit, or veggies.
- Fix things/garden to keep hands busy.
- Positive self-talk.
- Floss.
- Write a letter to someone.
- Clean the garage/basement.
- Wash and wax the car.

**Step four: Develop coping strategies.** When you stop tobacco use, your system will go through nicotine withdrawal as it adjusts. Having ideas to cope with withdrawal ahead of time can help you stay tobacco-free for good! When you combine medication with behavior changes and other quit strategies, research shows the greatest success for quitting for good.

- Before your quit date, consider Nicotine Replacement Therapies (e.g., gum, patches) and or medication on hand.
- Review your quit plan and delay acting on the urge to smoke.
- Call a friend/family member or the National Quit Line: 800-784-8669.
- Do something active.
- Go somewhere smoke-free.
- Drink water.
- Deep breathe.

**Step five: Let loved ones know you are quitting.** It can be hard to ask for help. Let them know exactly how they can help you quit.

**Step six: Remove reminders of tobacco use.**

- Clean your spaces to freshen the area.
- Throw away ALL tobacco products and accessories. Don't save anything "just in case."
- Wash the smoke out of your clothes, towels, and sheets.
- Go room-by-room and check pockets, handbags, briefcases, etc., for tobacco products.
- Use air fresheners.

**Step seven: Know where to turn for immediate help.** The first few weeks are the hardest. You will experience cravings, preoccupation and temptation to use, uncomfortable feelings, and withdrawal symptoms.

- National Quit Line: 800-784-8669
- Friends/Family
- Spiritual Support
- Tobacco Cessation Coach
- Nicotine Replacement Therapies
- Keep gum, toothpicks, coffee stirrers, licorice, or cinnamon sticks ready
- Talk with your doctor about medication
- Quit smoking apps, texting, online support
  - o For tools, tips, and apps, go to [Smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov)
  - o For information about mobile text options, go to [Smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov)
  - o To speak to an expert, find more information at [Smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov)

**Step eight: Celebrate quit milestones.** Whether it is minutes, hours, or one day at a time, reward yourself through your quit process. Celebrate being 24 hours, one week, and one month tobacco-free.

- Be proud of your accomplishments! This is hard work.
- Put aside the money you would have spent on tobacco and do something for yourself.
- Sleep in on the weekend.
- Get a massage.
- Join a gym.
- Do a fun activity.
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**Explore more [Real Goals and Supplemental Resources](#)**

For help translating or understanding this, please call (800) 635-9233. (TTY dial 711)