

# TIME TO CUT BACK ON ALCOHOL?

Use this coaching tool to help you get motivated to cut back on your alcohol intake.  
Find new ways to spend all the extra time you will save - and get your health,  
energy and vitality back!





# Cutting back on alcohol

We understand that after a long and busy day, it can feel like there is nothing better than a glass of wine, beer or other alcoholic drink to help us unwind. It can feel like the 'reward' we need.

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Socially in the UK, drinking is one of main ways we enjoy being with friends, and trying to cut back can be difficult and often meets with disapproval from others. The trouble is it's easy for those units to mount up and over time this can have a really detrimental affect on our health, mood, energy levels and weight.

The good news - there is no need to give it up completely. Although for any detox to work really well we recommend you find alternatives for 4 weeks - or a minimum of 2 of weeks to help you detox; you can then assess the benefits and how much better you feel and see if you can cut it out for just 4 weeks. This can often have such a transformational affect on how you feel that you feel inspired to keep your alcohol levels low to keep your energy levels and feelings of wellbeing where you want them to be.

By cutting out alcohol or cutting right back, you will feel the benefits pretty much immediately.

You will sleep better, wake feeling refreshed, you will have much more energy, you will feel less tired during the day, your mood will improve, you will look much better and start to reduce that hard to shift weight around the middle. You can often experience a 'natural high' as your sense of wellbeing begins to improve.

Regular drinking lessens your immunity so you can have more problems with infectious diseases, it taxes the liver and can make your skin dull and dry. It also puts you at higher risk of serious illness such as cancer. Alcohol causes 4% of cancers in the UK.

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## How much are you drinking regularly?

Time to be honest about how much you are drinking!

A medium - large glass of wine has 3 units of alcohol and 200 calories! A bottle of wine has 9 units of alcohol and 600 calories. A pint of lager has 2 units and 165 calories and 1 unit of spirits has 65 calories.

Add up your total weekly score:

Units
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Calories
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Example 3 bottles of wine is 27 units and 1800 calories  
- equivalent to 9 Bagels - or 9 Cornettos

The recommended guidelines for alcohol are no more than 14 units a week, with at least 2 alcohol free days per week.

## So if you want to cut back, what can you do?

Firstly we need to change our mindset about alcohol - away from focusing on it's 'benefits' and consider it's disadvantages - and all the advantages to cutting back.

List all the advantages of drinking

Eg, socialable, fun, helps me relax etc

List all the disadvantages of drinking

Eg the impact on health, how it makes me look and feel, impacts sleep etc

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Now consider as many advantages and disadvantages you can think of, if you reduce your alcohol levels

### Advantages of reducing alcohol intake

Eg I will have more energy, look better, improve health, have time for other things, better mood, what else..?

### Disadvantages of reducing alcohol intake

Eg. No reward, impact on my life, harder to relax, what people will say, what else?

## Replacing habits

Drinking regularly is a habit that we can get stuck in. Ask yourself if it really does provide all the benefits you think it does? There are very few people who genuinely feel they want to go back to how they felt once they experience all the benefits of drinking less.

### What else can I do to socialise / relax / unwind - consider other ways:

Eg Meet friends for coffee / breakfast / lunch, take up a new hobby, spend time with my partner in other ways, get more exercise, take up a sport, find other groups where drinking is not the focus, go to bed earlier, get up earlier, do something I love and don't have time for , read more, go out to the cinema / theatre. With the money I save, go shopping or have a treatment.

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## Top Tips:

Make a plan for what you want and how much you are going to drink

Share this with someone else to raise commitment to following your plan (your partner / coach).

Take your time, go out later

Have an excuse ready when you want to give it a miss

Go out to do something else rather than sit around drinking (we drink more when sitting down)

Don't feel pressurised by others - stand your ground and aim to be the slowest, not the fastest drinker

Change the scenery - go somewhere different

Go out for breakfast or lunch, rather than dinner

Consider all the other things you enjoy and other ways you can be entertained or relax and switch off

Ask yourself what you really want, rather than just allow your life to be dictated to by a habit, or other people

What 3 actions can I take to reduce my alcohol?

You are 80% more likely to change habits and achieve goals when you work with a coach. Get support from your zest4life coach [www.zest4life.com](http://www.zest4life.com)