

GETTING READY TO QUIT

Key Step 1: Get Ready

There are many things you can do ahead of time that will make it easier to quit smoking and increase your chances of remaining a nonsmoker. Some are as simple as getting rid of all cigarettes, ashtrays, and other objects that trigger your urges to smoke. Others are more complex, such as learning relaxation techniques to control the physical effects of quitting. First, you need to understand why you smoke.

Why Do I Smoke?

Most people smoke for different reasons at different times. Reasons for smoking include psychological issues, habits, social pressures, and physical dependence on nicotine. The test that follows will help you determine why you smoke.

The Why Test – Understanding Why You Smoke

Next to the following statements, mark the number that best describes your own experience.

5 = Always 4 = Most of the time 3 = Once in a while 2 = Rarely 1 = Never

- A. I smoke to keep myself from slowing down.
- B. Handling a cigarette is part of the enjoyment of smoking it.
- C. Smoking is pleasant and relaxing.
- D. I light up a cigarette when I feel angry about something.
- E. When I'm out of cigarettes, it's near-torture until I can get more.
- F. I smoke automatically, without even being aware of it.
- G. I smoke when people around me are smoking.
- H. I smoke to perk myself up.
- I. Part of my enjoyment of smoking is preparing to light up.
- J. I get pleasure from smoking.
- K. When I feel uncomfortable or upset, I light up a cigarette.
- L. When I'm not smoking a cigarette, I'm very much aware of the fact.
- M. I often light up a cigarette while one is still burning in the ashtray.
- N. I smoke cigarettes with friends when I'm having a good time.
- O. When I smoke, part of my enjoyment is watching the smoke as I exhale.
- P. I want a cigarette most often when I am comfortable and relaxed.
- Q. I smoke when I'm "blue" and want to take my mind off what's bothering me.
- R. I get a real hunger for a cigarette when I haven't had one in a while.
- S. I've found a cigarette in my mouth that I'd forgotten was there.
- T. I always smoke when I'm out with friends at a party, bar, etc.
- U. I smoke cigarettes to get a lift.

Score Yourself

Step 1: Transfer the numbers from the test to the scorecard that follows by matching up the letters. For example, take the number you wrote for statement A on the test and enter that number on line A of the scorecard.

Step 2: Add each set of 3 scores on the scorecard to get the totals for each different category. For example, to find your score in the "Stimulation" category, add together the scores for statements A, H, and U.

The score for each category can range from a low of 3 to a high of 15. A score of 11 or above in any category is high. A high score means that your smoking is probably influenced by that category. A score of 7 or below is low. A low score means that the category is not a primary source of satisfaction to you when you smoke.

The Why Test Scorecard

Review your score for each of the following categories, and pay attention to the categories in which you have a high score (11 or above). Think about alternatives to smoking that might work for you.

<p>“It stimulates me.” You feel that smoking gives you energy and keeps you going. Think about alternative ways to boost your energy, such as brisk walking or jogging.</p>	<p>_____ A _____ H _____ U _____ “Stimulation” Total</p>
<p>“I want something in my hand.” There are a lot of things you can do with your hands without lighting up a cigarette. Try doodling with a pencil or playing with putty or a straw.</p>	<p>_____ B _____ I _____ O _____ “Handling” Total</p>
<p>“It feels good.” You get a lot of physical pleasure from smoking. Various forms of exercise or other activities that you enjoy can be effective alternatives.</p>	<p>_____ C _____ J _____ P _____ “Pleasure/Relaxation” Total</p>
<p>“It’s a crutch.” It can be tough to stop smoking if you find cigarettes comforting in moments of stress, but there are many better ways to deal with stress (see page 8).</p>	<p>_____ D _____ K _____ Q _____ “Crutch/Tension” Total</p>
<p>“I’m hooked.” In addition to having a psychological dependency on smoking, you may also be physically addicted to nicotine. It is a hard addiction to break, but it can be done. Talk with your doctor about using medication to control your withdrawal symptoms (see page 9).</p>	<p>_____ E _____ L _____ R _____ “Craving/Addiction” Total</p>
<p>“It’s part of my routine.” If cigarettes are merely part of your routine, quitting should be relatively easy. One key to success is being aware of every cigarette you smoke. Keeping a smoking diary is a good way to do this (see page 4).</p>	<p>_____ F _____ M _____ S _____ “Habit” Total</p>
<p>“I’m a social smoker.” You smoke when people around you are smoking and when you are offered a cigarette. It is important for you to avoid these situations until you are confident about being a nonsmoker. If you cannot avoid a situation in which others are smoking, remind them that you are a nonsmoker.</p>	<p>_____ G _____ N _____ T _____ “Social Smoker” Total</p>

Now take a moment to personalize your reason even more. In your own words, write down the single most important reason why you want to quit smoking. Be specific. Do not write “Because of my health” if you really mean “Because I don’t want to get cancer like my dad did.”

Once you have identified your own reason for wanting to quit, save it as a note that you will have with you wherever you go (for example, on your smartphone or in a small notebook).