

Tips for Drivers Quitting Smoking

1. Set a quit date and plan ahead

Pick a date two to three weeks before your exam to give your body time to recover. Remove cigarettes, lighters, and ashtrays from your home and vehicle. This will reduce temptation.



2. Consider nicotine replacement or prescriptions

You can try a patch or nicotine gum to help with cravings. Talk to your doctor about quitting and your options for prescriptions like Chantix or Zyban.



3. Hydrate and choose healthy replacements

Drinking lots of water will help flush the nicotine out of your system. Try a healthy alternative like gum or a snack when you feel like reaching for a cigarette.



4. Manage triggers and stress

Take note of your triggers and try to avoid them when you can. Many people crave a cigarette after coffee or alcohol, so avoid those if possible. Stay away from social situations where you know people will be smoking. Practice breathing exercises to reduce stress, or try listening to music or podcasts when you are driving or bored.

5. Stay busy and distracted

Boredom and stress are killers of good intentions. If you can stay busy, it will make it easier for you to stick to your commitments. While you are driving, you can keep your mouth busy with chewing gum or snacks like carrots and sunflower seeds.



6. Make sure you have support and accountability

Tell trusted friends, family members, or other drivers about your goal and ask them to help keep you accountable. You can try accountability apps to track your progress. There are a number of free apps to help you quit smoking provided by governments and cancer centers. Frequently remind yourself of why you want to quit smoking.



7. Mentally prepare yourself for withdrawal symptoms

When you know what to expect and you know that it will pass, it is easier to get through the challenging moments. Most cravings only last five to ten minutes. Remind yourself that you can make it. Increased irritability is normal in the early stages of quitting. Find an outlet like meditation, deep breathing, or exercise.

