

How To Break Bad Habits: The Ultimate Checklist

- ☑ **Ask yourself relevant questions** regarding the frequency, nature and triggers of your bad habit, and write down the answers for greater clarity.
- ☑ **Draw a simple habit tracker** in your journal (a calendar will also do), and for a few weeks **take note of how often you do your habit**.
- ☑ Ask yourself the question “**What do I feel that makes me do this habit?**”, and answer with a **feeling**.
- ☑ Ask yourself the question “**What need does my bad habit meet that alleviates this feeling?**”, and answer with a **need**.
- ☑ After you have both answers, write down your conclusion: “**I [do bad habit] because it brings me [need met] when I am [feeling]**”. Keep it in your journal or somewhere you can see it every day.
- ☑ **Replace your bad habit with a good habit that meets the same need**, that you enjoy doing, that is easy, beneficial and measurable. Whenever you feel the urge to do the old habit, do the new one instead.
- ☑ **Remove the cues in your environment** that trigger your urge to do your bad habit—this will reduce the need for constant effort to resist temptation.
- ☑ Remove the craving for your bad habit by **implementing regular tiny habits** that help keep the need behind it met.
- ☑ **Use the habit stacking method** to make your tiny habits easier to implement.
- ☑ **Get some support** by finding an accountability partner, a “habit buddy”, or by getting professional help such as a coach or therapist.
- ☑ Answer the question “**How will my life change when I quit this habit?**”
- ☑ Keep the answers in your journal or on a poster on the wall and **use them as your daily source of motivation when you feel discouraged**.
- ☑ **Use a habit tracker to measure your progress** (track times you resisted an urge, replaced the old habit, or did healthy tiny habits)
- ☑ If you want, **track other metrics such as your mood and energy levels** to gather more data and make you more effective.
- ☑ Decrease the intensity of the rewarding feeling you get from your bad habit by **repeating the negative consequences out loud before you do it**—this will make you less likely to repeat it in the future.
- ☑ **Practice meditation** (start with 5 minutes a day) to increase emotional resilience, which will help you better resist cravings and stick with healthy habits.
- ☑ **Remind yourself that, one day, you already lived without the bad habit**. Therefore, you can do it again.