

# Managing triggers & cravings



**Why did you *start* smoking?** Why are you *still* smoking? After many years, smoking becomes so automatic that you may not realize why you're doing it. Cravings happen for two reasons:

1. Nicotine addiction
2. Places and events that “trigger” your desire to smoke

Triggers can work so quickly that you grab a cigarette without realizing or thinking about what you're doing. Common triggers include:

- Waking up
- Driving
- Stress
- Boredom
- Eating
- Coffee
- Alcohol
- Social situations

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## Becoming aware of triggers

Tracking your smoking can be powerful. It will provide insight about when, where, and why you smoke. Use a mobile app, keep a log right in your cigarette packet, or use the example below. Track the time, place, feelings, and triggers associated with smoking.

Time	Place	Feeling	Trigger	Intensity of craving (1-5)

- What are your triggers?
- When do you usually smoke?
- Where do you usually smoke?
- Why do you usually smoke?

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## Alternatives and distractions

There are ways to get past triggers without smoking:

- **Alternatives** are something you can grab instead of a cigarette whenever you have a craving. Gum, music and toothpicks are common substitutes.
- **Distractions** are something to take your mind off cigarettes during a craving: go for a walk, read a book, simply start to do anything else.

What alternatives do you use? What alternatives do you want to try?

What distractions do you use? What distractions will you try?