

# Strategies for Cutting Down One's Alcohol Intake



## Keep Track

Keep track of how much you drink.

Making a note of each drink before you drink it may help you slow down when needed.



## Count and Measure

Know what a standard unit of alcohol looks like so that you can accurately measure your drink.



## Set Goals

Decide how many days a week you want to drink and how many units of alcohol you will have on those days.

**Men: No more than 3–4 units of alcohol on any day/No more than 14 units of alcohol per week**

**Women: No more than 2–3 units of alcohol on any day/No more than 14 units of alcohol per week**



## Pace and Space

Sip slowly.

No more than one unit of alcohol per hour.

Have "drink spacers" – make every other drink a non-alcoholic one.



## Include Food

Do not drink on an empty stomach.

Eat some food so the alcohol will be absorbed into your system more slowly.



## Find Alternatives

If drinking occupies a lot of your time, fill the free time by developing new and healthy activities, hobbies, relationships, and coping skills.



## Avoid Triggers

If certain people, places, activities, times of day, or feelings trigger the urge to drink, avoid them and/or plan something else to do instead of drinking.



## Plan to Handle Urges

Remind yourself of your reasons for changing.

Talk with someone you trust.

Engage in a healthy, distracting activity that does not involve drinking.

Ride out the urge without giving in, it will soon pass.



## Know your NO

Have a polite, convincing "No, thanks" ready for times when you are offered a drink and do not want one.

The faster you can say NO to these offers, the less likely you are to give in.

Adapted from [www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov)



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