

Tell a newbie how many seconds a day do you still want a cigarette

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Remember the first few days after you quit smoking? Remember worrying that the urges, wanting and craves would never end? Here's your chance to reach out and tell both smokers and new quitters what it's like now. Below are 33 pages of comments written by hundreds of former smokers who had successfully quit smoking for days, weeks, month, years and some even over a decade, sharing what it was like for them at these different points in time to be nicotine free.

If a cold turkey quitter, please [email us](#) and share with visiting newbies both how long you've been 100% nicotine-free (paste your [quit meter stats](#) if possible) and how many seconds each day you spend wanting a cigarette. We'll then add your response to the below "[Tell a newbie ...](#)" parade which [Joel started](#) back in 2001 in our original support group Freedom.

#1 | 23 June 2001 | Joel Spitzer

Joel: I am starting a parade today, this is a first. Along with your [quit meters](#) giving your statistics of how long you have been off cigarettes, how much money you have saved, how much life saved you have racked up (in my opinion the most important variable in this meter), also share how much time or how many seconds or minutes in a typical day you really find yourself wanting a cigarette. The odds are pretty good that longer term ex-smokers will only have a few seconds on any given day. Even people off a week if seriously analyzing the number will come up with a few hundred seconds. While this may sound scary, consider the fact that there are 86,400 seconds in a day.

People who are just quitting today may answer this question with 86,400 seconds. But if they watch the responses of others they will likely see a clear progression of how over time, the desire for nicotine does in fact start to dissipate. So join on in. By the way, if you are not sure of the number of seconds wait a few days, time your own results and attach it to here later. This thread can serve as a clear message that life will get easier

for all new members if they just hang in over time. Hopefully it will serve all in their quest to never take another puff!

Joel

#2 | 23 Jun 2001 | Theresa

First off, Welcome to Freedom - and congratulations on your choice to quit! My quit meter says that I have been nicotine free for Two months, six days, 17 hours, 44 minutes and 24 seconds. 1151 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$215.92. Life saved: 3 days, 23 hours, 55 minutes.

In an average day in my life right now I probably think about wanting to smoke only a few minutes a day. I think about NOT wanting to smoke twice as much. (mostly while I am here reading and learning other times when I see a smoker in public I think how glad I am that I don't smoke anymore).

Not Smoking is GREAT! Freedom Rules!

#3 | 23 Jun 2001 | Nora Gold

After smoking an average of 1 1/2 packs a day for 26 years I have now been free for ten months, two weeks, four days, 2 hours, 9 minutes and 58 seconds. 9662 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$724.70. Life saved: 4 weeks, 5 days, 13 hours, 10 minutes.

Yesterday I had a thought about smoking for about 5 seconds when I came in from outside. It was not strong, just a thought. This is not a daily occurrence. I had been taking meds for a sinus problem and I think it stirred up something in my lungs because I had my second smoking dream a couple of nights ago. I hadn't expected that so far into my quit but it did happen.

To all you Newbies and lurkers out there, GO FOR IT. It is very worthwhile.

Nora

#4 | 23 Jun 2001 | GrumpyOMrsS (Gold)

What a special surprise!! For me, I have not entertained any thoughts of smoking since my third week. If I think of a cigarette at all, it is at work when I smell my customers or have to sell them cigarettes. And then I say to myself ... "am I ever glad I quit." I have absolutely NO desire to ever take another puff and it's been that way since the beginning of my quit. For



those of you finding it a little difficult at the beginning, know that life without smoking is absolutely wonderful!!

Congratulations to each and everyone of you on your first official smokefree weekend of the summer. Enjoy it and live it to its fullest....and remember....never take another puff. After smoking for 41 years...I have been smokefree for one year, five months, two weeks, five days, 20 hours, 14 minutes and 59 seconds. 10736 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$1,610.40. Life saved: 5 weeks, 2 days, 6 hours, 40minutes.....and I have no desire or thoughts to ever take another puff.

Linda

#5 | 23 Jun 2001 | John Gold

Hi Ya Newbies! Welcome to Freedom! After smoking three packs a day for thirty years and now being quit 2 years and 1 month, the average number of seconds each day that I spend thinking about me smoking a cigarette is: Zero !!!!!!!

In fact, I have not had a single "crave" (a short yet extremely power anxiety attack for a smoke) since about day 60 of my quit and during all of the year 2000 I only "thought" about smoking twice ("I wish I had a cigarette right now" type thinking), for a total of maybe 40 seconds, and once it was done on purpose just to see if I still could :)) I have now been free and healing for 2 Years 1 Month 1 Week 12 Hours 43 Minutes 47 Seconds and there should be an extra 46,171 cigarettes somewhere.

Withdrawal is Temporary!

Breathe deep, hug hard, live long,

John



#6 | 23 Jun 2001 | Teeisfree GOLD

I am quit 3 months (pack a day plus) and some days don't even think about smoking. If I do it is never for more than a minute or two. Most days it is ZERO seconds - I just don't even think about it anymore. It does get easier.

#7 | 23 Jun 2001 | AddictedtoEverything

Hi to all who have recently entered the world of the "Smokefree." Here are my stats
Four months, one week, two days, 23 hours, 48 minutes and 51 seconds. 5199
cigarettes not smoked, saving \$1,039.60. Life saved: 2 weeks, 4 days, 1 hour, 15
minutes.

And, ya know how many seconds a day I devote to craving a cig ... maybe about ten ...
and that is at the most. Usually, a megasecond is spent forgetting that I quit. Trust all of
us ... the pain and misery passes, and it happens quickly. Hang in there ... the rewards
of being smokefree are worth it.

Mary

#8 | 23 Jun 2001 | Curly (Green)

I haven't had a craving (weak or strong) since about my 2nd week. I have had thoughts
about cigarettes, though not many. When I find myself staring at someone with a cig, or
paying more attention to the person on TV smoking rather than the TV show itself, I've
been able to tell myself "Look at them, killing themselves. Glad I'm not there anymore!"
After only a couple of seconds. Basically, as soon as the thought comes in, I get it out.
It's really that simple - and ((Newbies)), YOU can do it too!

#9 | 24 Jun 2001 | AddictedtoEverything

First off, welcome and congratulations on your choice to quit! My quit meter says that I
have been nicotine free for two months, six days, 17 hours, 44 minutes and 24 seconds,
1151 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$215.92. Life saved: 3 days, 23 hours, 55 minutes.

In an average day in my life right now I probably think about wanting to smoke only a
few minutes a day. I think about NOT wanting to smoke twice as much. (mostly while I
am here reading and learning other times when I see a smoker in public I think how glad
I am that I don't smoke anymore).

Not Smoking is GREAT! Freedom Rules!

#10 | 24 Jun 2001 | cathym (GREEN)

Thanks Joel for a very perplexing theme. I say perplexing cuz now I have to stop and
really think. First of all I started to think about all the times I used to think about it but

almost never do anymore: first thing in the morning, after meals, even driving is finally becoming manageable. My walk at work finally feels like just a walk and not a reminder of what I am NOT doing on my lunch hour. I think I still think about it, but I can't say it's the same as WANTING ONE. Mostly the smell possibly makes me remember that ahhhhh feeling that I know now I cannot have but again it's not exactly WANTING ONE. See how difficult it is to separate the two.

I think the junkie that is still in me would like for them to be the same, but they aren't. So I will say (excluding this past week which has been most stressful at work) not more than several seconds in any one day and some days, maybe not at all. At first the weekends were the hardest, now that has almost reversed itself.

So when I really think about it, I have to say that I MUST THINK ABOUT IT, TO EVEN COME UP WITH A FIGURE. It's like I almost forget about it. I mean it's like even if I do, I just accept it and get on with it. As Heike would say ... it's so worth it and I know that it will continue to even get better. And YES UNTIL YOU LURKERS EXPERIENCE IT YOURSELVES, YOU WILL NEVER KNOW (BUT HOPEFULLY WILL!!!) HOW FREEDOM DOES RULE.

YQS
CATHY

One month, three weeks, two days, 13 hours, 14 minutes and 24 seconds. 1071 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$160.65. Life saved: 3 days, 17 hours, 15 minutes.

#11 | 24 Jun 2001 | Steve (green)

I am a newbie at just 1 month, 2 weeks, 2 days. I still think about smoking quite often. I would say at least a half an hour day. I was worried about this but now that I have written it down I realize that really isn't too bad, considering I used to think about smoking about every half hour or so. The worst time for me is when I'm really busy and minding my own business when bam!! Suddenly I want a cigarette. For no apparent reason. But I do realize that I think much more about not smoking than I do about smoking. I just long for the first day when I realize I never even thought about it. That will be the day I'm really free.

Steve

#12 | 24 Jun 2001 | Keilit (Gold)

This is me, the VERY proud ex-smoker and I can honestly say that I think about smoking 0 percent of most days. Once a week I might get a second or two thought, but

then it's gone so fast I don't even pause to acknowledge it anymore!! I am so glad I quit. I no longer ride the ups and downs of my addiction, but am free to enjoy the peace and calm I now have in my life.

Never take another puff!!!!
-Heather

One month, three weeks, 5 hours, 46 minutes and 2 seconds. 522 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$111.01. Life saved: 1 day, 19 hours, 30 minutes to spend with my daughter and my new boyfriend!!

#13 | 24 Jun 2001 | amcanuck (GOLD)



I have very few actual thoughts of wanting a smoke. Maybe a few times a week I picture myself having one, but those thoughts last only about 5 seconds each and are easily forgotten. I spend other time reflecting on wishing I had never smoked, and what it has done to me. But those thoughts just compell me to come to Freedom and see if I can lend a hand in a quit as others did for me. I have been quit for 4M 3W and 3Ds. And you know what? Quitting smoking really was only hard at the beginning.

amcanuck

#14 | 24 Jun 2001 | Joanne Gold

Here are my statistics: Two years, four months, three weeks, six days, 14 hours, 32 minutes and 29 seconds. 17572 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$3,074.97. Life saved: 8 weeks, 5 days, 20 minutes.

I no longer crave cigarettes and can't remember the last time I did. It really is amazing because during those early days I would have found that hard to believe. :)

It is important for all new quitters to understand that the comfort does come. If you face any challenges, consider them temporary. It gets better with every new day. The benefits are incredible. Be sure to work through it one day at a time.

Love and hugs to all!

Joanne

#15 | 24 Jun 2001 | Patticake (Gold)

I have to be honest here and say that not a day goes by that I don't have a 'smoking thought'. I smoked for 40+ years and that is the majority of my life to date. A smoker is who I was, it was a part of my life and I know realistically for me it will take time for those memories to fade. But the thoughts are fleeting and I find I am able to push them further and further into my 'not very important to think about department'. However I do take care in my acknowledgement of them as I take care to maintain control over them.

Personally I think I'll probably always have the thoughts, as I said it was a part of who I am. It would be nice to think I could forever blot it from my memory, but I don't think I can do that. So let's say I think a few seconds several times a day. 5m, 6d, 6h, 4718ns, a saving of \$778.28, LS: 2w, 2d, 9hrs, 10m, and happily counting. Antonia Oh yes our dear newbies, please note I said 'thought'. Thought only, cows will fly before I ever want one.

#16 | 24 Jun 2001 | mirigirl (silver)

How many seconds a day do I still want a cigarette? I would have to say NONE! Have thoughts about smoking - what it was like, how I don't smoke now, pop into the Freedom Board, see people smoking etc etc...well yes.... but actually want a cigarette? NONE Crave for a cigarette? Physically? Absolutely NONE Crave for a cigarette..emotionally? Mentally? When under stress? Even then NONE

And this is what totally amazes about my Freedom. I always thought that there would be some sort of ongoing struggle in staying Quit ... eternally vigilant!? ... well no ... aware - yes! I am aware and accept I am a nicotine addict. I do remind my self each day that I 'm happy not to smoke, and then I get on with it. This is to me, the Freedom I NEVER thought possible ... and I haven't had an easy journey of it, not that I've continually craved cigarettes but the healing changes in my life triggered by my Quit have run deep. And I'm grateful for that. The fog of smoking has lifted from my life and I am free to look at other areas of my life. True Freedom has arrived and it came a lot quicker than I thought.

To the newbie, all I can say is: Hang Tuff, Keep the Quit and Freedom will be Yours.

yqs Maz

NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!!

Five months, three days, 8 hours, 56 minutes and 35 seconds of FREEDOM!! 3859 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$1,235.31. Life saved: 1 week, 6 days, 9 hours, 35 minutes.

#17 | 24 Jun 2001 | LadyRed (Bronze)

This is a great topic and one that I really feel good after reading. Joel, your reply to Patticake and Steve made me feel good and feel quote/unquote "normal," and I'll explain why.

I would say that maybe 2 to 3 times a week I have a thought about smoking and thinking back to times when I smoked. It only lasts about 5 or 6 seconds and I quickly reinforce to myself the reasons I quit and it passes. I recently started a new job and during break I watch the puffers (they're outdoors, of course) and I can smell them and watch the dirty nasty habit of smoking and it turns me off. I watch them head for the door with the cigs in hand with their lighter as they rush out and light up at the end of the day....all of that stuff really makes me sooo glad I quit and really looking at the smoking habit for what it is: Dirty, smelly, nasty looking and downright stupid, yes stupid. But even with my attitude being that now, there are times when I feel an 'urge' hit and then think of those things (the nasty habit of smoking) and it passes pretty quickly, like I said, maybe 5 or 6 seconds.

So, Joel, thank you for letting me know that it's normal, and I have a feeling that as time passes those 2 to 3 episodes a week will diminish.

To all the newbies, please don't think I'm suffering in any way, I'm not, I've never felt better in my life, I smoked for 30 years. 5 or 6 seconds 2 or 3 times a week is NO BIG DEAL....most of the week I don't think of smoking at all. If I think of smoking, it's not that I'm thinking of smoking one, please let that be clear. I feel soooo free now, it's so worth it!

YQS, Grace

Four months, four days, 2 hours, 22 minutes and 54 seconds. 4963 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$1,054.48. Life saved: 2 weeks, 3 days, 5 hours, 35 minutes.

#18 | 24 Jun 2001 | ZAREFAH

After 35 years of smoking, 3/4 of my lifetime, here's my stats: One year, two weeks, five days, 22 hours, 52 minutes and 59 seconds. 7699 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$1,231.85. Life saved: 3 weeks, 5 days, 17 hours, 35 minutes.

How many seconds a day do I still want a smoke?

NONE...EVER...NEVER!

In the beginning all I could think of was the fact that I was not smoking. As I worked through the triggers, the process somehow reversed. At 6 months, I had a week that I swore I was craving every single day (it was a vacation and an entire new set of triggers.) When I came home, back to routine, I was stronger than ever. Sometime after 6 months, I realized I had come to accept the fact that I would never take another puff and that did not frighten me. I knew I was living better without my substance than I had with it. Deep down inside I began to feel like someone who didn't smoke. Amazing! I was able to change a lifetime's worth of triggers around in less than a year. I intend to keep on dancing for as long as the good Lord is willing!

Big hugs, Joy

#19 | 24 Jun 2001 | Kalie

Hi everyone!! I'm GREEN now with 1m 1d 19:13 smoke-free, 1,151 cigs not smoked, \$287.75 saved, 3d 23:55 life saved...and I think about smoking probably only a few times a day for about ten seconds ... and I'm getting stronger everyday!!!

Kalie

#20 | 25 Jun 2001 | Mahree (Bronze)

I read your question early this morning, but wanted to think a bit before I answered it. The Newbies, I hope, will see that the timing seems different for most people. I think that is important because over 40 years I quit many times. Mostly I would get discouraged because I did not smell the flowers, taste the food, get over feeling really sick and bad, within the time limits that were usually posted.

On this final quit I am 2 months, 1 week, 6 days, 14 hours, 2984 cigs not smoked at a savings of \$341.78 and a life savings of 1 week 3 days, 8 hours, and 40 minutes.

Because of this web site I have managed the above stats. Here I have learned about being an addict, here I have learned that 72 hours are necessary to get rid of the nicotine in my body. Here I have learned that the first 3 weeks are not going to be wonderful. I will be dealing with cravings from habits learned over a life time. But, little by little the cravings get less as we meet and overcome each personal trigger. Now, I experience several times a day, bad cravings, but maybe due to CRS, I forget them before they become an issue. Much better to know what to expect and deal with it.

Hugs from Mary

#21 | 25 Jun 2001 | Fat Tony GOLD

After five months two weeks and 2 days of abstinence I still crave cigarettes about as much as I did when I first quit.

#22 | 25 Jun 2001 | Glenys Goldx3

I have quit for two months now, and can say that I have not had a serious crave for over a month. I, too, think of cigarettes from time to time, but it is more about how I am glad I don't smoke than wishing I could. My husband smokes so it is "in my face" all the time, but still I do not want to smoke. I am loving being a non-smoker. So much freedom in so many ways. There is not one thing I miss about it. I can't remember what it was that I enjoyed about it either. I look at other smokers now and do not envy them, rather pity them, but remember always that I was one of them, so I must keep my guard up, but it is not uncomfortable - just the opposite!

So occasionally I think to myself, mmmm a cigarette would be nice (that's the junkie me) and I instantly dismiss the thought (that's the intelligent me) and it is very easy. This whole process takes about 10 seconds and doesn't even happen every day. Only once in a while. So come on newbies, give Freedom a go. You won't miss a thing. Cheers, Glenys

I have chosen not to smoke for 2 Months 14 Hours 5 Minutes 13 Seconds. Cigarettes not smoked: 1539. Money saved: A\$384.92.

#23 | 25 Jun 2001 | marty (gold)

I have had NOT A PUFF FOR 6 months 3 weeks 4 days : 3719 cigs not smoked : 1 week 5 days 21 hours added to my life.

CRAVINGS ("I really really want to smoke and it's a struggle not to") ZERO and it's been zero since week 3.

STRONG URGES ("I would love a cigarette, like it's a hot day, I'm thirsty and I need a drink") ZERO and it's been zero since month 2.

MILD DESIRE ("I could quite fancy a cigarette now, like I haven't eaten for 2 hours, I'm mildly hungry, and I can smell a barbecue") TWICE A WEEK lasting about 3 seconds each time. It's been like that since month 6.

That means I'm thinking that I'd like a cigarette for 6 seconds a week.

When I smoked, there were probably at least 2 occasions each day when I wanted to smoke but couldn't, because I was in a no-smoking office or a restaurant or on a train. Each of those occasions lasted say 30 minutes average. That amounts to 25,200 seconds a week when I was suffering significant anxiety and withdrawal symptoms, far worse in intensity than any discomfort I have suffered from not smoking since I quit.

That's why I believe that quitting is actually easier than smoking.

#24 | 25 Jun 2001 | Cliff (Gold)

It has now been one month, two weeks, 46 minutes and 19 seconds since I quit. That's 1801 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$225.16. Life saved: 6 days, 6 hours, 5 minutes. That's after 45+ years as a smoker of at least 2 packs a day.

It has been at least two weeks since I actually WANTED a cigarette. What I have now are vagrant thoughts about smoking that pass in a matter of a few seconds--and I have actually had one day where I realized the next morning that I hadn't thought about smoking at all.

It is wonderful to be free--and to all of you in those tough first weeks--it does get better!! It gets steadily better each day. Will I ever completely forget about smoking? After 45 years, of course not. But the few thoughts I do have are getting fewer and weaker every day! Look forward and never take another puff!!

Cliff

#25 | 25 Jun 2001 | Rena (green)

Hello my quitting brothers and sisters. I am very much of a newbie: 3W15h 20m of being GLORIOSLY FREE. Thank you all for your support and thank you Joel for all the knowladge and strength you are giving us.

I've been smoking for 20 years and this is not my first quit but it is my LAST QUIT. First few days I had cravings that were not long lasting-couple of minutes but they were very often (every half an hour or so) it was not easy but I was determined. Then I found this site and it gave me so much insight that after that my cravings are almost non existant. They only appear in trigger situations but last such short time that its almost unnoticable. Its more thought of that "perfect smoke" that I crave for then smoke itself (smoke I dread and hate).

Of course now I know that "perfect smoke" does not exist and its just dirty, stinky addiction. All in all I would say that my cravings last around 3 - 5 minutes max. for whole

week (this is because i expose myself to lots of triggers otherwise it would be even less) and I am sure as time progresses they will go completely.

YQS Irena

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