

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.

#776 | 01 Aug 2012 | IQuit4me

I smoked 1 1/2 packs a day for 28 years and I have been free from nicotine for 336 days@! I have not smoked 10,095 cigarettes, saved \$4,038 and a whopping 42 days of my life. I very rarely have any cravings and maybe thought about smoking for 1-2 seconds in the last week and they were NOT cravings, just a passing thought about it.

The cravings do go away even though you don't think they will at first and it feels so good to be able to breathe!

#777 | 7 Sep 2012 | pedrolg

I have quit for 38 days now, I never want a cigarette.

I do think of them occasionally, and sometimes when I pass by a smoker, it smells good. I'll never want another one though.

The thoughts last about 5 seconds, and happen about 3 times a week.

#778 | 11 Sep 2012 | soulagement

I never, ever, ever want a cigarette.

If this thread were called "Tell a newbie how many times a day you're happy you don't smoke anymore", then I could say that sometimes I completely forget about it, but sometimes I think about how grateful I am to not smoke any more several times a day. Whenever I see others lighting up. How great it is to be free!

#779 | 17 Sep 2012 | MissLiner

I want to smoke exactly ZERO seconds out of the day. I am almost at Gold, and I can honestly say that unless I am around cigarettes, I completely forget they even exist for days at a time. When I AM around cigarettes, I can easily sit and talk to a smoker without having ONE SINGLE urge to light up.

I just got married, and it was the most exciting, but also the most stressful week of my life (lots of do-it-yourself, so I had way more responsibilities than a bride should have). You know how many times I even THOUGHT about the existence of smoking, much less wanted to smoke? NOT ONE SINGLE SECOND.


On the other hand, how much harder would the whole thing have been if I was still smoking, trying to sneak them while waiting to go down the aisle, worrying about burning my dress, making sure I held onto smokes the whole time, feeling way more anxious than I already was due to withdrawal every 20 minutes? Way more difficult.

#780 | 18 Sep 2012 | SentosaIsland

102 days without nicotine. I think the last time I was thinking that I wanted a cigarette was like 18 days after quitting. The first few weeks can be hard, almost like loosing a friend, but it does get MUCH MORE easier VERY QUICKLY!

#781 | 13 Oct 2012 | michelleh

I quit 1 year, 2 months and 9 days ago and had a particularly bad day today. I hardly ever think about smoking but today the thought cropped up twice, not sure why. Each time the thought of smoking a cigarette probably lasted about 30 seconds, but then it

was gone again 

#782 | 13 Oct 2012 | Joel Spitzer

Video: [Longer-term quitters who say they are having bad days](#)

Also, from Bad days

I think it is important for everyone to know that as life goes on, people have bad days. Smokers have bad days, ex-smokers have bad days, people who never smoked a cigarette in their life have bad days. If the bad day is happening the week you quit smoking, blame it on quitting smoking. It is probably the reason. But as time marches on, you need to be a little more discriminating. For later in a quit, not smoking may be playing only a minor role, and possibly not any at all. What you said today was of pivotal importance though, even during your bad day yesterday, you didn't smoke, hey in your case, you didn't even consider smoking.

People in the early days of a quit sometimes hear long term ex-smokers say how it is now easy, how everything is going great. They often think to themselves, "well if it were going like that for me, sure I could stay off, but I am different now, it's still hard." They sometimes can't relate to ex-smokers. By acknowledging your bad day, or more accurately, an emotionally off day for one reason or another, and being able to awake the next day still smoke free with a new perspective on things gives a valuable lessons to new people here. Sure there are some tough times, but they pass and at the end of the day, you can still be smoke free. That is why I didn't call yesterday a bad day for you Penny, you made it through a touch day without a cigarette. You are still smoke free. In the greater scheme of things, it was a good day.

Watch people on the board who are off for months and have a relapse. Listen to their words and here you will see a bad day. Followed sometimes by an immediate quit which means a bad week. Sometimes though, some don't come back and you can probably accurately predict they are smoking again. They are having bad weeks, months and years. In America, with over 400,000 people dying annually every year from smoking, this translates to over 1,000 people dying prematurely every day. They then had a bad day. Their surviving family and friends are also then having a bad day. Some go on having lives a little worse off every day because of the loss of their significant other. Smoking leads to this kind of chain reaction of bad days.

Summing up, it's OK to share tough times, but balance the message, with how you feel by the end of the day that you are still smoke free. It will reinforce your resolve, it will reinforce everyone who reads it too. To stay free from nicotine, be honest and never take another puff!

Joel

#783 | 16 Oct 2012 | karebear509

Hello newbies! It's been a very long time since I've been here. I am very proud to say it will be 4 glorious years in Jan. I had to stop in to say thanks again, this REALLY does work!!! I smoked for 35 years and with Why Quits help, I am forever free! I very rarely think of cigarettes now except to notice how nasty they smell when others smoke. so all of you starting out, it is doable, just do it! Good luck on your journey. Karen

#784 | 22 Oct 2012 | free2beme

Hello ! You haven't smoked since November 23rd, 2010

Congratulations for choosing not to die a slow death.

You have quit smoking for: 1 year, 47 weeks, 3 days, 23 hours and 28 mins. You have saved: 4,193.87 Dollars by NOT smoking 13,980 cigarettes! last time I thought about a cigarette was when my neighbor stepped up inside my house and I politely asked them to step back outside with their cigarette because it smelled so horrible. I can't remember the last time I actually thought about wanting to smoke one!

#785 | 12 Dec 2012 | Krissy

The answer, in short, is EXTREMELY rarely. For the most part, I want a cigarette 0 seconds a day for months and months at a time. But, I DO reflect often on how glad I am that I do not smoke anymore. I am SO grateful that I am no longer a slave to that awful habit. I feel better, look better, smell better, and I can taste and see and smell like I was made to. I appreciate LIFE more. Actually, I took my LIFE back. That is what you're doing, new nonsmokers!! Don't second guess for one minute that the "one puff" you are thinking about is going to be worth your LIFE. Take your life back into your hands!! Crucify this awful habit and you will never regret it once it is dead.

Love,

Krissy - Free and Healing for Two Years, Nine Months, Eleven Days, 11 Hours and 22 Minutes, while extending my life expectancy 70 Days and 15 Hours, by avoiding the use of 20349 nicotine delivery devices that would have cost me \$6,898.00.

#786 | 18 Dec 2012 | hwc

I'm inching my way towards my five year anniversary. The day I quit was the second best day of my life (after the day my daughter was born!).

I can't remember the last time I thought about smoking. It's been at least two years. I have a hard time even remembering what it was like to be a nicotine junkie, living all

day, every day for my next cigarette. I got reminded of it a little bit at a concert recently when the guy sitting next to me reeked of stale cigarette smoke. Probably the only unpleasant thing about being an ex-smoker is being able to smell that on people...

#787 | 06 Jan 2013 | indianscorpion29

Hi Everyone. I am srikanth from India.

I quit smoking November 9th 2012. It has been 58 days of freedom for me. I have been an active smoker for 6 yrs....initially the physical withdrawal symptoms were tough. But hey the good news is ...it lasted only 2 days for me. Sometimes, very infrequently, I get thoughts when I am idle, which don't last more than 10 seconds.

I thank Joel for the knowledge.

I tried quitting 4 or 5 times before this but I never really overcame the physical symptoms fearing that my entire life would be in chronic physical withdrawal.

But the truth is, it hardly lasts for 2 or 3 days. It would start getting easier.

#788 | 29 Mar 2013 | Daniel

Hello, I have now stopped smoking for 8 months, 1 day, 22 hours, 4 minutes, 18 seconds. That translates into 6,172 cigarettes NOT smoked, for a savings of \$2,358.08! At 5 minutes per cigarette I have increased my life expectancy by 3 weeks, 10 hours, 24 minutes, 57 seconds.

Upon quitting I went through 3 very tough weeks of withdrawal. It was worth every second.

In truth, prior to quitting, I couldn't even fathom a single day without a cigarette... Quitting was a scary thought. I quit with the help of Joel and his fantastic site.

I am VERY proud to state that currently my cravings are so far apart I cannot even remember the last one.

In fact, I currently find situations where I disdain a cigarette far more often than I crave a cigarette.

#789 | 28 May 2013 | Itlme71

well last time i was here i had just been 6 months quit WOW it has now been one whole year and a half since my last puff , and i do still come back here just to read and see

Thanks for sharing your insights into this most important string. [Smoking triggers "Will I ever stop thinking of cigarettes?"](#)

#791 | 24 Aug 2013 | Judy Anderson

I have been 2 months and one day without nicotine.

I go hours without even thinking about having a cigarette and actually forgetting that recently I was a smoker. I wake up mornings and may go to 2:00 in the afternoon before a thought about cigarettes floats into my brain, sometimes the thought is that I have quit smoking! When I do think about a cigarette it isn't about wanting one now, it's the thought of being glad I am not a slave to nicotine anymore. I may have one or two thoughts a day about missing a cigarette, lasting about 15 seconds but I do not want one, I know I cannot have just one.

I am a happy ex-smoker, committed to NTAP

#792 | 24 Aug 2013 | stratsquire

Okay Joel, but I really don't think that any newbies are reading this and thinking of themselves as the newbies we are talking about. The true newbies probably think we are referring to people who recently stopped readministering nicotine to themselves. And I have come to regard such arrest as a fairly advanced act.

Let me explain. When I was in the first 90 days of my quit, I considered myself a newbie. However, as time has passed, I have grown to appreciate how truly advanced (and non-newbielike) any person's thought process is to even initiate a cold-turkey quit. If the quit is educated, they are not newbies in my mind even 2 hours in. If they are quitting cold turkey without the education, they too are advanced, not in their knowledge, but in their resolve. And that resolve has done them a service, by leading them to the education. Which is what I credit for strengthening my resolve.

Most of the actual newbies are still feeding. Hopefully reading. Remember, all smokers quit. We just want more to quit while still alive! Meanwhile, the true newbie's thoughts of quitting are more and more frequent, accompanying almost every feeding....inching toward what, for me, was the degree of self loathing that was necessary to finally achieve escape velocity...

Just remembering sends shivers up my spine.

In the meantime, saying no to nicotine every day has become effortless, automatic and, most importantly, comfortable. Never thought that the



comfort everyone spoke of was TRUE comfort.

Of course a quit is not a quit until one stops feeding. I don't mean to imply otherwise. But I know that, for me, my quit had a heartbeat before it was born. I felt it kicking a lot, especially toward the end. I mean, the beginning.

Ben (strat)
Quit 11.26.10

#793 | 24 Aug 2013 | Joel Spitzer

Hello Ben:

I believe for definition sake here Newbies are people in the early days of their quits. People who are reading here who and are still smoking are basically still smokers, not really in much better shape regarding their quitting status than many people not thinking about quitting.

Here is a commentary from the thread Actions speak louder than words-or thought that touches on this:

Thoughts or words are not decisive factors of anything. Lets say you never quit smoking, and are eventually diagnosed with emphysema, and then knowing that every puff you took was destroying more and more lung tissue, basically crippling you a little bit more every smoking moment.

Should you then feel solace for saying as you are lighting up a cigarette, "Yes, I know I am destroying more lung tissue and I am likely going to be on oxygen soon and gasping for air at some point until my heart finally gives out from the overload, but at least I thought about quitting today."

I don't think you or your family, friends, or doctor will look at this statement as a major accomplishment as you are lighting up one cigarette off the one that is about to burn out. Especially if you have said the comment earlier that same day, and have been saying it day after day for decades now.

If you think back to when you were first quitting, the odds were you had numerous thoughts for days and maybe weeks and still, here you are smoke free. It is because you never gave into those thoughts.

Today still your actions are speaking louder than your words or your thoughts. The action is you didn't take a puff yesterday and I strongly suspect if you are here reading now you are not planning on taking one puff today either. As long as you continue this practice, it does not matter if you never think of a puff again or if you think of it daily. You will never relapse as long as you never take another puff!

Joel

Other resources that discuss these thought processes are the videos [Setting quit dates](#) and ["I'm trying to quit smoking"](#). Besides the videos, check out the description section for links to strings that cover the same concepts.

Another group of current smokers who may feel they are somehow further along in the quitting process than people who may actually be off for just a day or two are smokers who had past long-term quits--maybe ones that lasted years or decades. The video [Past "successful" quits](#) covers these individuals.

Another place where I addressed this issue is in the string [Question about relapse](#)

Here is my comment from that string regarding this issue:

Do some people who relapse after being educated manage to quit again--yes. But I need to add a bit of caution here. It is not like the odds get better with these educated quitters. This statement will be quite a bit of a contrast of what you will often hear from most experts in the field of tobacco control.

If you look at most literature and listen to most professionals, they will often say that your odds of quitting improve with each subsequent attempt, and that people have to quit multiple times before they will actually succeed. While it might be comforting to hear how odds should improve, it doesn't match up to what I experienced in my clinics as you will see from the comment written below.

From [Why we must never take another puff](#)

I thought I better bring this up to clarify something Marty said today. Marty wrote in the string by Newme, and I quote, "As Joel said, many people here have gone thru multiple quits." That statement is true but needs a little clarification for our newest members. While it is true that many of our members have had multiple past quits, they were quits that were in fact lost before coming to Freedom and having a received thorough understanding of addiction and relapse prevention strategy. If you look at most of our gold members I would be willing to bet that they made it from their first day of membership with us.

I feel the need to clarify this for I don't want anyone working with the common belief that your odds improve with every time you quit or stated another way, if you lose this quit, you will just come back next time and be more successful. In live clinics I normally get 80-90% of my first time participants through the first two weeks successfully. The odds my repeaters making it the same time period are usually closer to 50/50. They are people who just seem to have a hard time accepting addiction. While you would think they would have learned from their past experience and be better equipped the next time around--it just doesn't work that way.

So my message to everyone here is whether this is your first time around with us or your second--make this time your last--the one that lasts a lifetime. To insure that this is the case always know to never take another puff!

Joel

Related strings:

[I don't know if I have another quit in me.](#)

[The Lucky One's Get Hooked!](#)

[Never Take Another Puff](#)

[If this is your first time quitting](#)

[I know I will quit again](#)

For the sake of this string, Newbies are the people who have recently quit, whether members or non-members alike. Also for clarification sake, a Member who smokes is no longer a member as covered in the string Good news, our members don't relapse anymore...

One other term that can be clarified here is "Lurker." I actually discovered a video I shot months ago and forgot to release, that I literally just put up this morning. Here is a link discussing this term: Message for our Lurkers. Unlike members, who are now all former smokers, lurkers might be current smokers thinking about quitting or people who have already quit.

One other video that touches on the concept of terminology is "**[What should I call myself?](#)**"

Whatever you call yourself or want to clarify your status as being, to really reap the benefits of breaking free from actively feeding a nicotine dependence is as simple as making and sticking to a personal commitment to never take another puff.

Joel

#794 | 03 Oct 2013 | Judy Anderson

Consider this... here you are at Freedom - a forum dedicated entirely to nicotine cessation - and at this very second you are reading about it. Doesn't it strike you as amazing that you can spend minutes - or soon even hours - focused on topics associated with quitting smoking while not actually WANTING to smoke at that

particular moment? If you sit and try to see a flower bloom you'll never see it move. This thread is proof that it does! John

I truly love and relate to the above post by John(Gold) August 6, 2002.

I am 3 months, 1 week, 4 days and 11 hours nicotine free. I have not puffed \$ 1,367.62 up in smoke and not smoked 3,039 cigarettes. I never want a cigarette anymore. I do have thoughts of smoking, these thoughts are about feeling good about not having to smoke. My life was run by nicotine. I feel that now, because of the knowledge I have gained here, I am running my life. As a nicotine addict I can continue to do so by simply never taking another puff.

Judy

#795 | 15 Nov 2013 | ltlme71

hello , i have to say that now i hardly ever even think about smoking, the only time that i really do think about them is when i smell them on someone or see someone with one dangling out of their mouth and i think "wow i use to smell that bad" or "wow that looks really ugly, i use to look like that " lol that is about the only time i think about it now and i had a really really hard time quitting lol was hard but i have stuck with it and now they

really just disgust me more than anything 🤢 good luck to everyone reading this and know that it does get better with time just dont give up never will i ever take another puff ever !!!

My name is kristal, and I am a nicotine addict.

I have stopped nicotine for 2 years, 18 days, 17 hours, 4 minutes and 15 seconds (749 days).

I've not smoked 24740 death sticks, and saved \$4,657.15.

I've saved 85 days, 21 hours and 42 minutes of my life.

#796 | 07 Jan 2014 | Rusty

It's been 4 years now. I don't remember when I last craved a cigarette. I see smokers all the time and it just makes me a little sad to see them now. My close friends that still smoke all "want to quit" or just don't care about themselves enough to stick with it. At least they have no doubts about my opinion as I call out to them as they sit in the smokers area. You can lead a horse to water. If your here just lap up the help and support and stick with it.


Russell - Set myself free 17th Nov 09 - Gained a life, Gave up Nothing.

Answers to your questions . . . even if your not sure what you want to ask

#797 | 15 Jan 2014 | Mardan59

It's funny, I am at almost at one year now since I quit. I don't want to smoke at all, what I get is a sudden almost like a triggered reflex, makes me have a fleeting memory of like looking for my pack and lighter...then when I become aware of the feeling, it vanishes...weird huh??. It feels so good to have broken the chains of nicotine's grip. If you are reading this...know you CAN do it...it's really not all that tough or intimidating. Just use Freedom's information and support...it makes quitting so much easier!

Mary

Happy and Free for 361 days 

#798 | 16 Jan 2014 | rushnthru

I have not craving at all to take another puff, although sometimes I actually smell cigarettes in my home and will say out loud, "I smell cigarettes" I am disgusted by the smell and now it even makes me sick to my stomach, I never would have predicted that one. I would never say this to anyone but the smell of cigarettes on another person revolts me now, I feel bad feeling that way but it is true. I can see now how many doors I must have closed for myself just from smelling like an ash tray. SAD but TRUE!

#799 | 03 Jun 2014 | CallmeJerry

Thank You for your honesty, and keep up the hard work.
CMJ

800 | 05 Jul 2014 | Mellow71

Following a prompt in my journal thread from Joel I'll add something here. Its taken me longer to remember the last time I wanted to smoke than that passing moment of desire lasted!

I'm four months quit I chain smoked and inhaled a pipe, unfiltered copious quantities of smoke from I woke up till I went to sleep. I had seven pipes spread over two rooms so they could cool down sufficiently during rotation. I was a slave to the addiction in work and leisure. Four months in it's simply not part of me anymore, if anyone had told me that five months ago I would not have believed them (and been so frightened at the thought of giving up I'd have smoked a full bowlful double quick time!)

Any newbies reading this and anxious, it passes, it really does. And believe me the

passing of that craving isn't the only plus, my life is transformed, I'm free, happy and a lot less stressed.

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