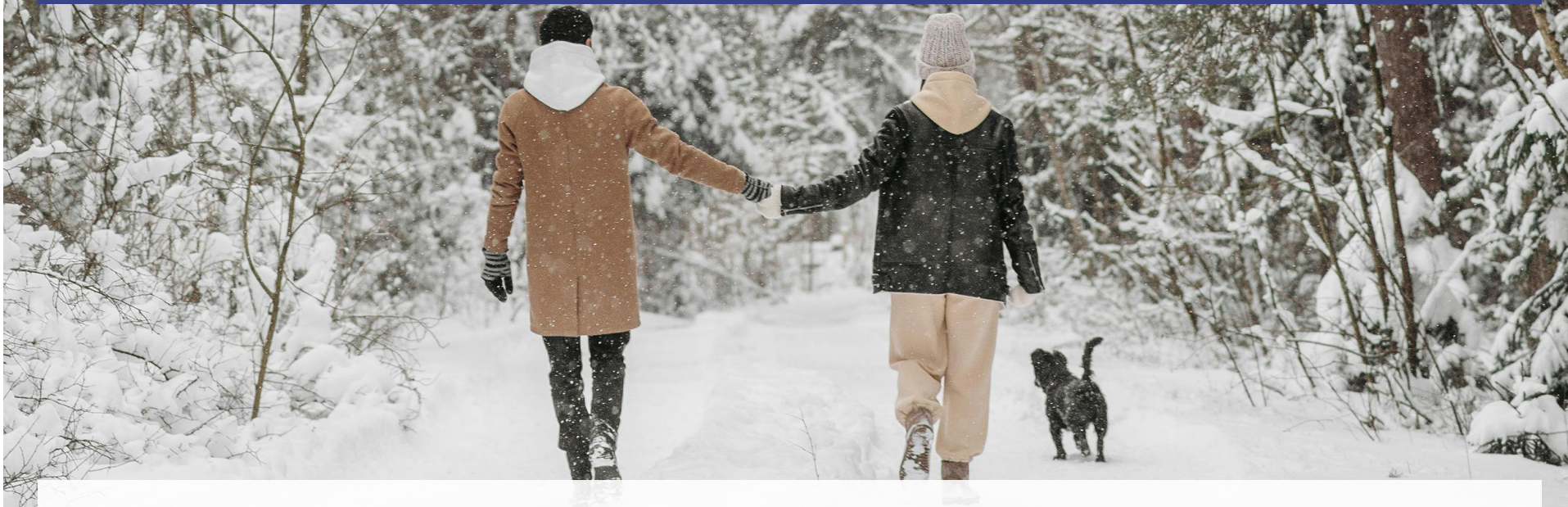


DRY JANUARY 2026



TAKING TIME OFF FROM DRINKING CAN BE BENEFICIAL FOR MENTAL, PHYSICAL, AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH.

In order to maintain reduced drinking during dry January, setting goals, intentions, and building a supportive network is paramount. Each day will provide a tip/activity to try to help maintain an alcohol-free January. It is important to keep in mind that this calendar will not suit everyone's needs, so take from it what helps you the most and aligns with your goals.

DRY JANUARY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1 Set goals and intentions for the month. Write down your reason for participating in dry January and reflect on why you want to reduce your alcohol consumption. Write down three goals for the month.	2 Recognize your triggers. Write down any contributing factors which invoke urges to drink, whether social, stress-related, etc. Build a plan to manage these triggers, whether at the moment or later on.	3 Tell a friend. Social support can be conducive to achieving investment goals. Talking about how you want to participate in dry January allows them to find out what the best way to support you is.
4 Create a plan for social events. Looking at the month ahead, it is in your best interest to plan for social gatherings that have been preplanned which may involve alcohol consumption. Work through how you will navigate these social settings and other ones which come up spontaneously. Ask yourself, what would I say if someone asked me if I wanted a drink?	5 Remove alcohol from your home. Having any visible alcohol or close access to it can lead to great temptation to drink. Storing it so it's out of sight or asking a friend to hold on to it for the month can help reduce the risk of drinking.	6 Try a hobby/activity. Drinking is often a social event, so substituting alcohol for an activity still fosters a sense of community without any downsides. Look for local events going on – farmer's markets, thrift stores, museum walks – or reach out to someone to play a sport or spend time together.	7 Do some light movement. Release some stress by going for a walk, doing a yoga class, or stretching before bed.	8 Practice meditation. Limited consumption of alcohol after a prolonged period of frequent drinking can increase anxiety. Practicing a quick meditation online or on an app can assist in regulating the nervous system and calming one down.	9 Write down three things you're proud of. After your first full week of limited or no alcohol consumption, write down three things you are proud of yourself for overcoming or achieving.	10 Take on a task you've been putting off. Sometimes Saturdays get away from us after the previous night's activities. Take today to do something you told yourself you would get to later, whether it's laundry, cleaning, or an email.
11 Plan a low effort social event. If you find that your social battery drains faster than usual without the consumption of alcohol, plan a quick activity to do with a friend or family member. Get coffee, go for a walk, study together, etc.	12 Try a new work out. Often alcohol is used as a stress-reliever or a method to unwind after a long day. Working out releases endorphins which can assist in reducing stress hormones.	13 Calendar check-in. Look over any academic/social events coming up that you need to prepare for. Whether it's the start of a new semester or a family party, get yourself organized and ready to tackle them.	14 Choose one habit to improve. Try to think of one habit you'd like to change. If you'd like to drink more water – carry a water bottle with you, if you'd like to go to sleep earlier – set a time to be "clocked out" by every day, etc.	15 Halfway check-in. Reflect on how the first half of the month has felt with limited alcohol consumption. What changes have you noticed? Have you met any of your goals? If not, what can you do to build momentum to achieve them?	16 Volunteer. Limiting your consumption of alcohol reflects the level of self-care and growth one is capable of. Return that energy back to your community and help those in need.	17 Do something you haven't had time for. If it's been a while since you've watched a movie, read a book you forgot about, or cooked a specific meal, today is the day to go after it.

If reducing your alcohol consumption has been difficult, you may find it helpful to reach out to someone. Think about contacting your campus counseling or student health center to see what services they offer. Additionally, consider investigating local alcohol specific resources, or use a supportive resource like the Crisis Text Line (741-741) or 988 (call, text or chat at 988lifeline.org).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
18 Reframe your thinking. <p>If you've had difficulties so far this month and have felt tempted to drink, try and reframe your mindset. Thirty-one days free from alcohol can be seen as a punishment, however, try and think of it as a form of self-care.</p> <p>If you haven't been having difficulties so far, try and communicate to a friend or write down to yourself the ways that this journey so far has improved your ability to perform self-care.</p>	19 Create something. <p>If you're feeling restless or unproductive, take some time today to work on a project you haven't touched on. Do some quick drawings or make a comforting meal.</p>	20 Take yourself on a date. <p>Spend some time today going somewhere you've been meaning to try or visit a place which brings joy.</p>	21 Get some extra sleep. <p>Find some time today to rest. Take a quick nap or set yourself up to go to sleep early.</p>	22 Practice saying no. <p>If you've felt pressured or encouraged to drink at all, or if you've had difficulties saying no to a social event, try to plan a response for next time it occurs.</p>	23 Host or initiate an alcohol-free social night. <p>Invite your friends to do an activity or play a game free from alcohol. Open up a new board game or watch a show together. Normalizing sober social time can help set you up for more sober nights in the future.</p>	24 Have a structured productive day. <p>Plan out any tasks that you need to get done to set yourself up for success for the rest of the weekend/the upcoming week. Start with the easiest task, then reward yourself by taking a break, then start another.</p> <p>Do not feel pressured to complete them all today; even one task completed sets your future self up for success.</p>
25 Spa day. <p>Relax by taking care of yourself. Paint your nails, try a new face mask, take a bath, take an extra long shower.</p>	26 Gratitude prompt exercise. <p>At the start of your last week, recognize and write down three things which went well this month and three difficulties you had while reducing/stopping your alcohol consumption.</p>	27 Budget check-in. <p>Look back on your previous month's spending habits in terms of alcohol compared to this month's. Reflect on any differences between the two time frames and how you feel about each.</p>	28 Reflect on how you feel. <p>What differences or changes do you notice in your body? What feelings come up when you think about your limited alcohol consumption?</p>	29 Make a 2026 vision board. <p>Imagine how you would like the rest of this year to go for you and create a piece of media which represents that.</p>	30 Indulge yourself day. <p>Treat yourself to a special dessert or food you love. Recognizing your dedication and perseverance throughout the last thirty days deserves a celebration.</p>	31 Write and reflect on your journey. <p>What days were the most difficult? How did you react?</p> <p>Is a limited consumption of alcohol something you feel would be personally beneficial in the long-term? Why or why not?</p>

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE COMPLETED DRY JANUARY!

Whether this was a short-term break or the start of a longer commitment, pat yourself on the back and take time to celebrate. Regardless of whether you got through this month completely or partly sober, any effort towards taking a break from alcohol deserves to be recognized and rewarded. Commitment is a slow process and should be taken one step at a time, so don't let the harder days discourage you. Below is a list of additional sober resources and information for harm reduction methods if you wish to learn more. Thank you for participating in dry January, here's to 2026!

Partners in Prevention: mopip.org/pip/alcohol-and-high-risk-drinking

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: niaaa.nih.gov/news-events/spectrum/volume-15-issue-3-fall-2023/incorporating-harm-reduction-alcohol-use-disorder-treatment-and-recovery

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: samhsa.gov/substance-use/learn/alcohol

Missouri Department of Mental Health: dmh.mo.gov/behavioral-health/treatment-services