

# The New York Times: “Considering Dry January? Set Yourself Up for Success- [C1]

La sfida di non bere alcolici per trenta giorni dopo gli eccessi delle feste natalizie è un incentivo ad adottare abitudini più sane che non implicano necessariamente un’astinenza permanente.

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[Dry](#) January sounds like a simple proposition: No alcohol for thirty-one days. And some enthusiasts jump in without much planning — perhaps even [hungover](#) after a [rowdy New Year’s Eve](#). There is no data suggesting that those [folks](#) won’t be able to abstain from drinking, said Dr. David Wolinsky, an assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioural sciences with Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, who specializes in addiction. But starting the month with a few strategies in your back pocket — and with a clear sense of your goals — may help you [get the most out of](#) the challenge. “Most of the benefits of [Dry](#) January are probably going to be related to the intention with which you go into [Dry](#) January,” Wolinsky said. The challenge isn’t a [stand-in](#) for treatment for people with alcohol use disorder, he stressed, but those who are looking to get a [fresh start](#) to the year may benefit from the mental and physical reset it can offer, and the opportunity to adopt new habits. For instance, a 2016 study found that six months after [Dry](#) January ended, participants were drinking less than they were before.

## TELL PEOPLE ABOUT YOUR PLAN

One of the simplest steps is [to spread the word](#) among friends and family that you intend to take the month off, said Casey McGuire Davidson, a sobriety coach and host of The Hello Someday Podcast, which focuses on “sober-curious” topics. Research has shown that [accountability](#) can play a crucial role in helping habits [stick](#), and you might find a friend or partner to join you, Davidson suggested. Even if you don’t, you may be surprised by how encouraging people are of your goal (though she said you should share it only with people you trust.) “[Dry](#) January gives people a period of time when they can stop drinking with community and support,” she said,

“without a lot of questions.” Davidson also recommended reading books that may help you evaluate your relationship with alcohol, or listening to sobriety podcasts.

## IDENTIFY YOUR TRIGGERS

Habits tend to be cued by certain environments or situations, explained Wendy Wood, a professor of psychology and business at the University of Southern California and the author of *Good Habits, Bad Habits: The Science of Making Positive Changes that Stick*. For instance, “you have a toothbrush habit,” she said. “You put your toothbrush in a certain place. You brush your teeth usually at about the same time in the morning in that place.” Wood said that for many people, drinking habits are shaped in a similar way. “Understanding where it is that you typically drink, who you’re with, what you drink, and disrupting those cues — disrupting the context in some way — is really critical to changing habits,” she said. It may help to jot down observations throughout the month, Wolinsky said, recommending three columns: What was the situation in which you wanted to drink? What were your thoughts about drinking? And what did you do instead?

## FIND FRICTION POINTS

Building extra time or effort into an activity that is typically seamless for you — such as pouring a glass of wine when you walk through the door after a long day at work — greatly reduces the likelihood of engaging in that behaviour, Wood said. Something as simple as moving your wineglasses to the back of the cupboard can create just enough friction to help you achieve your goal of abstaining. Similarly, Davidson recommended removing all alcohol from your home before Jan. 1, or at least your favourite drinks. “I was a red wine girl,” she said. When she took a break from drinking — a break that has lasted eight years — Davidson told her husband: “I can’t have any in the house. If it’s sitting on the counter, there’s no way I’m not going to pour myself a glass.”

## MAKE A PLAN FOR SELF-CARE

All of the experts recommended thinking about what you will do during moments when you would otherwise be drinking. So, instead of mixing a cocktail to relax before bed (which can disrupt sleep anyhow,) you might try deep breathing or [brewing a cup of tea](#). It may take some [trial and error](#) to find satisfying alternatives. “[Give yourself grace](#)” in the coming weeks, said Khadi Oluwatoyin, founder of the Sober Black Girls Club. Make time for rest [to the extent](#) you are able. And [don’t take on](#) too many [New Year’s resolutions](#), she suggested; for instance, doing [Dry](#) January while adopting a new diet may be a recipe for failure. Some people [slip up](#) simply because they are hungry, Oluwatoyin said. “Go get something to eat!” Davidson recommends rewarding yourself, either at the end of each day or the end of the week. Fun activities or indulgences can help the month feel like less of a [slog](#). “This is a period of experimentation and curiosity,” she said. “Instead of going to a bar, can you get a pedicure or massage on Friday night? Or get takeout sushi and plan a movie night with friends or your partner?” These tiny [shifts](#) can give you something to look forward to.

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# Glossary

- **to jot down** = annotare
- **Dry** = senza alcol
- **get the most out of** = sfruttare al massimo
- **don't take on** = assumere
- **New Year's Eve** = notte di San Silvestro
- **stand-in** = sostituto
- **pouring** = versare
- **trial and error** = prova ed errore
- **slip up** = fare un errore
- **slog** = faticata
- **shifts** = cambiamenti
- **hangover** = con i postumi di sbornia
- **cued** = indurre
- **likelihood** = probabilità
- **counter** = ripiano
- **to spread the word** = diffondere la notizia
- **rowdy** = turbolenta, rumorosa
- **folks** = persone
- **to the extent** = fino al punto
- **seamless** = senza interruzioni
- **engaging** = partecipare
- **brewing a cup of tea** = preparare il tè
- **Give yourself grace** = essere indulgente
- **New Year's resolutions** = buoni propositi per l'anno nuovo
- **fresh start** = nuovo inizio
- **accountability** = responsabilità
- **stick** = mantenere, persistere
- **cupboard** = armadio