My craving plan

Something to reach for when the urge feels strong

An urge is a signal to use support

A craving can feel convincing. You do not have to make a decision about your whole future in that moment. Focus on your next safe action. These ideas are for cravings, not for treating withdrawal.

Pause and change the situation

If it is safe, step away from the place, person or activity linked with drinking. Set a short timer and postpone acting on the urge while you contact support. Repeat if needed; there is no fixed time a craving must last.

Check what you need

Ask: Am I hungry, upset, lonely or tired? Would food, water, rest, a quieter space or company help? Try a simple activity such as a shower, a short walk or noticing five things around you.

Connect before the urge grows

Call a trusted person, recovery contact or support service. Try: "I am having an urge to drink. Can you stay on the phone while I work through it?" If one person is unavailable, use your backup contact.

Before you change your drinking

If you drink heavily or regularly, need alcohol to feel steady, or have had withdrawal before, speak with a doctor before stopping or sharply reducing. Alcohol withdrawal can be life-threatening. Shaking, sweating or feeling unwell after cutting down needs prompt medical advice. Call 000 for seizures, severe confusion or hallucinations.

Australia: Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline 1800 250 015 (free, confidential advice). Lifeline 13 11 14 (24/7 crisis support). Call 000 if there is immediate danger or a medical emergency.

Make it personal

Write a few words. You can leave questions blank or talk them through with someone.

My common triggers or risky times are...

My first safe action will be...

Two activities I can try are...

My first support person and phone number...

My backup person or service and phone number...

You do not have to do this alone.

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Safety and support sources: healthdirect.gov.au/alcoholism; adf.org.au/insights/safely-withdrawing-alcohol/; lifeline.org.au/131114; medicarementalhealth.gov.au/provider/national-alcohol-and-other-drug-hotline-16469. Checked 1 October 2026.