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# Setting your goals

Think about whether you want to cut back your gambling or stop completely. The more often you have said 'yes' to the questions over the page, the less likely it is that trying to control your gambling is likely to work.

➤ **Consider every 'yes' as a sign that you should try to stop gambling altogether**

Setting yourself a goal should be a positive experience. Try to frame your goals as what you want to achieve, rather than something you do not want.

Setting **'SMART'** goals is one way of defining what you want to achieve and measuring your progress:

**Specific:** Who will do what, and how?

**Measurable:** How will you know that you have achieved your goal?

**Attainable:** Is the goal realistic and under your control?

**Relevant:** Why is this important for you? What is your motivation?

**Time-framed:** When do you want to have achieved your goal?

It helps to write down your goals to:

- help you clarify what you want to achieve;
- keep you focussed;
- enable you to see your progress.

It is normal to have mixed feelings about stopping gambling. Change takes focus and energy, and gambling also usually offers something that appears to be of value (at least in the short-term). Honestly discussing what is going on for you with others that you trust, without holding back, may help you to become more aware of what is driving your behaviour.



# Goal Setting: What to Consider

	Controlling Your Gambling	Stop Gambling Completely
<b>Money</b>	<b>Never borrow</b> money to gamble. Gambling should be paid entertainment – how much can you afford to spend per week / month?	If you have <b>debts</b> , how will you <b>repay</b> them? Make a plan so that you aren't tempted to gamble when money is tight.
<b>Time</b>	Think about <b>how often</b> you gamble and <b>how long</b> for. Even if your finances are OK, you may be neglecting other activities or risking your health.	How will you spend the time you previously spent gambling? Think about <b>hobbies</b> you may have neglected or something you may have always wanted to try.
<b>Relationships</b>	Key relationships in your life may have been <b>damaged</b> by your preoccupation with gambling. What can you do to <b>rebuild</b> or <b>strengthen</b> these relationships? How can you regain <b>trust</b> with the people you care about? You may need to <b>talk openly</b> with your loved ones and ask what they feel could make a difference.	
<b>Locations</b>	If you gamble both on and offline, do you notice a difference in your level of <b>control</b> ? Think about the <b>limits</b> you set and ensure you keep track of time and money spent.	<b>Self-exclusion, blocking software</b> and other tools are available to help you stop gambling. It may also be helpful to set goals around internet usage if you struggle with online gambling.
<b>Gambling Activities</b>	Think carefully about activities which are particularly <b>problematic</b> for you, which you may need to avoid completely	Some activities, such as raffles, the lottery or scratch cards, may not have been problematic for you before, but consider they may be <b>triggers</b> going forward.
<b>Accountability</b>	To regain <b>trust</b> from others, it may be helpful to demonstrate <b>accountability</b> . Is there anyone you can be accountable to, and how will this work? Can you keep a <b>recovery diary</b> , or ask someone you trust to check your bank statements at random intervals? Who can you talk to about your progress regularly?	

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# Goal Planner

Rate the impacts gambling has in your life, where **5 is 'could not get worse'** and **1 is 'could not get better'**. **What are your top two priorities, and how can you work to reduce these impacts?** Place your own list of goals somewhere that you refer to often, to keep your goals fresh in your mind and can keep working towards them all over time.

	Impact out of 5	How can I reduce this impact by 2?	Priority
My gambling			
Physical and Mental Health			
Relationships			
Housing			
Work/ education			
Money			
Social life/ lifestyle			
Legal issues/ crime			
Alcohol/ drug use			