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5 best Dry January apps for 2024

Whether you're a weekender, an after-worker, a daily tippler, or an only-with-company-er, a month of no alcohol can do wonders for how you feel, how you look, and how healthy you are inside. We explore five of the most popular apps that help you cut down or cut out the alcohol.

Why try a Dry January app?

In January 2023, 175,000 people in the UK took part in Dry January¹, the month-long stop drinking challenge that can help you mentally and physically re-set after a [boozy Christmas and New Year](#).

But can cutting out alcohol for one month really make much of a difference on your health? Since [Alcohol Change UK](#) launched the first Dry January campaign 11 years ago, more research has emerged in support of its physical and mental health benefits.

Cutting out alcohol for a month

What you'll notice²

- You're sleeping better.
- You may feel less anxious.
- Your mood can improve.
- You have more energy.
- Your skin becomes healthier and clearer.
- You have extra cash.

What happens inside your body³

- Your blood pressure lowers.
- Your risk of diabetes reduces.
- Your cholesterol lowers.
- The levels of cancer-related proteins in your blood goes down.

For many people, Dry January [is a testing ground for making longer term reductions](#) to their alcohol consumption. The health outcomes of this are even more significant and potentially lifesaving.

Yet even one alcohol-free month can be daunting. Alongside Alcohol Change UK's [Official Guide to a Month Off Booze](#), a Dry January app can help keep you motivated and on track with the challenge.

We look at five of the most popular stop-drinking apps so that you can decide which one may best suit you:

1. Try Dry – for official Dry January

Cost: Free.

Available on: [iPhone](#) and [Android](#)

[Try Dry](#), the official app of Dry January, has been created by charity and Dry January founders Alcohol Change UK. Unlike most sobriety apps, this one was created with the short-term, flexible goals of the Dry January challenge in mind. This means you can tailor the app to reflect and respond to the level of drinking control you desire – over one month or longer, should you wish to extend.

Features and benefits

- **Set custom goals** – including Dry January and Sober Spring.
- **Track your units, calories, and money saved.**
- **Monitor your wellbeing** – energy levels, sleep, mood, and craving trackers.
- **Visualise your drinking pattern** – with My Chart and the Units Calendar.
- **Receive daily motivations** – at a time that suits you.
- **Access blogs** – for tips and inspiration.
- **Take the health quiz** – to check your drinking risk level.
- **Write down notes** – to record your thoughts, feelings, and learnings.
- **Experience your achievements** – with app celebrations and badges.

Best for: seeing what you've saved

The Try Dry January app is all about showing you what you've saved – from the money you've not spent to the calories you've cut out – making it a great choice for people who enjoy visual rewards.

2. Drink Less – for moist January

Cost: Free.

Available on: [iPhone](#) only

Many people use Dry January to reduce – rather than totally cut out – the alcohol they drink that month. People trying so-called moist January may be best supported by an app that's centred around drinking less. The [Drink Less](#) app is designed by behavioural scientists and contains some fun techniques to help change your attitude towards drinking.

Features and benefits

- **Set goals** – based on what motivates you, including units, spending, and calories.
- **Get feedback** – on whether what you're doing is working.

- **Visualise your progress** - with the dashboard chart.
- **Log your drinks and understand units** - using visual graphics.
- **Update a mood diary** - to help you understand the effects of drinking.
- **Play games** - designed to keep you motivated.
- **Create action plans** - for dealing with temptation.
- **Log your triggers** - so you can learn to manage them.
- **View insights** - including your average mood score.

Best for: noticing your wellbeing as you drink

Drink Less encourages you to log your mood, productivity, clear-headedness, and sleep patterns when you log your drinks. As you start to notice negative scores in the Your Hangover and You section, this helps to gradually change how you feel toward drinking.

3. Saying When - for understanding your triggers

Cost: Free

Available on: [iPhone](#) and [Android](#)

During Dry January and beyond, the [Saying When](#) app tracks your drinking and identifies when and where your desire for alcohol is strongest. This was designed by Canada's [Centre for Addiction and Mental Health](#) primarily for people who want to bring their drinking under control in the long-term. However, its step-by-step instructions and trigger identifying tools make it a great Dry January app - particularly for the people using Dry January to test out longer-term sobriety goals.

Features and benefits

- **Complete a self-assessment** - last month's drinks.
- **Set goals** - abstain, abstain with exceptions, or cut down gradually.
- **Track both your drinks and urges** - interactive, visual fill-a-glass feature.
- **Log your coping strategies** - when faced with an urge.

- **Access tips** - if over your limit you receive prompts to get you back on track.
- **View daily-to-monthly progress** - the Checkups feature shows 28 day statistics.
- **Visit links for more resources** - if you feel you need more help.

Best for: learning when and why you drink

While Saying When is set up for long-term success, those partaking in Dry January can benefit from learning about the triggers that cause them to reach for their beverage of choice - including any emotional, social, or cultural triggers. The app encourages you to think about this from the start through the self-assessment feature, and then uses your data to show you how much this influences your drinking behaviour - a real eye opener that encourages long-term behavioural changes.

4. MyDrinkaware - for understanding your drinking habits

Cost: Free

Available on: [iPhone](#) and [Android](#)

Centred around a daily drink tracker, the [MyDrinkaware](#) app may not be the best Dry January app for those attempting total sobriety. However, it can help people following a moist January, and more broadly is a great app for people considering going alcohol-free - but who first want to better understand their relationship with alcohol and how dangerous it is.

Features and benefits

- **Complete a self-assessment** - that tells you your alcohol risk level.
- **Track drinks and drink-free days** - while learning units per alcohol drink.
- **Track your spending** - to understand the money you could save.
- **Log your sleep quality** - watch how this improves.
- **Be alerted when you've been binge drinking** - learn the safety limits.
- **Manage lifestyle changes** - at your own pace.

- **Receive personalised support** – for your custom targets.
- **Celebrate your wins** – to keep you on track.

Best for: tracking weekly progress

After setting your goals, you can add any drinks you have from a wide choice of alcoholic beverages and sizes. The app will then translate this into units and display the amount you're consuming week on week, giving you a clear view of when you're making progress or not. Drinkaware emphasises [safe and healthy drinking](#), and alerts you if you reach risky binge drinking levels.

5. I Am Sober – for helping you stay sober

Cost: free

Available on: [iPhone](#) and [Android](#)

On the other end of the spectrum, the I Am Sober app is all about cutting out alcohol completely. Whether you use this as a Dry January app or to combat [long-term addiction](#), this app offers a wealth of support and motivational strategies.

Features and benefits

- **Track drink-free day and savings** – including what you've saved in time, money and calories.
- **Log multiple addictions** – if you have them.
- **Receive daily notifications** – encouraging you to recommit.
- **Receive support** – you will be asked how you're getting on.
- **Write notes** – add your thoughts and photos in the journal function.
- **Celebrate your wins** – with milestone alerts and photos.
- **Connect with a community** – of others attempting sobriety.

Best for: long-term sobriety support

As the I Am Sober app caters for people with addiction, it focusses on providing lots of support – from the option to select a calm wallpaper to the workbook that encourages you to make positive comments to yourself. The community tab also allows you to find support among other quitters.

Further reading

1. [Alcohol Change UK: The Dry January story.](#)
2. [Alcohol Change UK: Try Dry the Official Guide to a Month Off Booze.](#)
3. [Mehta et al: Short-term abstinence from alcohol and changes in cardiovascular risk factors, liver function tests and cancer-related growth factors.](#)

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Authored by: Amberley Davis	Peer Reviewed by: Dr Krishna Vakharia, MRCGP	
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