

# HABIT HELPER

## CHEAT SHEET

The easiest way to stop a bad habit in its tracks is to swap it out for a new one.

Here are some prompts to get you started:

### Old Habit:

### New Habit:

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| You're on your phone while they're talking to you.                                       | → <b>Put the phone down and say:</b> "Sorry, I want to hear you—go ahead." Then actually listen.   |
| You sigh loudly or roll your eyes when they ask you to do something.                     | → <b>Swap the sigh for a simple:</b> "Yep, I'm on it" and do it without resentment.  |
| You're about to say 'You always...' or 'You never...' in an argument.                    | → <b>Stop. Reword it. Say:</b> "I feel [ <u>emotion</u> ] when [ <u>specific behaviour</u> ] happens."   |
| You're answering them with one-word responses while distracted.                          | → <b>Turn toward them, add more words, and ask them something back:</b> "It was fine—how was yours?"   |
| You're about to correct how they're doing a task (dishes, laundry, parenting and so on). | → <b>Pause. Instead, say:</b> "Thanks for doing that." And if it really matters, address it after appreciating their effort.                         |
| You're irritated but keeping it inside, expecting them to notice.                        | → <b>Say it clearly but kindly:</b> "Hey, I'm feeling off because of [ <u>thing</u> ]. Can we talk for a sec?"                                       |
| You're about to rush out the door without saying anything.                               | → <b>Even if you're in a hurry, stop for one second and say:</b> "Love you—see you later."   |
| You're about to jump in with advice when they're venting.                                | → <b>Ask first:</b> "That seems really frustrating. I want to support you - do you want advice, or do you want an ear to vent? I'm here for either!" |
| You're about to say "Nothing's wrong" when something clearly is.                         | → <b>Instead, say:</b> "I'm not ready to talk yet, but I will be soon."  |

## Old Habit:

## New Habit:

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| You walk in the door and immediately start complaining about your day.               | → <b>Before unloading, ask:</b> “How was your day?” Let them go first.   |
| You’re about to dump a problem on them without warning.                              | → <b>Start with:</b> “Hey, do you have a sec for something on my mind?” This avoids an ambush.   |
| You’re irritated at them and thinking of ‘punishing’ them with distance.             | → <b>Do the opposite—get close.</b> A small act of warmth (touch, eye contact, kind word) can defuse tension.  |
| You’re about to brush off their stress with ‘It’s not a big deal.’                   | → <b>Instead, say:</b> “That sounds stressful—do you want to talk about it?”   |
| They do something nice, and you’re about to just think ‘that’s nice’ but not say it. | → <b>Say it out loud:</b> “Hey, I really appreciate you doing that.”   |
| You’re mad and about to fire off a passive-aggressive text.                          | → <b>Pause. Ask yourself:</b> “Would I say this out loud in this tone?” Rewrite it to be clear, and kind.  |
| You’re about to criticise something they did.  | → <b>Reframe it as a request:</b> Instead of “Ugh, why do you always do that?” say, “Hey, next time, it’d help me if you could [ <u>preferred action</u> ]?” |
| You’re mad and about to go to bed without saying goodnight.                          | → <b>Even if you’re upset, say it:</b> “Goodnight” signals that the relationship is still secure.  |
| You’re about to tell your partner “Relax” or “Calm down.”                            | → <b>Instead, say:</b> “I see you’re upset—what do you need from me right now?”  |
| You’re about to get defensive when they bring up an issue.                           | → <b>Pause, take a deep breath, and say:</b> “Okay, I want to understand—tell me more.”  |
| You’re about to assume they just ‘know’ you love them.                               | → <b>Say it out loud:</b> “Hey, I love you. Just wanted to say that out loud.”   |
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# YOUR TURN

## WHAT HABITS CAN YOU CHANGE?

*Tip - how to best use this list & get started on your own:*



**Catch Yourself** - Spot the habit sneaking in before it takes over (or choose one from our list)



**Flip the Script** - Swap it for a better move on the spot



**Bank the Win** - Notice the shift, stack up the good moments with your partner



**It's not about perfection**—it's about small tweaks that add up to big change

**Old Habit:**

**New Habit:**

