

At the end of a work-from-home day, closing your laptop can look like a small action. But it can carry a big message: work is over, and the rest of the evening can begin. The difficulty is that a laptop lid does not automatically switch off your work brain. If you are used to marking the end of the day with a drink, the gap between “I’ve finished work” and “I feel finished” can be especially noticeable.

The answer is not necessarily to swap your usual drink for a different drink, or to copy someone else’s elaborate evening routine. Start by asking: **what job is this habit doing?** Once you understand what the drink and the workday ritual are providing, you can design an **end of day transition** that meets those needs in a way that feels realistic.

Why closing the laptop often isn’t enough

For remote and hybrid workers, the boundary between work and home is easy to blur. The laptop may be on the kitchen table; your commute may be ten steps; and messages can arrive long after your official finish time. You might close the screen, then reopen it to check one more thing. Or you may stop working but carry the meeting, deadline or unfinished task around in your head.

A useful **work from home wind down** gives your brain a clearer signal than “I’ve stopped typing”. It creates a small sequence that marks a change of role, place or pace. The sequence does not need to be impressive. It needs to be noticeable, repeatable and practical on an ordinary Tuesday.

That is where a **habit cue** helps. A cue is the event or signal that prompts a behaviour: the last calendar meeting, a particular time, saving your final document or hearing your laptop shut. Pairing one reliable cue with a few clear actions makes the transition easier to remember.

Four jobs evening drinking may be doing

There is no single reason people have a drink after work. It can be comforting, enjoyable, habitual or social, and different evenings may involve different things. Avoiding shame matters: noticing a habit is not the same as judging yourself. Try identifying what you value about the moment, rather than treating the drink as the whole story.

The job What it might feel like A non-drink element to explore Decompression “I need to come down from the day.” A brief walk, a shower, music or quiet time without notifications. Reward “I’ve earned something enjoyable.” A favourite snack, a good book, a game or a planned treat. Sensory pleasure “I like the glass, pour, taste and first sip.” A drink you genuinely enjoy, served in a favourite glass, with care and attention. Boundary or signal “This tells me the workday is over.” A closing ritual, a change of clothes or stepping outside for a few minutes.

There may be other jobs too: easing loneliness, making a meal feel special, or creating a shared moment with a partner. The table is a starting point, not a diagnosis. If the drink is serving more than one purpose, one replacement action may not cover them all.

Ritual replacement is different from drink replacement

“Replace the drink” is common advice, but it can miss the point. If what you look forward to is the clink of ice, the slow pour and the first cold mouthful, a plain glass of water might not feel like an equivalent. That does not mean you have failed. It means the ritual has sensory parts that matter.

Ritual replacement means keeping some of the useful structure or meaning while choosing what to do within it. You might still pour something into a glass, sit in the same chair and take a deliberate first sip. You could also choose a completely different cue, such as changing out of work clothes and walking around the block. The goal is not to make every evening identical; it is to create a genuine transition that you can return to.

If you want to drink less or change your drinking pattern, a new ritual can support that intention, but it does not have to be a one-for-one swap. You could plan alcohol-free evenings, decide in advance what you want on a particular night, or try a pause before choosing. The important thing is to make the choice intentional rather than leaving it to a tired, automatic moment.

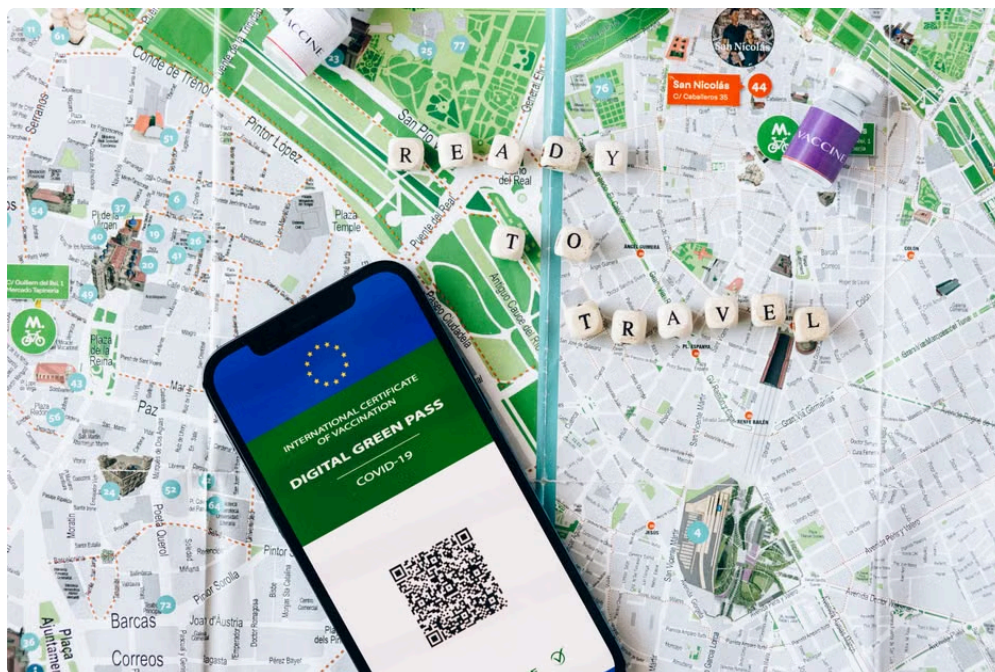
Build a laptop-closing ritual with a clear first step

Routines tend to stick better when they are specific. “I’ll relax after work” is hard to act on because it does not say what happens first. “At 5.30, I save my work, write tomorrow’s first task, close the laptop and put it in the drawer” gives you a sequence you can actually follow.

1. Choose a reliable cue

Pick a cue that already happens on most workdays. It could be your final calendar event, the end of your agreed working hours, or a phone alarm labelled “close down”. If your finish time varies, use an event such as completing your final planned task rather than a fixed time.





2. Write a short workday closing list

Before closing the laptop, take two or three minutes to capture what is unfinished. Write down the next action for tomorrow, rather than trying to solve the whole task. For example: "Open the draft and add the two customer examples." This can reduce the temptation to reopen your computer because you are worried you will forget something.

3. Make the ending physical

Close the relevant tabs, save your work, shut the laptop and put it somewhere that is not in your direct line of sight. If possible, use a work bag, drawer or separate room. Add one physical action that marks the change: stand up, stretch, wash your mug, change clothes or open the door and step outside.

4. Decide what happens next

Have a simple next action ready before you finish. It might be putting the kettle on, taking the dog out, starting dinner or walking to the end of the street. The action should be small enough to begin even when you feel tired. You are not planning the perfect evening; you are making the first few minutes easier.

Make room for sensory cues

People often build routines around what they intend to do and forget what they will see, hear, taste and touch. But sensory cues can make a new ritual feel satisfying rather than like a chore. Think about the details: warm or cool, quiet or lively, indoors or outside, a particular mug or glass, a playlist or no sound at all.

If the pour and first sip are part of what you enjoy, you may want to choose an appealing alcohol-free drink or a soft drink you actually like, not merely the nearest substitute. Serve it in a glass that feels right to you. If the main pleasure is the pause, you could keep the glass and the pause but vary what is in it. These are options, not rules.

Some people also look at products such as **CBD Sleep Gummies (Joy Organics)** when exploring a bedtime routine. A product name is not proof that it will improve sleep, and CBD products can raise questions about suitability, interactions and quality. If you are considering CBD, check the product information carefully and seek **pharmacist advice**, particularly if you take medicines, have a health condition, are pregnant or breastfeeding, or

are unsure whether it is appropriate for you. Do not treat a supplement as a guaranteed fix or a substitute for professional care.

If you are assessing a CBD product, look for accessible information about what it contains and how it has been tested. A **QR code lab results** link may take you to batch-specific testing information; check that the report is for the product and batch you have, and that you can understand what it does and does not tell you. Lab results are useful information, not a promise of a particular effect.

Try a one-week experiment, not a total life overhaul

I keep a notebook for one-week experiments because it is easier to learn from a small test than from a grand promise. For seven workdays, try the same basic laptop-closing sequence. Keep it short. At the end of each day, note whether you did it and what felt helpful or awkward.

1. **Choose one cue:** for example, your last scheduled meeting.
2. **Choose three closing actions:** write tomorrow's first task, shut the laptop and put it away.
3. **Choose one next step:** step outside, change clothes or start dinner.
4. **Notice the result:** did the ritual create a clearer boundary, even if you still felt tired?
5. **Adjust one thing:** make the sequence shorter, move the laptop or choose a better cue.

Track what matters to you, not what you think you are supposed to report. You could rate your sense of "work is over" from one to five, note whether you reopened the laptop, or record how much you enjoyed the transition. If the ritual didn't happen, look for friction: [CBD lab results QR code](#) Was the cue too vague? Did you have no clear next action? Was the laptop still open on the table? Treat that as useful information, not evidence that you lack willpower.

When the boundary is hard to hold

Some jobs require genuine out-of-hours availability, and some weeks are busier than others. A workable ritual may need a "late finish" version: save the task, note when you will return to it, and move to a short reset even if it is only a few minutes. You can also agree team norms around response times where that is possible. The aim is a boundary that fits your circumstances, not an idealised routine that collapses the first time work runs late.

If drinking is causing concern or changing your drinking feels difficult, consider speaking with your GP or an alcohol support service. You do not need to wait until things reach a crisis point to ask for help. If you would like support with routines, boundaries or behaviour change, **The Coach Space directory (Find a coach - free consultation)** can be one route to explore a conversation with a coach. Check that any support is a good fit for your needs and remember that coaching is not a replacement for medical advice or specialist alcohol support.

Make the ritual yours

A laptop-closing ritual sticks when it does more than look organised. It helps you cross the boundary from work to evening, and it gives you a clear first step when your attention is tired. Begin with a cue you already have, close down work in a few concrete actions, and move directly into something you want to do.

Then ask again: **what job is this habit doing?** If you are seeking decompression, reward, sensory pleasure or a boundary, make sure your routine addresses the relevant job rather than simply replacing one object with another. Test it for a week, notice what feels good, and adjust. A reliable ritual is rarely built in one perfect evening; it is made by repeating a small, meaningful transition often enough that your day begins to feel complete.