

You've had a bad day and are feeling overwhelmed with emotion. You're feeling low, afraid and like nobody understands you. You feel like you're up against the world and need some sort of release. We understand how it feels to be in the situation you're in right now, because many of us have been there too.

Self-harm is often used as a way of dealing with things when they become too overwhelming. It may seem like a good idea at the time, but self-harm can be incredibly dangerous and can have unintended consequences on your health and appearance and occasionally, leading to death. Trust us when we say this: it isn't fun trying to hide the scars, the cuts or the bruises.

We understand that right now, it feels as though there's no light at the end of your tunnel, but we promise that there is and things won't always be like this. The below alternatives to dangerous acts of self-harm should be used as a short-term measure. It is important that you talk to somebody about how you are feeling and get the help you deserve. You can speak to somebody right now on the Ditch the Label [chat](#) and get anonymous help and advice or you could speak to a trusted adult offline.



**YOU ARE NOT ACCIDENTAL.
THE WORLD NEEDS YOU.**

**WITHOUT YOU, SOMETHING WILL BE MISSING AND
NOBODY ELSE CAN REPLACE IT.**

15 SAFER ALTERNATIVES TO SELF-HARM

You are responsible for your own health and it is important that your actions do not cause distress, harm or damage to other people or things. We accept no liability for unfavourable outcomes as a result of this advice. If in doubt, we advise you speak to your GP or a trusted adult.

Our experts have put together a list of 15 safer ways to self-harm, many of which are proven to give the same release and effect as other means, but with much less risk.

- 1.) Snap a rubber band against your wrist**
- 2.) Slap a hard surface – such as a wall or tabletop**
- 3.) Find somewhere isolated and scream as loudly as you possibly can (alternatively do it into a cushion)**
- 4.) Use a red marker pen to draw or write words on the place where you want to cut**
- 5.) Squeeze ice in your hands really hard**
- 6.) Squeeze the ‘pores’ in the skin of an orange / satsuma / clementine (take care to avoid getting juice in your eyes)**
- 7.) Punch a cushion or punching bag – consider learning martial arts**
- 8.) Find an old magazine or newspaper and tear it up**
- 9.) Write down exactly how you are feeling in a diary – or if you’d prefer to, just scribble everything out**
- 10.) Take part in high-intensity exercise; like circuit training, boxing, running or swimming**
- 11.) Flatten aluminum cans for recycling – see how fast you can do it**
- 12.) Take a cold bath**
- 13.) Play music really loudly**
- 14.) Try squeezing a stress ball**

15.) Find a lake or ocean and throw stones into the water as hard and as far as you can

16.) Look after and be kind to yourself; it doesn't have to be something active. You could try meditation, aromatherapy oil...

Ultimately, self-harm is not the answer to your problems, but doing the above things as a short-term measure could be safer ways of releasing emotion. It is important that you speak with somebody who is able to help you. Never feel like you have to go through this alone, because we are with you and are able to help. to speak with somebody. If you are feeling suicidal in the UK – call The Samaritans on 116 123, they are there 24 hours a day, every day. In the USA – call The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline on 1-800-273-TALK (8255).