

Keeping your New Year's Resolutions on track

By [Fitness Savage](#) on Wednesday, December 26, 2012 at 12:56pm ·

Behavior experts say that it takes about one month to form a new habit, and many people try to create (or break) habits at the start of each year. With the right attitude and focus, you can stick to your New Year's resolutions and achieve long-term success. Here are 30 daily tips that will help you do exactly that.

1. If you haven't yet settled on your top goals for the year, do so today. Writing down your goals (in specific terms) means you're more likely to achieve them.
2. Are your goals specific and positive? Rather than vowing "to exercise" for example, reword each goal so that it is clear and measurable: I will walk 30 minutes every day. I will complete a 5K race. I will do a yoga DVD twice a week.
3. Post your written goals in places where you'll see them often—on your computer or fridge, in a picture frame on your desk, as a bookmark, and in your wallet. These reminders will help you stay focused and on track.
4. Develop an action plan for every goal. For example, a healthy eating resolution may involve: learning more about good nutrition, visiting a dietitian, finding ways to adapt your recipes, buying containers to pack lunches, learning how to prepare new foods, and planning extra time for shopping and cooking. Don't overwhelm yourself with every action step at once, but focus on a few things each day.
5. Make a realistic timeline to stay on track. Deadlines turn wishes into goals. Give yourself adequate time to complete each action step and choose a date when you hope to reach your overall goal. If you haven't started working on your goals yet, today is the day!
6. Share your goals with family and friends for invaluable support and assistance. Confiding in them is a powerful motivator for helping you remain consistent and persistent. Some may be willing to modify their own lives to help you giving up soda or watching the kids while you hit the gym, for example.
7. Enlist a diverse support system instead of just one buddy. These people should be encouraging or knowledgeable in helpful ways, whether swapping healthy recipes, exercising with enthusiasm, or sharing weight loss tips.
8. Start a journal. This can be a simple notebook or a computer document. This is most important when you workout; this tracks the progress on weight amounts, times, and frequencies. Use it to track your progress, record your successes and learn from your mistakes. When you have a bad day, use it to remember why you chose these goals and how far you've come.
9. Create a motivational collage. Find inspiring pictures, encouraging words and quotes, or anything that reminds you of your goal. Glue it all together and place it where you can see it daily. This is your vision a clear, motivating, and energizing reminder of who you want to be. You can even put them in your journal that you'll be looking at daily. A friend gave me a journal to add all the motivational quotes that I found most inspiring.
10. Don't expect perfection. You will mess up, make mistakes, and forget along the way. The key is persistence and a willingness to learn from your mistakes. Focus on what you have done right instead of dwelling on the negative. This is the same with everything in your

life. These bad habits are what kept us from reaching our goals daily. It's all about moving forward!

11. Practice saying, thinking and writing positive things about you. Acknowledge and take credit for the things you've done well, and recognize your abilities and talents. Keep a list to add to, think about, and read to yourself daily. I've known people who had a hard time accepting compliments. They didn't recognize just how talented and gifted they truly were and the reason people say positive things were because they were true. Listen to the positive things people say, write them down, and accept them.
12. Develop a plan B. Work, travel, or kids will disrupt your routine, so create alternatives walk during lunch, choose healthy fast foods, or wake up earlier. Doing something is always better than doing nothing. Remember, you don't need hours working out. You can get a great daily workout under 30 min. You can squeeze something somewhere in your day.
13. Take advantage of technology. Sign up for motivational emails or text messages, set reminders on your computer, or have a friend call and check in on you. These little things will keep you focused no matter where you are. Check in on this site daily; motivational quotes are posted nearly daily, post questions and problems you're having with your goals. We can get through nearly anything together.
14. Reward yourself. For each milestone you reach, plan something fun. Rather than using food or skipping a workout to celebrate, stay on track with: new clothes, a massage, a vacation, movie tickets, a book, a day off work, or a gym membership. You do it for your kids, why is it any different for you? Go ahead, you deserve it!
15. Halfway through look back on your progress and re-evaluate your goals. Are you on track with your timeline? Is your goal still important? Are you motivated? Make changes to your goals, if necessary, to keep the momentum going strong! Again, this is the time you want to look at all that you've achieved, not the failures. Don't look at the scale; you can't rely on that as actual progress.
16. Avoid saboteurs. People will try to persuade you to go against your plan, whether they feel guilty themselves or jealous of you. Ignore them. Share your goals with positive people and stay away from these topics around the negative ones.
17. Write about your motivation in your journal. There are many reasons you chose your goals—better health, self-esteem, or happiness. Put all these reasons on paper and read them when you need motivation.
18. On a calendar or spreadsheet, place a BIG sticker, star or check mark on every day that you met your goals or took positive action steps. Over time, your calendar will become a visual reminder of your progress towards that long-term goal. It will also remind you that the occasional bad day doesn't have a major effect in the long-run.
19. Find a goal buddy. While your support group should still be in place, a person who is striving for the same goal can offer greater support, inspiration and accountability. He'll count on you just as much as you count on him.
20. Visualize. Sit comfortably, breathing deeply, with your eyes closed. Envision yourself reaching that goal, meditate if you will. How has your life changed? How does it feel that you're accomplishing it? Picture all the steps you took to reach this point and believe that you'll get to where you want to be.

21. Share your knowledge. Could someone else benefit from what you've learned so far? Acting as a mentor can strengthen your own commitment to your goals and inspire others to create positive change in their own lives.
22. Learn something new that inspires you. If you want to quit smoking, for example, read about successful quitters whose lives have improved, or about how smoking affects your health. Find new, specific tips for your current stage.
23. Make yourself a priority. You do a lot for others, but tend to neglect yourself. Give yourself the care, attention and love that you need. Your goals are important and you deserve to take time for yourself each day in order to achieve them.
24. Do less. Bombarding yourself with too many goals can be stressful. The more items you focus on, the more each task suffers from a lack of priority, attention and accuracy. Whittle down your to-do list to focus on what is really important.
25. Celebrate milestones. While your long-term goal may be to lose 50 pounds or more, each pound lost is one step closer and each deserves recognition! Call a friend or write in your journal. You never know who you may inspire!
26. Get the right tools. Sticking to your goals may require some supplies, like good shoes to exercise or finance software to reduce your debt. Choose the tools that keep you safe (first and foremost) and help you measure your progress.
27. Add variety! To prevent boredom, try new things. Enroll in a class, find a local support group, try a new workout, or anything that keeps you excited.
28. Create your reality. The mind doesn't know the difference between imagined events and reality. Picture success. Try goal-related affirmations each day and your behavior will reflect what you want to be.
29. Get back on track. Slip ups are normal and they don't mean failure. Instead of beating yourself up for your mistakes, tell yourself that one error doesn't mean much. Don't wait until tomorrow, next week, or next month to get back on track start right away. Put your mistake into the past and move forward. Even the most successful people in the world make mistakes!
30. Everything is a choice. You choose to watch TV instead of walking, or to de-stress by eating instead of talking to someone or being active. Before you act, stop and ask yourself if this "solution" will really help you in the long run.