

## New Year, New You!

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Have you written down your New Year's goals yet? Life is busy for most people, but taking some time to write down your goals will help you be more likely to achieve them. We all have choices. You can choose to watch TV or work out, or to de-stress by taking a hot bath or talking to a friend instead of eating. Before you act, stop and ask yourself if your behavior is going to bring you closer to meeting your goals.



Here are some tips to help you keep those New Year's goals:

1. Make your goals specific, measurable and realistic to achieve within an adequate time frame. For example, rather than saying you plan to do more exercise or lose weight, say "I will walk for at least 30 minutes a day, 4 times per week." or "I will lose 8 pounds in the next 12 weeks."
2. Post your goals in places where you'll often see them like on your refrigerator, bathroom mirror, computer or in your wallet.
3. Write down a plan with several steps of how you will achieve your goals like bring gym shoes to work to walk at lunch; go to the gym right after work; bring lunch to work instead of eating out; stock the kitchen with healthy snacks; track food and/or activity intake, etc. Plan ahead for roadblocks as kids, weather, work, etc. will disrupt your plan. Think ahead of ways to overcome barriers like having Lean Cuisines in the freezer if you don't have time to make a lunch or working out indoors with a DVD if it's raining or too cold to walk outside.
4. Share your goals with family or friends. Invite a friend or neighbor to exercise with you or have a friend text you daily to find out if you exercised to keep you on track.
5. Use motivational websites like [www.SparkPeople.com](http://www.SparkPeople.com) or [www.MyFitnessPal.com](http://www.MyFitnessPal.com) or free phone apps to log food or activity like Loselt, iPump or StepTrackLite.
6. Reward yourself every month or quarter that you meet your goals with a new piece of clothing, sports gear, book, CD, movie, massage, etc.
7. Add variety to keep you motivated by changing up your workout routine, taking a new exercise class or learning a new sport, etc.
8. Avoid people who try to sabotage your efforts because they may feel guilty about their own weight or jealous of your efforts.
9. Be realistic about slip-ups. Skipping a day or two of exercise or overindulging in food is okay as long as it doesn't turn into a week or more. Just get back on track the next day with watching your intake or working out.
10. Stay positive! Remind yourself of all the things you've done well. Losing 5 pounds might not seem like a lot, but carry around a 5 lb. bag of sugar or flour and you'll realize it is a significant loss. Focus more on how you feel or measure inches or body fat loss rather than focusing on pounds lost.

Remember, it takes about 30 days to form a new habit, so give yourself time to make lifestyle changes. Make yourself a priority in 2012. Too many people put others before themselves and end up neglecting their own health and well-being in the process. You won't be able to care for others well if you don't allow some time to care for yourself. Cheers to your health and well-being in 2012!

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