

What is a **SMART** Goal?

Specific

You have a much better chance of accomplishing a specific goal. A specific goal usually answers the five Ws: who, what, where, when, and why.

Measurable

To determine if your goal is measurable, ask yourself: How will I know when I've accomplished my goal?

Attainable

Your goals should be neither out of reach nor easy to accomplish, because you don't want them to be meaningless. They should be realistic and attainable, but may also put you outside your comfort zone.

Realistic

One way to tell if your goal is realistic is to determine if you have accomplished anything similar in the past. Ask yourself what conditions would have to exist to accomplish this goal.

Timely

A goal should be grounded within a time frame. Without a time frame, there's no sense of urgency. A time frame will also allow you to set check-in times. This will help you stay on track and gauge your progress.



Areas of Health Improvement

Here are some examples of SMART goals for four focus areas of health improvement. These examples will show you how you can structure your goals to be more specific and achievable using the SMART tool.

Life Balance

- Every evening during the work week, I will turn off my work phone and computer and take one hour for myself. During this time, I will spend time with my family by playing games, talking, or going for a walk.
- On Saturday mornings, I will wake up before everyone else does so I have two hours of "me time." I will do an activity that makes me happy, such as needlework, reading, or taking a bath.

Fitness

- I will work out by doing strength training three days per week on Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays at the gym. I will do this after work from 5:45 to 6:30 p.m. To make sure I do this, I will pack my gym clothes and take them with me to work.
- I will walk with my family after dinner four days per week. We will clean up after dinner and then go for a 15-minute walk in our neighborhood, Monday through Thursday.

Nutrition

- I will eat five servings of fruits and vegetables daily for at least four days per week on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.
- I will drink at least 64 ounces of water per day at least five days per week. I will drink a glass of water before drinking anything else. Furthermore, I will have water with every meal.

Health Indicators

- I will lower my systolic blood pressure by 12 points by limiting my salt intake to 1,500 mg of sodium per day. I will do this by not adding salt to my meals and reading labels so that I'm aware of how much sodium is in the food I eat, which I will monitor using a food journal. I will also retest my blood pressure every two weeks for three months.
- I will improve my HDL cholesterol numbers by five points. To do this, I will increase my physical activity to 30 minutes or more, five days per week. I will recheck my cholesterol on June 1.

My **SMART** Goal Worksheet

My SMART Goal

Ask yourself—is it: Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely

Barriers I may encounter:

How I will overcome those barriers:

Who will I enlist as my support:

They will help me with:

When I accomplish this goal, I will reward myself with: _____

Example

My SMART Goal: I will lose ten pounds by March 31, 2017, by strength training four days per week at the gym and running three days per week outside. I will workout Monday through Thursday, and I will run on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Ask yourself—is it: Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely

Barriers I may encounter:

It will be hard to get up early in the morning.
I may not want to run after work if it's been a long day.

How I will overcome those barriers:

I will go to bed early, set my alarm, and put my clothes out the night before.
I will ask my neighbor to be my running partner so I'm held accountable.

Who will I enlist as my support:

Karen (my neighbor)
Matt (my husband)

They will help me with:

Keeping me accountable to run three days per week.
He will help me get out of bed in the mornings.

When I accomplish this goal, I will reward myself with: A new pair of running shoes.

Sources

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