

# Be realistic: It's key to achieving those New Year's resolutions

January 23 2023, by Cara Murez

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The key to keeping those New Year's resolutions from fading out by

February: Make sure you've set achievable goals.

Resolutions are often [lifestyle changes](#) and those are best managed when the goal is something attainable, according to an expert at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

"Resolutions and lifestyle changes are very similar. When we think about lifestyle changes, it's normally positive, but when people have [unrealistic expectations](#), they often fail," [Dr. Asim Shah](#) said in a college news release. He is executive vice chair in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Baylor.

Common [resolutions](#) include [weight loss](#), exercise routines, diet changes, managing finances and quitting smoking.

Understand the pros and cons, Shah suggested. This might involve making a list of the advantages and disadvantages to keep yourself motivated.

Lifestyle changes aren't dictated by the calendar or required to start on Jan. 1.

Make a plan and track your progress, Shah suggested. Take baby steps. Don't give up too quickly because it takes time to build a habit.

Link your resolution to the end result to help you achieve your goals.

"It's time for people to think about why they fail and why they continue to make resolutions that don't succeed. Make achievable resolutions to be proud of yourself," Shah said.

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [healthy weight, nutrition and physical activity](#).

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