

The best New Year's resolutions are those you can keep

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Taking small steps may help you reach goals by keeping you from getting discouraged, expert says.

(HealthDay)—You'll be more likely to stick to your New Year's resolutions if you establish realistic and achievable goals, an expert suggests.

Too many people try to do too much too fast and set unattainable [goals](#), which simply sets them up for failure, according to Luis Manzo, executive director of student wellness and assessment at St. John's University in New York.

"There is no sense in making a resolution to wake up every morning at 5 a.m. and run five miles if you know you are not a morning person and you have never run more than a mile in your life. Such a goal will just demoralize you when you are unable to stick to it," he said in a university news release.

"Rather, play to your strengths, select goals that you can do and that work for you," Manzo suggested. "Maybe a more realistic goal is running after work for 20 minutes two days during the week and once on the weekend for 25 minutes. Start small, build your confidence and your motivation will skyrocket."

He offered a number of other suggestions to help you stick with your resolutions, including:

- Set aside time each day to work on your

goals. For example, if you want to exercise, put it in your calendar. Be sure to factor in the time you need to get to the gym, shower and get dressed.

- Make your resolution part of your routine. The more you do this, the easier it will be to achieve your goal. For example, if you want to connect more with family and friends, make it a habit to call them on a certain night of the week.
- Write your goals down and make them public. This will make you more accountable.
- Surround yourself with people who are supportive of your goals. Or you can set goals with a friend so that you can encourage each other. For example, if you plan to write a book, find a friend who has the same goal and agree to share your progress and give each other feedback once a week.

More information: The U.S. General Services Administration offers tips for sticking with [popular New Year's resolutions](#).

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