

New resolve for New Year's resolutions

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(HealthDay)—What would New Year's be without resolutions? But the way you approach change can make the difference between reaching successful milestones and abandoning your resolutions faster than you

can say Valentine's Day chocolates.

It helps to do some advance planning. First, decide on the goals you'd like to achieve. Grab a calendar and spread them out over the course of the coming year. Trying to make them all at once often fails.

The Harvard Business Review suggests making your resolutions as tangible as possible. Don't just list them—write out why you want to make them, why your current behaviors are unhealthy, and the benefits you'll gain by improving them.

Track Your Steps:

- Chart your resolutions in a paper or online journal.
- Space them over the course of a year.
- Once you pick your first [goal](#), block out time to reach it.

The best way to make a difficult lifestyle change is to identify small, realistic steps you can take to make it happen. If you want to get fit, start with a daily 10-minute exercise session, and build on the time or number of sessions. If your [resolution](#) is to stop bringing work home with you, start with just two nights a week. Allowing yourself time to reach your goal will help make the change stick.

Use your journal or calendar to chart your progress along the way. In addition to noting your achievements, try to write down circumstances that either helped or hindered you. Looking back on these notes in the future can help you stay on track.

If you've been unsuccessful in the past, consider joining a support group rather than going it alone. Enlist the help of your doctor for [health goals](#) or your [human resources manager](#) for work issues.

Push through any setbacks. Don't let the occasional slip turn into a slide. Learn from a slip-up by recognizing what caused it and avoiding that trigger whenever possible.

More information: The American Psychological Association has more on [how to stick to your resolutions](#) and turn them into realities.

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