

“I set goals, and have trouble reaching them. How can I get better at this?”

The best way to set and reach a goal is to set a S.M.A.R.T goal.



What is a S.M.A.R.T. goal? It's Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely. How can you create a S.M.A.R.T. goal? It's easy. All you need to do is follow these five rules and you'll be on your way!

Specific

Be specific about your goal. Most goals we set for ourselves are general goals. For example, saying, “I’m going to eat healthy this year!” certainly may be an attainable goal. But it’s not a specific goal. When stating a specific goal, say instead, “I am going to eat fish three days a week for at least one month. Then I will evaluate my goal.” Keep a journal of your success. Seeing your goal on paper and writing about your progress will help you stay on track!

Measurable

Set goals that challenge you, but be sure your progress can be measured. Your goal to “walk each day” is not measurable. Instead, set a measurable goal by saying, “I will attempt to walk for 30 minutes each day to improve my cardiovascular system.” Then monitor your progress. You may notice in the first week that you can only walk for 15 minutes a day. That’s OK—don’t be discouraged. At week two you’re now walking 20 minutes at a time. Before you know it, you’re into the third month, and you’ve increased your daily walk to an hour! Now that’s measurable, and you’re well on your way.

Attainable

Identify all the steps you must take in order to reach your goal. Are your goals really attainable? Write the steps down and review them. Stretch the margin and challenge yourself, but not so much that you become discouraged and surrender. Remember: quitters never win and winners never quit. Be resilient, and set attainable goals. Realized goals increase your self-esteem and help to motivate you.

Realistic

Did you really think that you could run the Boston Marathon if you only trained for three weeks? We all know that’s not a realistic goal. Unrealistic goals will not be realized. Have a plan that’s specific, measurable, attainable and reasonable. You’ll be on your way to setting a true realistic goal!

Timely

Before you begin, ask yourself one question: When do I want to accomplish this SMART goal that I’ve chosen? In two months, six months, one year? Hold yourself accountable. If you don’t, who will? Create a time line and stick to it. Knowing there is a payoff at the finish line will help you remain focused and on track.

So, just don’t set a goal—set a S.M.A.R.T. goal, and success will be yours!

