

# 10 tips for creating healthy habits



Habits are usually routine things you do without thinking about them. Good examples include brushing your teeth, locking your door, or taking your vitamins and medications each day.

Developing healthy daily habits can help you achieve your goals and improve your quality of life.

Examples of other healthy habits include:

- Going to bed at the same time each night
- Having breakfast every morning
- Walking for at least 30 minutes a day.

Habits can sometimes be difficult to build at first. Here are some practical tips to help you create long lasting healthy habits.



# 1. Start small

Making big lifestyle changes can be overwhelming. Instead, focus on trying small, manageable changes that you can sustain over time. For example, if you want to exercise every day, begin by committing to 10 minutes of light exercise you enjoy each morning.

# 2. Define what success is to you

It's important to be specific about what you would like to accomplish. A goal to improve your balance and prevent falls is great but doesn't tell you what it means to succeed. Instead, you could aim to complete 30 minutes of balance exercises per week. Then pat yourself on the back when you achieve that clear goal!

# 3. Make a plan

Achieving your goals is more likely to happen if you develop a plan that outlines when you'll work towards that goal. For example, if you plan to complete 30 minutes of balance exercises per week, you could decide to do your exercises each morning after breakfast. This can help create a mental link between breakfast and exercise, which makes sticking to your new habit easier.



## 4. Be prepared

You're more likely to work towards your goals with healthy habits when you can see the things you need to complete them. You could keep an exercise mat and water bottle in a visible place so that it reminds you throughout the day to complete your exercises.

## 5. Track your progress

Keeping track of your habit building can help you see your progress and stay motivated. Habit tracking is simply recording the new habits you're trying. For example, if you were trying to develop a habit to walk 30 minutes a day, you could record each day you completed that goal on your calendar.



## 6. Celebrate your progress

If you track your progress, over time you'll be able to see how successful you have been in achieving your goal, and what factors might be in play on days when you haven't been able to stick to your plan. Remember, it's not about being perfect, but about making progress each day. Set yourself a reminder to celebrate when you hit your goals to keep you motivated!





## 7. Be accountable

Holding yourself accountable can help you maintain your habits. This means telling someone what you're doing and sharing your progress with them to help you stay on track. Find a workout buddy, check in with other friends making similar changes to their habits, or join a group.

## 8. Enjoy the ride

Another way to stay on track is 'temptation bundling'. The idea is to allow yourself to have some fun while you're working on your new habit. For example, turn up your favourite music when you're doing your balance exercises. This creates a mental link between your new habit and pleasure so you're more likely to stick to it.

## 9. Be flexible

Forming healthy habits can make your routine a bit boring. Mixing it up can help you maintain your progress. Try doing something new, change the time or venue of a habit, or go a little outside of your comfort zone to make it more interesting. Using your imagination is a great way to stick to new habits and keep your brain healthy.

# 10. Don't be too hard on yourself

Be kind to yourself! If you don't turn up every now and then, enjoy having a rest instead. Don't let it throw you off track! Take the rest day in your stride, do something nice instead if you can, and don't beat yourself up. There's always next time!

## Bonus tip!

Talk to others and encourage them to join you! If you've found great ways to start and stick to new healthy habits, share your experience with others!

Join our Facebook Group ConnectUp and chat to other like-minded people about what you've been up to, chat to friends about what you've learnt, or support others in making some changes that will help them too. You could be a positive influence

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