

Transcript

No matter how old you are, no matter how long it's been since your last workout, your body will benefit from exercise. But starting an exercise plan, especially if you haven't been active in a while, can be overwhelming. For best results, make your goals SMART.

SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. And setting SMART goals will help you take the idea of exercise and turn it into action.

First, be specific. How many times in your life have you thought you are ready to exercise more, and made that your goal? How did it go? The idea is great, but without a clear goal you probably felt frustrated because there was never really anything to reach.

Instead, make a goal that is specific. Do you plan to walk 3 times a week? Maybe you want to focus on calories burned and plan to burn 900 calories a week through exercise. Or, maybe you would like to run 1 mile without stopping to walk. Whatever goal you set, make it specific, so you know what you have to do to reach it.

To easily find out if you have reached your goal, it must be measurable. Did you walk 3 times this week? Did you burn the number of calories you wanted? Did you run for 1 mile without stopping?

Is your goal Attainable? In other words, can you reach that goal?

It is important to set goals that are not too easy, because where is the challenge in that? And not too difficult, because then you will get frustrated and give up.

For example, deciding to run a marathon when you haven't run in years may not be attainable at this point. Try running a mile first and then gradually increase the amount you run each time. If a marathon is your long-term goal, you will get there over time.

Trying to bench press 200 pounds the first time you add resistance exercises to your exercise routine, may not only be hard to achieve, but may also cause injury.

Instead, think of a goal that is attainable and work towards it safely.

Each goal you set should also be realistic for you. With your busy schedule, can you walk in your neighborhood 5 nights a week? Maybe 3 nights a week and once at lunch is more realistic for now.

If you have a medical condition, meet with your healthcare provider or personal trainer to ensure your goals won't increase your risk of injury or make your condition worse. Exercise is for the long-term so do it safely.

"When I was 350 pounds, I just would walk for 5 to maybe 7 minutes and that would be enough to where I was sore, I was winded. And I just couldn't do any more. But I would get up every day and continue to do that. And after maybe a month, I noticed that I was doing twice as much. After two months I noticed I was doing maybe four times as much."

And finally, every goal you set should be timely. Set an end date, and schedule it into your daily routine. Without a timeframe to reach each goal, you may never get there.

I will walk 30 minutes 3 times this week.

I will do 1 set of repetitions for each muscle group this week.

I will join a water aerobics class before my birthday.

Starting an exercise plan can be difficult. But seeing results can give you the motivation you need to keep moving. Make your goals SMART. Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. And you will have a plan that fits your life.