

5. Be S.M.A.R.T. About Your Goals

Setting goals is good, but you should be very specific about how you set your goals. Most goal-setting experts recommend using the “S.M.A.R.T.” method. Goals should be:

S – Specific. Wanting to do more exercise is a good goal. But there’s a much better chance of you achieving your goal if it’s more specific, like: *Run 200 miles in 3 months.*

M – Measurable. You can’t track your progress if your goal isn’t measurable. Instead of saying, “I want to lose weight,” say, “I want to lose 15.5 pounds.”

A – Attainable. Every goal you set should stretch you, but every goal should also be attainable. If you never exercise, you won’t be able to run a marathon within 2 weeks, but you could run 5 miles.

R – Realistic. This is closely tied to attainable goals. All goals should be realistic given your circumstances. They should take your limitations into account, while still stretching you to new heights.

T – Timely. Every goal should have a start and end date. If you don’t know when you want to achieve something, you’ll never know if you’ve actually met your goal.