

# Change your habits, change your life

We all have habits – some good, some not so much. But did you know you can train your brain to form new, healthier habits?

Here are some ways to make changes for the better:



## 5 tips to create healthier habits



### 1. Set SMART goals.

SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely. For example, if you want to eat more fruits and veggies, set a SMART goal. Pledge to eat at least two fresh fruits or veggies each day for one week.



### 2. Pick a time and place.

Habits are more likely to stick if you work them into your regular routine. So if you always watch the news after work, take a 30-minute walk on the treadmill at the same time.



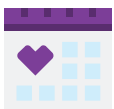
### 3. Replace your old habits with new ones.

Swap old habits for new, healthier ones to retrain your brain. Maybe you drink coffee with sugar every morning before work. Instead, drink hot herbal tea with a teaspoon of honey.



### 4. Don't let slip ups knock you off track.

On busy or stressful days, you may forget and fall back into your old routine. Don't be hard on yourself. Just try to get back to your new habit the next day.



### 5. Give yourself time to adjust.

It takes an average of 66 days for a change to become a habit. Some people take much longer.<sup>1</sup> Be patient with yourself. In time, you may find that you don't miss your old habits.



### DID YOU KNOW?

There are actually 4 parts to any habit:<sup>2</sup>

- **The cue** – sparks the behavior
- **The craving** – drives us forward
- **The response** – the habit itself
- **The reward** – how we feel afterward



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<sup>1</sup>Gardner B, Lally P, Wardle J. Making health habitual: the psychology of 'habit-formation' and general practice. *Br J Gen Pract*. 2012 Dec;62(605):664-6. doi: 10.3399/bjgp12X659466. PMID: 23211256; PMCID: PMC3505409. Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3505409/>

<sup>2</sup>Clear J. How To Start New Habits That Actually Stick. Available at <https://jamesclear.com/three-steps-habit-change>. Accessed October 25, 2023.