

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES



Big Goals Have Small Beginnings



Often, the biggest barrier to accomplishing your goals is that you're not thinking small enough! You set a goal: 10,000 steps in 30 days, run a 5k, or work out at the gym four times a week. Then, circumstances seem to pop up out of nowhere. Friends call with last-minute plans, the computer crashes and you've fallen behind on work, the kids come home with a mountain of homework, and you decide that "the timing wasn't right" or "I'll try again next month". Quickly, a goal that was set with intention and excitement is replaced with disappointment.

A lack of motivation usually arises when we're unsure of how far away from our goal we are. We can blindly believe that the goal is still so far away when it may actually be just around the corner.

The solution? Start thinking small and build momentum through small daily wins. As they accumulate, you build confidence in yourself and your ability to achieve the larger goal at the finish line.

Make a Plan: Your Roadmap to Success

Life can be demanding and that can have a big impact on your energy levels, available time, and the overall success of your fitness goals. It's important to make a realistic plan that suits your lifestyle. Here are some key points to remember:

- 1 Set Your Goal.**
It's important to know what you're working towards, but don't focus on the bigger picture. Create small, achievable goals that will allow you to see your progress more clearly. These *mini-goals* can help prevent slipping into the habit of procrastination.
- 2 Determine Your Schedule.**
If you're a shift worker, your workout schedule will look very different than that of someone who works 9 to 5. Be realistic with your timing to avoid guilt and disappointment. Remember to work in rest days, which will help prevent injury and muscle fatigue and keep you motivated.
- 3 Track Your Progress.**
Write it down, use an app, post on social media. However you choose to record it, tracking your progress can make the difference between giving up or pushing on. Being aware of how close you are to success and celebrating what you've done is a must.
- 4 Reward Yourself.**
Celebrate your wins – the mini-goals too! Identify things that you enjoy and establish the reward beforehand, which gives you something to look forward to and keeps you motivated. Even a simple treat like your favourite coffee will taste better when you know you've worked for it and earned it!

Wellness Walks – Grab Those Sneakers!

Sometimes we could use a little inspiration to get us moving towards our goal. If you're not feeling motivated to move or you need an activity for rest day, try one of the ideas below!

Backward Walk

It feels awkward and can be a bit challenging, but it burns 25% more calories than walking forward. It also develops muscle in the hamstrings and calves. More muscle means an improved metabolism, greater body stability, less injury, and stronger bones. Do 1-minute intervals and gradually increase.



Meditation Walk

You don't have to sit down to meditate! Before you begin, stand erect and place a hand on your stomach. Breathe deeply for 2 minutes. Begin walking with your arms swinging like pendulums. Think of nothing but your rhythm and breath.

Post-Meal Walk

Remember being told, 'wait 2 hours after eating to swim?' Well, wait only a few minutes before walking! Walking post-eating is an excellent way to kick-start the digestion process, manage blood sugar levels and improve sleep.

Money Collector Walk

Focus on walking until you find a coin. Walking with your mind on something promotes stress relief. Keep at it and start a coin jar to see how much you can collect. Treat yourself to coffee or a healthy smoothie when you've collected enough!



Gratitude Walk

Enjoy a quiet walk with your thoughts and focus only on what you're grateful for. Don't let anything else in! Practicing gratitude while you walk boosts the stress-relieving benefits of exercise.

Burn Rubber Walk

Walk fast and swing those arms! Intense walking can help ward off frustration and blow off some steam. Up the intensity and tackle some hills or climb stairs quickly.

Sources Ten Minute Meals, Five Minute Workouts. Darcy Williamson, Robert Sweetgail, Pat Zak, Ph.D
www.bestfoodfacts.org/exercise-burn-calories/ | Images from Freepik.com