

# *Your Guide To Creating*



# *A Healthy Fitness Routine*



# CHOOSING YOUR NEXT FITNESS GOALS

Whenever you decide to get fit, there are a number of big decisions you have to make. The main one is what fitness goal will you set for yourself that will put you on the path to success?

**SETTING YOUR FITNESS GOALS IS THE FIRST STEP TO ACHIEVING THEM**

## WHY WE FAIL WITH OUR FITNESS GOALS

A lot of people set a fitness goal and try to keep up the good work. After a couple of days or weeks of effort, however, they have usually given up. In some cases, they might be in even worse shape than before due to an injury caused by overdoing things, or not doing an exercise properly.

We often fail to reach our goals because they are too vague, and/or because we think we have to be “perfect.”

## SETTING A SMART GOAL

Goals often run along the lines of statement like this:

“I want to get more fit.”

“I want to lose weight.”

*The trouble is these are not SMART goals.*



SMART =

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant/Realistic

## TIMED

In terms of specific, what does more mean? How much weight? Some people decide to spend 30 minutes working out every day. Others set a weight loss goal of, for example, 20 pounds.

The goal should be measurable so you can track your progress. Set a timer for 30 minutes. Or, check your scale each week to see how much weight you are losing.

Most goals are attainable, but it is a question of whether or not they are realistic within a given time frame, the “T” in SMART goals. With the gym goal, it would be foolish to start with 30 minutes every day if you have been a couch potato for years. However, this could be your goal within 2 to 3 months.

If you want to lose 20 pounds overnight, that is not realistic. It took time to gain weight, so it will take time to lose it. A safe rate of weight loss averages at 1 to 2 pounds per week, so if you said you wanted to drop 20 pounds within 3 months, that would be possible. A weight loss diary could help you track your results.

## GIVING UP THE IDEA OF PERFECTION

A lot of people wonder what the best fitness program is. The honest answer is: “The one you will stick to.” You don't have to be perfect, but you do have to do your best. But your fitness program is in your hands. If you want to work out every day, fine. If you want to skip a day, that's all right too. The main thing is to be consistent and track each session in your fitness journal to make sure it is advancing you towards the goal you have set.



## SETTING YOUR FITNESS GOALS IS LIKE LAYING OUT A ROAD MAP FOR YOUR WORKOUTS

### GETTING ORGANIZED

Once you set your goal, it is important to track it. A notebook and a plan can help. When are you going to set aside time for working out or going to the gym? What days will you do cardio (to raise the heart rate) and what days will you do strength training in order to build long, lean muscle?

Plan ahead and see what a difference it can make to achieving your fitness goals.

### CHOOSING AN EATING PLAN

One of the most important decisions you will need to make in terms of health and fitness is what eating plan you would like to follow, especially if your goal is to lose weight. There are so many to choose from, it can be really confusing in terms of what actually works and what doesn't. And with new fads appearing all the time, it can be tempting to jump on yet another diet bandwagon.

But let's keep things simple and narrow it down to a number of options that have been proven to work for both weight loss and overall health.



## COUNTING CALORIES

Counting calories is the most common way to lose weight or maintain it. It does require a database of the caloric values of foods and a calculator or pen and paper. A food diary to keep track of exactly what you eat can help. You can calculate the calorie counts for your favorite recipes and stick to portion sizes.

The recommended daily allowance of calories for men is 2,500, and for women, 2,000. However, this assumes the person is pretty active. For most of us who work at a desk every day and love the TV at night, 2,000 and 1,600 might be better options.

Cut calories and burn more through exercise. You should see the pounds drop off at the rate of 1 to 2 pounds per week. HOWEVER, something to keep in mind is that all calories are NOT the same. Aim for fresh fruit, veggies, lean protein, nuts and seeds. Stay away from sweets, baked goods and candy.

## COUNTING CARBS

Atkins is the most famous of the low carb diets, with nearly 50 years of results behind it. The theory is that carb calories make us fatter because they tend to get stored rather than burned. The Atkins induction program allows only 20 grams of carbs per day for the first 2 weeks, about 40 for stage 2 and about 60 to 80 for the maintenance phase, to help you keep off the weight you have lost.

To put these numbers into perspective, the average American eats an average of 300 grams of carbs per day. Atkins is therefore a pretty radical diet that will involve a good deal of counting to begin with. The advantages are you can lose 10 to 20 pounds very quickly because of the significant changes in the chemical makeup of your body when you cut carbs. There are also lots of free resources online to help you. Use a food diary to keep track.

Other low carb diets include: Paleo, South Beach and Keto. Mix and match recipes and you are sure to find an eating lifestyle that is right for you.



**DON'T FALL FOR FAD DIETS. PICK A HEALTHY PLAN AND STICK TO IT.  
IF YOU FALL OFF THE WAGON, JUMP RIGHT BACK ON.  
CONSISTENCY ALWAYS WINS THE RACE.**

## THE MEDITERRANEAN DIETS.

The Mediterranean diet is modeled on the diet of the people in Italy, Greece, and other countries around the Mediterranean Sea. In my opinion, this is one of the healthiest ways of eating on the planet. The Mediterranean diet is made up of small portions of an average of 60 different foods each day. The foods are mainly fruits, vegetables, 3 portions of fish per week, and high-quality olive oil.

Both diets are heart-healthy and taste great. You're sure to find one you can stick to for better health.

## CHOOSING A GYM

While it is perfectly possible to get a good workout at home, many people like the idea of going to a gym. There are other people to socialize with, a range of equipment, and often fitness classes that can help them get up and get moving.

Sadly, for every 100 people who join a gym, at least 25% drop out within a month. They might not have set their fitness goals correctly, or they might have made a mistake about that gym really being the right one for them.

## COMFORT LEVELS

Some people are very confident about going to a gym. Others are more nervous. In addition, each gym has a vibe or a certain energy. Some are laid back, while others are paced with highly-competitive people pumping iron.



Start assessing the gym from the moment you walk in the door. How are you greeted? How do the people using the gym treat each other? Do people look like they are enjoying being there?

**GYM MEMBERSHIP CAN BE EXPENSIVE. TAKE TIME TO CHOOSE WISELY.**

## HOW CLOSE TO HOME IT IS

It should be within 30 minutes walking time or 15 minutes driving time to your home, so you will not hesitate to go. If you are going to drive, check the parking available in the area.

If you plan on working out before or after work, choose a gym close to your office with good shower facilities and dressing rooms.

Visit the gym the first time at the time you will most likely be working out. This could be before or after work, or on your lunch hour. If the lines are long for equipment and facilities, you might want to check out other options.

## CHECK ABOUT LIFE SAVING PROTOCOLS

Heart attacks happen, as do accidents. Check to see that staff are all trained in CPR and that the gym also has an AED, an automated external defibrillator that can shock the heart back into a normal rhythm. Make sure they have staff trained to use it on every shift. Check their first aid station as well.



# NOT ALL GYMS ARE CREATED EQUAL. DO YOUR RESEARCH TO FIND ONE YOU'LL FEEL GLAD TO VISIT

## DETERMINE THE CULTURE

Is there a mixture of ages and levels, or are there only 20-somethings pumping iron? You need to choose a place where you will feel you can fit in.

## CHECK OUT THE CLASSES

You should be allowed to watch a couple of classes like yoga, spinning or Zumba to see if they are right for you. Make sure the classes are included in the monthly fee, not extras that have to be paid for.

## READ THE FINE PRINT

Many people stop going to their gym because they feel scammed by their contract. Be sure you read everything carefully before committing. Look for zero down plans and reasonable monthly fees depending on the facilities, such as, if they have a pool.



# CHOOSING A WORKOUT CLASS

## **SO MANY EXERCISE CLASSES PICK ONE THAT MATCHES YOUR GOALS**

Chances are if you join a gym these days, you will have a chance to attend a range of different workout classes. In fact, you might be so spoiled for choice that it can be tough to choose the right ones for you.

## START FROM WHERE YOU ARE

If you have not been working out recently, and/or are new to the gym, it's best to start slowly by looking in on the class to see if it is at the right level for you.

Aerobics is the most common, but there are a lot of different options, including step. Then there are high-intensity workouts like HIIT, definitely not for newbies.

## SET YOUR GOALS

A balanced workout program is comprised of 5 to 6 days of 30 to 45 minutes of aerobic activity each week, plus 30 minutes of strength training every other day. The days in between help the muscles to heal.

Aerobic activity is anything which gets your heart pumping at higher than its normal resting rate. You should be a bit out of breath, but still be able to speak. Strength training does not have to be all about pumping iron or using the Universal machines that look like confusing torture devices. You could use light weights or resistance bands or try yoga and tai chi. With the latter 2 workouts, you are literally using the weight of your own body to tone and trim.



## ADD VARIETY AND INTEREST

There are many aerobic activities. Try to mix things up for variety and to add interest to your workouts. Trying a range of beginner classes gives you something to look forward to. You might even find one that you love, which will keep you motivated enough to keep going back for more.

### **CHOOSE A VARIETY OF CLASSES TO MAINTAIN THE FUN FACTOR WITH YOUR WORKOUTS**

## WORKING ON YOUR TROUBLE SPOTS

Yoga can give you a good whole body workout, but in most cases, you will most likely need to focus on your trouble spots such as abs, butt and thighs to get the kind of results you really want. This being the case, check out the class calendar for those types of workouts.

## USING EQUIPMENT

If you tend to avoid the imposing-looking weights machines, a structured class might be just what you need to help you feel more confident. These classes can ensure you learn how to get a good, safe workout, and formulate your own program to reach your goals.

## DANCE CLASSES

Don't underestimate the power of Zumba, belly dancing and more. In most cases, they are suitable for all fitness and age levels, and are a great way to get up and moving to burn some calories.



## BOOT CAMPS

Some workouts are like boot camps. If you are just starting out, this could be something you might aspire to in 3 months, once you've started going to the gym regularly.

## SPINNING

If you like to ride a bike, try a more demanding workout with spinning. The bikes will create different challenging terrains, so you get a different workout every time.

## YOGA

There are a number of different types of yoga. For the sake of safety, avoid hot yoga and start with beginner's classes. These should be suitable for people of all ages and fitness levels.

# CHOOSING A PERSONAL TRAINER

Hiring a personal trainer is a very big commitment that needs to be considered carefully. First, there is the cost. Second, there are the goals you will be setting and then trying to achieve with the help of the trainer.



## MAKE SURE YOUR PERSONAL TRAINER HAS CREDENTIALS AND EXPERIENCE

### WHY HIRE A TRAINER?

Hiring a trainer does cost money, but it can help keep you more motivated with each session. A trainer can serve as an accountability partner you report your progress to. They can encourage your efforts and point out ways of working out more efficiently. They can also customize workouts if you have any existing health conditions and teach you proper form for exercises and equipment in order to prevent injury. Those who are determined to see more consistent results in their new workout routines think the money is well-spent.

However, you need to find the right trainer for you. Here are some of the most important things to consider:

### COST

How much will they charge per session? Is there a discount if you buy a number of sessions at the same time?

### CREDENTIALS

A trainer should be able to show you some form of fitness certification in their particular area of expertise. To become certified, personal trainers must pass an exam through an accredited organization. Accreditation ensures they've met certain standards of professionalism and competence from a trustworthy professional organization.

### EXPERIENCE

Less experienced trainers will often be cheaper, but you will often get what you pay for from a more experienced trainer who has several years under their belt of working successfully with clients.



## A PERSONALITY YOU CLICK WITH

Some people like a tough approach and boot-camp style attitude to training. Others want someone they can relate to more easily. No matter which, the important thing is that you feel you have enough rapport with the person to share your goals with them and be honest about your progress. It's no good fibbing and saying you are working out every day and watching what you eat if you never exercise and are eating junk food.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND TESTIMONIALS

If your friend is looking amazing these days and you discover they have used a personal trainer, ask if they think the trainer would be a good fit for you.

When meeting a trainer, ask if they can provide testimonials in the form of people who would be happy to speak to you on the phone briefly about their experience.

## SCHEDULING

If they are in high demand, it might be tough to get an appointment.

## OUTLOOK ON LIFE AND HEALTH

Some trainers take a very physical approach, while others are more holistic and look at mind, body and spirit. They will also look at diet. Try to find someone who matches your philosophy about health and wellbeing.

**YOUR PERSONAL TRAINER WILL HELP HOLD YOU ACCOUNTABLE  
FOR YOUR WORKOUTS, SO BE SURE THEY ARE SOMEONE  
YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH**



## WHERE YOU WILL DO THE WORK

Will it be at the gym, or in your home, or at a studio? If it is outside your home, will you be motivated and responsible enough to go.

## THE RIGHT 'VIBE'

In these days with more open conversations about appropriate versus inappropriate behavior, it is important to put safety first. If the trainer says or does anything you feel crosses your boundaries, they are not the right trainer for you.