

# Guidelines For Setting Goals

## Goals

A goal is something you work to achieve. Your motivation (desire to change) will affect how well you reach your goal. The following guidelines can help you set and achieve a goal.

- **Set realistic goals.**  
They should be challenging but possible.
- **Set a goal that is specific.**  
Clearly define what you are trying to do.
- **Set a goal you can measure.**  
You will know when you have succeeded by measuring your progress.
- **Make the goal yours so you “own” it.**  
This is your goal, not anyone else’s goal.

There are 2 types of goals:

- **short-term:** This is a goal you can accomplish in a reasonably short time that contributes to a longer-range goal. Example: “I will read at least 1 chapter of a book I enjoy each day.”
- **long-term:** This is a series of many short-term goals. Example: “I will read at least 12 books this year.”

Goals are easier to accomplish when they are clear, specific and divided into steps you can manage.

## How to Set Goals

Use the following steps to set your personal goals.

- **Understand yourself.**  
Ask yourself: “What do I do well?”  
“What do I enjoy doing?” “What are the most important things in my life?”
- **Make clear, specific goals.**  
A goal should tell you exactly what you want and it should be measurable. For example, a clear and specific goal is “I want to be at work by 7:30 a.m. every day this month.”
- **Make your goal positive.**  
Say “I will get a B in my college course” instead of “I don’t want to get a failing grade.”
- **Set time limits.**  
Give yourself a reasonable deadline in which to accomplish your goal.
- **Write down your goals.**  
Keep your written goals where you can see them. This will help keep you focused on reaching them.
- **Check your progress.**  
Are you doing what needs to be done to meet your goals? If not, what can you do to get back on target?