Introduction



Setting goals may feel like an intimidating process, like you are about to run a long distance with no end in sight, but it does not have to be that difficult. By following these steps, you will be goal setting in no time. Once you become comfortable with setting goals, you will see how much easier it is to create and complete your personal fitness program.

Click on each step to learn how you can set fitness goals that you can reach.



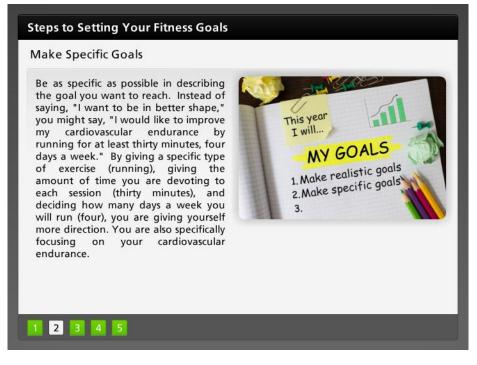
Make Realistic Goals



By setting goals that are realistic, you are preparing yourself for a successful future in reaching your goal. For instance, if you have not been running in a long time, then it would not be realistic to make your goal to run a marathon within the next month.



Make Specific Goals



Be as specific as possible in describing the goal you want to reach. Instead of saying, "I want to be in better shape," you might say, "I would like to improve my cardiovascular endurance by running for at least thirty minutes, four days a week." By giving a specific type of exercise (running), giving the amount of time you are devoting to each session (thirty minutes), and deciding how many days a week you will run (four), you are giving yourself more direction. You are also specifically focusing on your cardiovascular endurance.



Write Your Goal



When you write down your fitness goal, you make it more of a focus in your life. Post your written goal in several areas as a reminder for you to stay on track. You may even want to say your goal aloud every morning, so it will be fresh in your mind throughout the day.



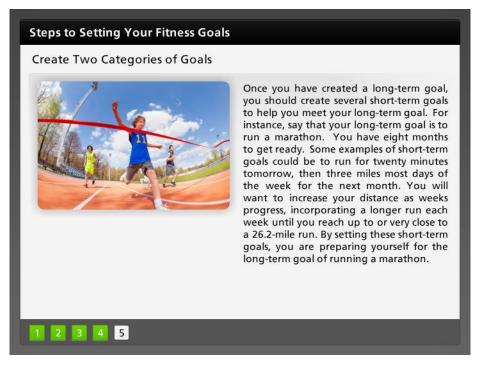
Overcome Setbacks



There will be unexpected things that happen throughout your day or week that may set you back from your goal. This is fine as long as you realize that it is just a setback and not a failure. A setback is an unfortunate happening that hinders you from achieving your goal. Setbacks may happen, but do not let them deter you. Get back on track to work toward your goal.



Create Two Categories of Goals



Once you have created a long-term goal, you should create several short-term goals to help you meet your long-term goal. For instance, say that your long-term goal is to run a marathon. You have eight months to get ready. Some examples of short-term goals could be to run for twenty minutes tomorrow, then three miles most days of the week for the next month. You will want to increase your distance as weeks progress, incorporating a longer run each week until you reach up to or very close to a 26.2-mile run. By setting these short-term goals, you are preparing yourself for the long-term goal of running a marathon.

