H   B   N   H

Habit-building is a great skill to have, particularly if you're someone who wants to improve aspects of your life but aren't quite sure how. Making a new habit feel second nature is possible for anyone, and can help you achieve small and large goals by breaking them down into daily or weekly activities. Here are some ways you can create new habits:

K

When you're starting to build a new habit—for example, saving money—spend some time doing a positive visualization of what that will look like. For example, you might picture a certain number in your bank balance, or imagine yourself not feeling nervous when you open your credit card statement. Spend some time picturing how it will feel to have that positive habit as a regular part of your life.

D

Part of the pressure of building a habit is having to remember to do it. However, if you build reminders into your day, you'll be much better equipped. For example:

S . Using a digital reminder app can keep you on-task.

L . For example, if you're trying to remember to bring your lunch to work, post a note on the back of the front door so you'll get a reminder when you need it.

B . If you need to remember to take medication in the morning, for example, use brushing your teeth as the reminder for the new habit.

F B . If you want to remember to stretch or walk 10,000 steps, a tool like this will help remind you.

F

When we promise ourselves that we're going to exercise three times a week, it's easy to make excuses and let it slide. But it's much harder to let it go if someone else is expecting you to do it. Here are a few suggestions for creating accountability for yourself:

F . It could be doing a daily yoga practice, for example. Each day you can check in to make sure you've each done it.

J . You may want to build a habit of healthier eating—there are online and o ine groups you can join to help you along the way.

M . To build positive habits to get out of ruts, picture the version of yourself who has built this positive habit.

C

Promising yourself some kind of reward for achieving your habit building goals. For example, you may want to build a habit of waking up half an hour earlier in order to spend 30 minutes on creative writing each morning before work. You might promise yourself that once you've done this every day for a month, you'll register for a creative writing course that you've been researching.

Incentives can be big or small, but they need to be something you really want in order to act as a reward.

T

Don't try to tackle multiple new habits at once: you'll likely end up feeling overwhelmed and defeated. Choose one and then, when it becomes an automatic part of your routine, start on the next one.

T

Like at school when you had a star chart for good behauhihn

S   . Put your time for your new habit into your calendar.

Experts say it takes an average of 66 days to make a new habit an automatic behaviour—sometimes more. That's a lot of days, but if you find that you fall off the wagon, don't beat yourself up: missing a few days here and there doesn't mean you have to start again completely from scratch. Just focus on the outcome of replacing old habits with new ones and the improvements to your life your new habit will make.
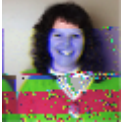
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