

# Achieve Your Goals in 2015!



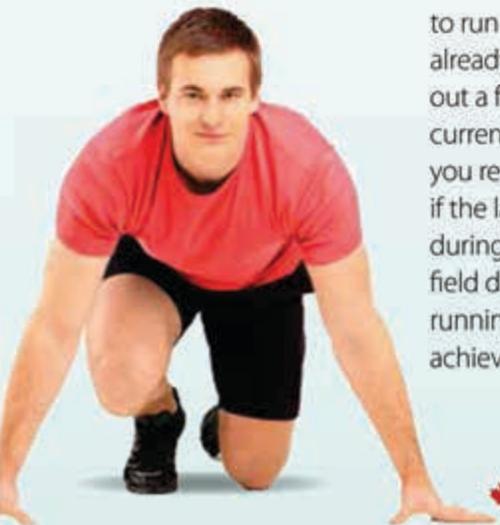
Make 2015 the year that your dreams come true! Setting realistic, measurable goals will help you achieve what you've always wanted. Not sure how to start? Here are some tips to set achievable goals.

**Think big.** What is one thing that would improve your life dramatically? Whether it pertains to getting healthy, ridding yourself of debt or getting a promotion at work, think of one thing that would give you the biggest boost and turn it into your goal.

**Analyze your habits and behaviours.** Don't let bad habits and behaviours sabotage your hard work. Once you've thought of a goal, ask yourself these questions:

- o What current habits or behaviours will help me reach my goal?
- o What current habits or behaviours will impede my efforts?

For example, if your goal is to run a marathon and you're already running or working out a few times a week, your current fitness habits will help you reach your goal. However, if the last time you ran was during an elementary school field day, you'll have to make running a habit so that you can achieve your goal.



**Write it down.** Studies show that writing down your goal will improve your chances of achieving it.

- **Approach your goal as if you've already achieved it.** This will put you in the right mindset.
- **Be specific.** The more specific your goal is the better. Instead of saying, "I have lost weight" say, "I have lost 20 pounds and dropped two pants sizes."
- **Divide it up.** Large goals are easier to reach if you break them into smaller pieces. Divide your big goal into smaller short-term and mid-term goals. If your goal is to run a marathon, a short-term goal would be to run a 5k within the next month, and a mid-term goal would be to run a half marathon by June.
- **Give yourself a time limit.** Setting a deadline will help you maintain the focus and drive you need to achieve your goal.
- **Track your progress.** Tracking allows you to see how far you've come and may give you the extra motivation you need when you're feeling discouraged.

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# The Benefits of Goal Setting

If the thought of setting goals makes you say, “Bah! Humbug!” you may want to change your tune. Setting achievable, measurable goals helps you:

- **Find your focus.** Every day we’re bombarded with opportunities, choices, decisions, etc. Goals help you focus on what you want so that you can filter out everything else that will throw you off course.
- **Take action.** Once you write down your goal and create a plan, you’re more motivated to put it into action. Reviewing your goals regularly will help you reconnect with your motivation so that you can stay on track to achieve success.
- **Deal better with setbacks.** When you have a specific goal, you’re more likely to see a setback as a challenge to overcome rather than an unachievable or impossible obstacle. You’ll keep moving forward and get back on track.
- **Feel a sense of accomplishment.** The surge of energy that you feel when you complete your goal is unlike anything in the world. All of the hard work and sacrifices you made along the way will make your success much sweeter. Achieving your goals boosts confidence in yourself and your abilities and may make you happier.

## 3 Secrets of Goal-Getters

Improve your chances of achieving your goals this year with these helpful tips:

1. **Get S.M.A.R.T.** That is, set goals that are **S**pecific and written, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic in time and skill, and **T**ime-based.
2. **Find an accountability partner.** An accountability partner is someone who will make sure that you complete the activities required to achieve your goal, whether it’s checking in with you once a day asking about your progress or providing encouragement when you need it the most.
3. **Have a “why.”** Having a reason to achieve your goals will keep you motivated, especially when you’re tempted to give up.

