

Establish a Regular Exercise Routine

By Applying The Principles of Atomic Habits

By James Clear

Workbook / Journal

The goal of this journal / workbook is not to change all your habits overnight. Instead, the goal is to develop one small habit that will have a big impact on your life. When that habit starts becoming automatic, you can print a new copy of this workbook and work on your next habit. These small changes will accumulate and eventually change your life!

Exercise Regularly

By Applying The Principles of Atomic Habits



Build small habits: begin with a minimal effort and gradually increasing it by just 1% each day or week to build a consistent routine.

The key to building lasting habits is to focus on creating a new identity first. Shift your focus from "What do I want to achieve?" to "Who do I want to become?" Define the person you want to be, such as "I am a runner", and then prove it to yourself through small, consistent wins in your exercise routine.

4 RULES TO HELP YOU START AN EXERCISE ROUTINE

1 MAKE IT OBVIOUS

Create clear and visible cues or triggers that prompt you to exercise. The key is to create an environment and routine that makes it obvious and convenient to engage in physical activity regularly.

- 1.Set a Specific Time:** Schedule your exercise sessions at a specific time each day, making it a part of your routine. For example, "I will exercise for 30 minutes every morning at 7:00 AM."
- 2.Lay Out Workout Clothes:** Place your workout clothes, shoes, and any necessary gear in a visible and easily accessible location, such as next to your bed or by the door.
- 3.Use Visual Reminders:** Set up visual reminders, such as post-it notes or calendar alerts, to notify you of your exercise time or to-do list for the day.
- 4.Create a Dedicated Space:** Designate a space in your home for exercise, whether it's a small corner with a yoga mat or a home gym. When you see this space, it serves as a cue to work out.
- 5.Join a Class or Group:** Enroll in an exercise class or group that meets at specific times. Knowing you have a commitment and a set schedule can make it more obvious when it's time to exercise.
- 6.Technology and Apps:** Use fitness apps or wearable devices with reminders and notifications to prompt you to exercise regularly.
- 7.Buddy System:** Partner with a friend or family member for workouts. Accountability from someone else can make it obvious that it's time to exercise together.
- 8.Morning Routine:** Incorporate exercise into your morning routine, such as right after waking up or before your daily shower.
- 9.Trigger Activities:** Associate exercise with other activities you do daily, such as watching your favorite TV show or listening to a specific podcast, so it becomes part of your routine.

2 MAKE IT ATTRACTIVE

Find ways to make your workouts more enjoyable and appealing, such as choosing activities you love, exercising with friends, or incorporating music or entertainment during workouts. This will increase your motivation and enthusiasm for developing a regular exercise habit.

- 1.Choose Enjoyable Activities:** Opt for exercises or physical activities that you genuinely enjoy, whether it's dancing, cycling, hiking, or playing a sport.
- 2.Exercise with Friends:** Make exercise a social activity by working out with friends or joining group fitness classes. The social aspect can make it more enjoyable.
- 3.Incorporate Music or Entertainment:** Listen to your favorite music, podcasts, or audiobooks while exercising to make the experience more enjoyable and engaging.
- 4.Set Exciting Goals:** Establish exciting fitness goals or challenges that motivate you and make exercising more attractive.
- 5.Vary Your Routine:** Keep your exercise routine interesting by incorporating variety. Try different workouts, locations, or exercise partners to prevent boredom.
- 6.Invest in Attractive Gear:** Buy exercise gear that you find aesthetically pleasing and comfortable to wear and use. Feeling good in your workout attire can boost motivation.

3

MAKE IT EASY

Simplify the process of working out to reduce barriers and increase the likelihood that you'll stick to your exercise habit and gradually progress toward your fitness goals.



- 1. Choose Convenient Locations:** Select exercise locations that are easy to access, whether it's a nearby park, your living room, or a local gym.
- 2. Set Realistic Goals:** Start with achievable exercise goals that fit your current fitness level and schedule, making it easier to commit to regular workouts.
- 3. Schedule Workouts:** Block out specific times for exercise in your daily or weekly schedule, treating them as non-negotiable appointments.
- 4. Prepare Ahead:** Lay out your workout clothes and equipment the night before, so they're readily available when it's time to exercise.
- 5. Short Workouts:** Begin with short exercise sessions, even just 2-15 minutes, to reduce the perceived time commitment and make it easier to get started.
- 6. Start Slowly:** If you're new to exercise, begin with low-intensity activities to build confidence and gradually increase intensity as you become more comfortable.
- 7. Home Workouts:** Consider home-based workouts or bodyweight exercises, which eliminate the need for commuting to a gym.
- 8. Fitness Apps:** Use fitness apps or online resources that offer guided workouts and exercise routines you can follow at home or in a time-efficient manner.
- 9. Incorporate Physical Activity:** Include physical activity in your daily routine by walking or biking for transportation, taking the stairs, or doing quick exercises during breaks.
- 10. Accountability Partner:** Exercise with a friend or enlist a workout buddy who can provide motivation and make the experience more enjoyable.
- 11. Consistent Timing:** Choose a consistent time of day to exercise, which helps establish a routine and makes it easier to remember.
- 12. Track Progress:** Keep a workout journal or use fitness apps to track your progress and see how far you've come, motivating you to continue.

4

MAKE IT SATISFYING

Ensure that your workouts are rewarding and enjoyable. This will help you stay motivated and committed to regular physical activity. By making exercise satisfying and enjoyable, you can create a positive relationship with physical activity, making it more likely that you'll stick to your exercise habit over the long term.

- 1. Reward System:** Create a reward system for yourself, such as treating yourself to a favorite activity or item after completing a workout. This will reinforce the idea that exercise leads to positive outcomes.
- 2. Visualize Benefits:** Visualize the benefits of exercise, such as improved health, increased energy, and a sense of accomplishment, to make it more attractive.
- 3. Celebrate Progress:** Celebrate your fitness milestones and achievements to reinforce positive feelings about exercising.
- 4. Set Enjoyable Goals:** Define fitness goals that genuinely excite you and align with your interests, whether it's training for a fun run, mastering a new dance style, or improving a favorite sport.
- 5. Positive Associations:** Associate positive emotions with exercise by focusing on how it makes you feel, such as the post-workout endorphin rush, increased energy, or reduced stress.
- 6. Variety and Exploration:** Explore different types of physical activities and workouts to find what you enjoy the most, preventing exercise from becoming monotonous.
- 7. Intrinsic Motivation:** Discover the intrinsic rewards of exercise, like a sense of accomplishment, increased self-confidence, or improved well-being, rather than relying solely on external rewards.
- 8. Social Interaction:** Exercise with friends or join group fitness classes to make workouts a social and enjoyable experience.
- 9. Tracking Progress:** Use fitness apps or journals to track your progress and celebrate your achievements, creating a sense of satisfaction and motivation.

YOUR IDENTITY

Your current behaviors are simply a reflection of your current identity. The way you behave is a mirror image of the type of person you believe that you are (either consciously or subconsciously). If you want to change your behavior you need to first change your identity (i.e. change the things you believe about yourself).

The most effective way to change your habits is to focus on who you wish to become, not on what you want to achieve. Make the habit part of your new identity.

"It is a simple two-step process: Decide the type of person you want to be. Prove it to yourself with small wins." "Ask yourself, "Who is the type of person that could get the outcome I want?" Then be that person.

Describe the person you are now in the table below. Categorize your descriptions into positive beliefs and negative beliefs.

	Who am I today?	Who do I want to be?
Positive Beliefs		
Negative Beliefs		

List the habits you need to develop or break in order to be the person who you described that you want to be and then prioritize these habits.

Select the habit that you want to work on first. Ideally, this habit should be one that won't take much effort but will create the greatest impact over time.

The habits I need to develop in order to be the person I want to be	Order of Priority

BREAK THE HABIT INTO SMALL COMPONENTS

In "Atomic Habits," James Clear emphasizes the importance of breaking habits into small, manageable components to make them more attainable, a principle that can be effectively applied to developing a regular exercise routine. Here's how you can break down the habit of exercising regularly into smaller components:

1. Start with Micro Habits:

- Begin Small:** If your goal is to run for 30 minutes daily, start with a commitment to run for just 5 minutes each day and gradually increase the duration.

- Set Micro Goals:** Instead of aiming to do 20 push-ups, start with 2 or 3 and slowly increase the number.

2. Establish Mini Routines:

- Warm-up Routines:** Develop a short and simple warm-up routine to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

- Cool-down Routines:** Incorporate a brief cool-down phase post-exercise to gradually make the entire process a habit.

3. Break Down the Exercise Session:

- Segment Workouts:** Divide your workout into smaller sections, such as 10 minutes of cardio, 10 minutes of strength training, and 10 minutes of stretching.

- Use Intervals:** Break your exercise into intervals with rest periods in between, making it less daunting.

4. Focus on Frequency over Duration:

- Prioritize Consistency:** It's more important to exercise a little every day than to do intense workouts sporadically.

- Gradually Increase Duration:** Once the habit is established, slowly increase the time spent exercising.

5. Simplify the Process:

- Minimize Steps:** Reduce the number of steps to start exercising, like keeping your workout clothes and shoes readily accessible.

- Pre-plan Workouts:** Having a predetermined set of exercises can make starting your workout more straightforward.

6. Create a Reward System:

- Immediate Rewards:** Reward yourself with something enjoyable immediately after exercising, like a tasty but healthy snack.

- Long-term Rewards:** Set long-term rewards for consistent exercise, such as buying new workout gear after a month of regular workouts.

7. Track Small Wins:

- Maintain a Progress Journal:** Documenting even the smallest progress can provide motivation and a sense of achievement.

- Celebrate Small Milestones:** Every achievement, no matter how small, brings you closer to your goal and deserves recognition.

Conclusion:

By decomposing the process of building a regular exercise habit into smaller, more manageable components, the task becomes less overwhelming and more achievable. Consistency in these small components leads to the development of a robust and enduring exercise habit, paving the way for a healthier lifestyle.

SET YOUR GOALS

1. Clarify Your Intentions:

- Understand Why:** Clarify why you want to establish an exercise routine. Understanding your motives will help sustain your commitment. For instance, "I want to exercise regularly to improve my overall health and well-being and reduce stress."
- Set Clear Goals:** Define what success looks like. Instead of vague goals like "I want to get fit," try specific ones like "I want to exercise for 30 minutes a day, five days a week."

2. Be Specific:

- Type of Exercise:** Define what types of exercise you will be doing, such as running, swimming, weightlifting, yoga, etc.
- Duration and Frequency:** Establish how long each exercise session will be and how often you will exercise, such as 30 minutes per day, five days a week.
- Intensity Level:** Decide the intensity of your exercise – whether it will be light, moderate, or vigorous.

3. Set Achievable Targets:

- Start Small:** If you're new to exercising, start with shorter, less intense sessions and gradually increase duration and intensity.
- Break it Down:** Break your goal into smaller, manageable tasks. Instead of aiming to run five miles on the first day, start with one and gradually increase the distance.

4. Plan for Obstacles:

- Identify Barriers:** Recognize potential hindrances like lack of time or motivation and find solutions for them.
- Develop Contingencies:** Create backup plans for when obstacles arise, such as having indoor workout options for bad weather days.

5. Schedule It:

- Prioritize Exercise:** Treat exercise like any other important activity; block out time in your schedule and make it non-negotiable.
- Choose Convenient Times:** Schedule exercise for when you're most likely to do it, like mornings for a morning person.

6. Create Positive Associations:

- Pair with Pleasurable Activities:** Associate exercise with enjoyable activities, like listening to music or podcasts, or watching your favorite shows while on a treadmill.
- Reward Yourself:** Establish rewards for sticking to your exercise routine, like a relaxing bath or an episode of your favorite series after working out.

7. Seek Support:

- Find an Exercise Buddy:** Having a friend to exercise with can increase accountability and make working out more enjoyable.
- Join a Group or Class:** Being part of a community with similar goals can provide motivation and support.

8. Document Your Plan on the Next Page:

- Write it Down:** Documenting your plan helps in solidifying your commitment and serves as a constant reminder of your goals.
- Review and Adjust:** Regularly review your plan and adjust it as needed to keep it realistic and achievable.

SET YOUR GOALS

[illegible]

USE HABIT STACKING

Identify a habit you already do every day and then stack your new behavior on top. This is called habit stacking.

For example, after I brush my teeth every morning I will exercise.

How can you use habit stacking to combine your new habit with an existing habit?

After [current habit]_____, I will [new habit]

USE IMPLEMENTATION INTENTIONS

(A CLEAR PLAN OF ACTION, SETTING OUT WHEN AND WHERE YOU'LL CARRY OUT THE HABIT YOU'D LIKE TO CULTIVATE)

An implementation intention introduces a clear plan of action, setting out when and where you'll carry out the habit you'd like to cultivate. Research shows that this is the most effective way to cultivate a new habit.

My Plan of Action

WHEN	
WHERE	
WHAT	

HOW TO BUILD NEW HABITS

There are four laws of behavior change:

1

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8. Morning Routine: Incorporate exercise into your morning routine, such as right after waking up or before your daily shower.

9. Trigger Activities: Associate exercise with other activities you do daily, such as watching your favorite TV show or listening to a specific podcast, so it becomes part of your routine.

What can you do to make it obvious:



In the weekly planner on page 12, allocate time for some of these activities to be done in the upcoming week.

2

MAKE IT
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What can you do to make it attractive:



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What can you do to make it easy:



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8. Social Interaction: Exercise with friends or join group fitness classes to make workouts a social and enjoyable experience.

9. Tracking Progress: Use fitness apps or journals to track your progress and celebrate your achievements, creating a sense of satisfaction and motivation.

What can you do to make it satisfying:



In the weekly planner on page 12, allocate time for some of these activities to be done in the upcoming week.



In the weekly planner below, designate time slots for some of the tasks mentioned in the preceding pages, or any other tasks you prefer, that will aid in the cultivation of this new habit.

WEEK OF:

MONTH:

YEAR:

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5:00 AM							
5:30 AM							
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YOUR ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

One of the factors that influence our behavior and our habits is our environment. Visual cues strongly influence our behavior which is why stores position items that they want us to purchase at eye level. Habit formation begins with a cue. Therefore, if we want to influence our behavior and change our habits we should arrange our environment so that we see the things related to the habit we want to develop.

For example, you can put a treadmill next to your TV or you can put your exercise gear out the night before a workout.

How can you arrange your environment to help you develop your habit?

I will:

What can you do to make your cues visible?

I will:

Go ahead and arrange your environment. Describe the changes you made.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

The Role of Family and Friends in Shaping Your Habits

"We tend to imitate the habits of three social groups: the close (family and friends), the many (the tribe), and the powerful (those with status and prestige)."

"One of the most effective things you can do to build better habits is to join a culture where (1) your desired behavior is the normal behavior and (2) you already have something in common with the group."

"If a behavior can get us approval, respect, and praise, we find it attractive."

Look for people who succeeded in developing the same habit and learn from their experience.

I will:

List the things you can do or change. For each item on your list, mark what you consider manageable and identify what will make it work.

I will:

MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

A habit tracker is an effective technique to keep your habits on track since one of the most satisfying feelings is the feeling of making progress. "Habit trackers and other visual forms of measurement can make your habits satisfying by providing clear evidence of your progress."

James clear suggests that you never miss twice. If you miss one day, try to get back on track as quickly as possible.

Mark the habit tracker below. Don't break the chain. Try to keep your habit streak going for as long as possible.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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HABIT CONTRACT

A habit contract is a good framework to keep your habits on track since it imposes negative consequences if you fail to do so.

Use either of the habit contracts below. In the habit contract, you will commit to doing something and you will identify specific habits that will help you reach that goal.


You then set up penalties for not doing those things. Once you have completed it, sign it and get two people you respect to sign it as well. Choose people who you will not want to disappoint or lose face in front of if you don't do what you commit to doing.

There is one version with specific objectives and habits and a blank version that you can fill in with your own objectives and habits.



Habit Contract to Establish a Regular Exercise Routine

This contract is a commitment to improve my health, well-being, and quality of life by integrating regular exercise into my lifestyle.

 **Contracting Party:** Name: _____

 **Start Date:** Date: _____

 **Reasons to Establish a Regular Exercise Routine:** _____

 **Goals:**

1. Exercise for ____ minutes/hours ____ times per week by (specific date): _____
2. Incorporate ____ types of exercise activities per week by (specific date): _____

 **Action Steps: Initial Steps:**

a. Identify preferred types of exercise: _____

b. Schedule regular exercise times: _____

c. Set up a support system: _____

Daily/Weekly Tasks: a. _____

b. _____


Rewards for Achieving Goals: a. _____

b. _____

 **Rewards:** Short Term Reward for First Week: _____

Mid Term Reward for First Month: _____

Long Term Reward for Six Months: _____

 **Consequences for Non-Compliance:** _____

 **Support Partner Details:** Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Contact Information: _____

😊 Role of Support Partner:

To provide encouragement and support. To help maintain accountability towards the set goals. To offer understanding and motivation during challenging times. To celebrate milestones and achievements in the journey to establish a regular exercise routine.

📅 **Review Dates:** First Review: [Insert Date] _____

Second Review: [Insert Date] _____

Final Review: [Insert Date] _____ During each review, progress will be assessed, challenges will be addressed, and adjustments to the action steps, if necessary, will be made.

✍️ **Acknowledgement and Commitment:** I, [Name] _____, understand the immense benefits of regular exercise on my health and well-being and am making a committed decision to establish a regular exercise routine. I will actively pursue the action steps listed above and will seek support as needed.

Signature of Contracting Party: _____

I, [Support Partner's Name] _____, commit to supporting [Name] _____ in their journey to establish a regular exercise routine. I will offer encouragement, understanding, and accountability to help them achieve their goal.

Signature of Support Partner: _____

Date of Signing: _____

HABIT CONTRACT



Date: _____

My goal is

To reach this goal I will do the following:

(for each habit, state what you will do, when and where)



1.

2.

3.

Penalty: If I do not do the things above then

Name

Signature

Name

Signature