

Developing S.M.A.R.T. goals

S.M.A.R.T. goals work by outlining exactly what is required, how it will be measured, and providing a time frame in which to do it. SMART is an acronym that stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely.

Specific

Your goal needs to be detailed and clear, not general. There can't be any room for uncertainty. To make a specific goal, try and answer these questions: What am I doing? Why am I doing it? What will it require of me?

Measurable

Your goal also needs to be measurable, meaning that there has to be a point where you will know that you have accomplished the goal. A time limit, rep range, or goal weight, for example.

Attainable

The next step is to make sure that your goal is actually realistic. It needs to be something you can accomplish. For example, don't set a goal of running a marathon in under 4 hours.

Relevant

Your goal must be appropriate for what you are trying to accomplish (related to health, diet, and fitness). An easy way to think about this is to include the desired result with the goal.

Timely

The final step is to make sure that your goal has an ending. Committing a deadline to your goal provides greater structure and motivation, and will help you focus on achieving it before the end date.

Putting it all together

Here is an example of a S.M.A.R.T. goal:

- By Sunday night I am going to increase my total weekly exercise minutes from 150 minutes to 180 minutes, by adding 10 minutes to each of my three walks this week.