



Hit Your Weight-Loss Goals

Expert tips to help you make your resolutions a reality.

BY CELIA SHATZMAN



THE RESEARCHER SAYS:

Be honest with yourself

Your brain tends to remember good behaviors while blocking out the less virtuous ones. Researchers believe this is because we are apt to see our actions in an optimistic light, which can give you a skewed view of your progress when you're trying to slim down. To take a realistic look at your habits, track diet and exercise in a journal, highlighting the positives ("Ordered fish instead of a hamburger") as well as the negatives ("Skipped my walk today").

MARGARET C. CAMPBELL, PhD, professor of marketing, University of Colorado Boulder

THE DIETITIAN SAYS:

ID fake hunger

The next time you reach for the chips, ask yourself: *Would I dig into a bag of baby carrots right now?* If the answer is no, chances are you're eating out of habit rather than need. Instead of munching, have some water or herbal tea (thirst often disguises itself as hunger). But if the vegetables *do* sound appealing, it's time to refuel. Choose a snack that combines protein and fiber, such as pairing the carrots with hummus.

MICHELLE DUDASH, RDN, author, *Clean Eating for Busy Families*

THE EXERCISE PRO SAYS:

Start slowly to stay committed

Taking on too much too soon will leave you burnt out and ready to throw in the towel. Instead, add more functional movement throughout the day (shoveling the walkway or walking up an escalator). Then set a goal, like finishing a 5K. Pick a comfortable distance and pace at first and use this simple rule: Once the activity no longer feels challenging, gradually push yourself to kick it up a notch, strolling farther and faster.

COLLEEN CONLON, group fitness instructor, Equinox

GO FOR IT!
Beginners will need about six to eight weeks to train for a 5K.