

The Simple Guide to Creating Habits for a Great Year

It's a new year, and many of us are looking to make positive changes in our lives.

The best way to do that is not by making resolutions, but by creating habits that will stick for the long term. If you want to run a marathon, form the habit of running. If you want to write a novel, form the writing habit. If you want to be more mindful, form the habit of meditation.

Of course, that's easier said than done — just form new habits, no problem! So in this guide, I'm going to lay out the key steps to forming the habits that will change your life.

If you'd like help forming these habits, I invite you to join me and more than a thousand others changing one habit at a time in my Sea Change Program.

Steps to Creating a Habit

1. **Pick a positive habit.** I recommend you find new, positive habits to form, rather than starting with quitting a bad habit. If you want to quit eating junk food ... focus instead on creating the habit of eating more vegetables. Good positive habits to start with: meditation, reading, writing, exercise, eating vegetables, journaling, flossing.
2. **One habit at a time.** We all have a list of a dozen habits we'd like to change — and all right now! But in my experience, the more habits you do at once, the less likely your chances of success. Even one habit at a time takes focus and energy! Trust me on this: doing one habit at a time is the best strategy, by far, for any but the best habit masters.
3. **Small steps are successful.** People underestimate the importance of this, but along with one habit at a time, it's probably the most important thing you can do to ensure success. Start really small. Meditate for 2 minutes a day the first week (increase by 2-3 minutes a week *only* if you're consistent the previous week). Start running for 5-10 minutes a day, not 30 minutes. Eat a small serving of vegetables for *one* meal, don't try to change your entire diet at once. Start as small as you can, and increase only gradually as long as you stay consistent. A parramatta childrens dentist professes to start brushing early for children, because that habit would stay. Small steps allow your mind to adjust gradually, and is the best method by far.
4. **Set up reminders.** The thing that trips people up in the beginning is remembering to do the habit. Don't let yourself forget! Set up visual reminders around where you want to remember (ex: in the kitchen, for the veggies habit, or a note on your bathroom mirror for flossing), along with digital reminders on your phone and calendar.
5. **Set up accountability.** How will you hold yourself to this habit change when you feel like quitting? Accountability. Join a community or small team to hold yourself accountable — I highly suggest you join my Sea Change Program for this accountability.

6. **Find reward in the doing.** You won't stick to any change for long if you really hate doing it. Instead, find some pleasure in the doing of the habit. For example, if you go running, don't think of it as torture, but as a way to enjoy the outdoors, to feel your body moving, to feel alive. Bring mindfulness to each moment of doing the habit, and find gratitude and joy as you do it. The habit will become the reward, and you'll look forward to this nice oasis of mindfulness.
7. **Try to be as consistent as possible.** The more consistent you are, the better. Resist putting off the habit, and make it your policy to just get started when you have said you'll do it, rather than indulging in the old pattern of, "I'll do it later." That's an old habit that you want to retrain by doing it immediately.
8. **Review & adjust regularly.** I like to review how I did with my habits at the end of each day, before I sleep. It helps me get better and better at habits. But at the minimum, review once a week (and do a check-in with your accountability team) and adjust as needed. For example, if you forgot to do the habit, adjust by creating new reminders. If you aren't consistent, maybe set up a challenge with your team so that you pay them \$10 each day you miss (for example). Adjusting each week means you'll get better and better at doing this habit. If you fall down, keep coming back.

Again, if you'd like some support in forming these habits, I invite you to join me and more than a thousand others changing one habit at a time in my Sea Change Program.