

Setting Goals

Part of the *Learning to Live Well with Diabetes* Series

Welcome! A prediabetes or diabetes diagnosis can feel overwhelming. There is so much to learn and so much to do. The **Learning to Live Well with Diabetes** series was created to share clear, practical information and resources to offer support without adding extra stress. Setting small, manageable goals over time can help relieve stress and lead to lasting health improvements, and you don't have to do it alone. Please take what is helpful to you on your journey and leave the rest.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact:

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Getting Started

Making changes to support your health can be hard. Many people want to make changes but aren't sure where to start.

This tool is designed to help you choose small, realistic goals that feel possible right now. Small steps can add up over time. As you reach one goal, you can build on it and choose the next step that works for you.

Change does not happen all at once. It's normal to move forward, pause or try again. Setbacks happen to everyone and are part of learning what works in your daily life.

Every effort counts. Each step you take is progress.



Start by thinking about one area of your daily life that you would like to work on.

Choose something that feels important to you and possible to try right now. Then set a small goal you can practice over the next few days or weeks. When you feel comfortable with that step, you can build on it or choose a new goal.

Some people find it helpful to focus on one area at a time. Others like to try small changes in a few areas. There is no single "right" way—what matters most is choosing steps that fit your life. You can choose the area that feels most important to you right now and start with one small step.



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Action Step: Look at the table below. It offers some areas of daily life that are important to diabetes management. **Which one feels like a good place to start?**

Write it down here:

Areas of Daily Life that You Might Choose to Work On

| | |
|---|---|
| Eating Patterns and Nutrition | Managing Carbohydrates |
| Physical Activity or Movement | Sleep and Rest |
| Taking Medications as Prescribed | Checking or Monitoring Blood Glucose (if recommended) |
| Stress Management and Emotional Well-Being | Healthcare Appointments |
| Learning More about Diabetes and Self-Care | Problem Solving around Daily Routines |
| Building Support from Family, Friends, or Community | Preventative Care (Eye Exams, Food Care, Dental Care) |

Setting a Goal

Once you've identified an area to work on, you can set your goal to turn it into a clear path to progress. A good goal is simple, realistic, and fits into your daily life. These tips may help:



Start small. Choose a goal that feels doable right now. Small steps are more likely to become habits.



Be specific. Try to say exactly what you plan to do. For example, instead of “be more active,” you might say “take a 10-minute walk after dinner three days this week.”



Focus on what you can control. Goals work best when they focus on actions you can take.



Set a time to check in. Decide when you will look back and see how it went. You can keep the goal, adjust it, or choose a new one.



Be kind to yourself. If something doesn't go as planned, that's okay. Think about what you learned and try the next step.

Remember, the strategy is progress, not perfection. Even small efforts can lead to meaningful change over time.

Action Step: Try using the tips above to **make a goal**. Make sure it is specific and something you think you can achieve. How will you know you are accomplishing your goal? Who can help you meet your goal? **Write your goal below:**

On a Scale of 0 to 10, how confident are you that you can accomplish your goal? (Circle the number that best matches your confidence level.)

Not confident at all **0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10** Very confident

If you circled **2 or more**, think about what helped you feel confident enough to choose your number and not a lower one. If you circled **8 or less**, think about why you don't feel more confident. What might help you increase your confidence a bit? For example, if your confidence is at a 5, what might help you move it to a 7 or 8?

What helps you feel confident? What might increase your confidence? **Write these below:**

Checking in With Your Goal

Taking time to check in on your goal can help you see what's working and what may need to change. Think about how the goal went and how it fits into your daily life. Did it feel manageable? What helped you succeed?

If the goal was hard to meet, try to think about what got in the way. Barriers are common and can include things like time, stress, schedule changes or forgetting. Understanding these challenges can help you adjust your plan, so it works better for you.

After you check in, decide on the next step. You might keep the same goal, make it a little easier or more specific, or choose a new goal to try. Each check-in is a chance to learn and keep moving forward.

Action Step: Did any barriers get in the way of achieving your goal? **Write them down below:**

From here, you can decide on a manageable next step. Here are **three** options:

If you achieved your goal and feel confident that you can keep it going without too much effort, you can

- 1)** Add a new goal from the same area of daily life or from another area.
If you could not achieve your goal in the way that you wanted, you can:
- 2)** Make a plan to address any identified barriers and try again, or
- 3)** Make a new goal from the same area of daily life or from another area.

Making changes is a process, and each step helps you learn what works best for you.

Once you are comfortable setting goals, you can use the simplified goal setting tool on the next page. Use this tool as often as you like and remember that goals can always be adjusted as your needs and priorities change.

Remember

- ✓ Small steps can lead to meaningful change over time
- ✓ It's okay to adjust your goals as you learn what works
- ✓ Setbacks are a normal part of the process
- ✓ Every effort you make is progress

Simplified Goal Setting Tool

1. Choose an area of daily life to work on.

What area would you like to focus on right now?

- Nutrition or eating patterns
- Managing carbohydrates
- Physical activity or movement
- Sleep and rest
- Taking medications
- Checking blood glucose
- Stress or emotional well-being
- Healthcare appointments
- Learning more about diabetes
- Support from family or friends
- Preventive care (eye, foot, dental care)
- Other: _____

2. Set a specific goal.

What is one small step you would like to try?

My goal:

When will you do this and how often?

How will you know you are accomplishing your goal?

3. Check in with your confidence.

How confident do you feel that you can reach this goal?

0 = Not confident at all

10 = Very confident

Confidence level: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. What helped you choose that number and not a lower one?

5. What might increase your confidence?

If your confidence is lower than you would like, what might help?

- Make the goal smaller or simpler
- Ask someone for support
- Change the time or routine
- Get more information or tools
- Other: _____

6. Give it a try.

Practice your goal over the next few days or weeks. When will you check in? _____

7. Identify barriers.

When you check in, think about what helped and what got in the way.

What went well?

What made it harder to meet your goal?

8. Address barriers and choose your next step.

- Keep the same goal and add a new one
- Adjust the goal to address barriers and try again
- Try a new goal

My next step:

Remember:

Change takes time. Small steps and repeated practice can lead to meaningful progress.

Each time you try, you learn more about what works for you.