

# Making Healthy Habits

How, what, and when we eat become habits over time that are hard to change. It can be a slow process, but healthy choices can become a habit, too! Here are a few tips:

**Gather intel.** Keep track of what you eat and how you feel. Learn how specific foods impact you physically and mentally. This can inform your meal plans moving forward.  
**Example:** Try a food journal or mood-tracking app to see long-term impacts (see example below right).

**Start small.** Try just one or two small changes at first. Too many changes all at once can derail you before you even get started. Keep at it for a period of time and move to the next change when it becomes routine.  
**Example:** Commit to a side of vegetables with dinner daily.

**Make it easy.** Healthy choices are easier to make when they're readily available and easy to implement. Keep them in a convenient place to catch your attention.  
**Example:** Have pre-cut veggies (celery, carrots, etc.) in easy view to grab when you're looking for a quick snack.

**Keep it simple.** Think of it in terms of categories, like "fruits," "vegetables," "grains," etc. Try to get one or two from each category every day.  
**Example:** Have a piece of fruit with breakfast; a side of veggies with lunch; a grain side dish with dinner.

**Make it enjoyable.** It's easier to put a habit into regular practice if you like what you're doing! Notice flavors that appeal to you. Experiment with different cuisines or preparation methods.  
**Example:** Search online for new, interesting recipes using ingredients you know you enjoy. Try a new one each week.

**Enlist support.** Get family members or friends "on board" with your goal. Hold each other accountable.

**Example:** Include children on meal preparation with lots of healthy ingredients so they become invested in the process.

**Track your progress.** A simple "yes" or "no" checklist works nicely. Completing your daily goal, even on something small, gives you a "win" and keeps you motivated.

**Example:** Use a mobile app to help track of your successes and see patterns when you struggle (see ideas below).

**Be patient.** Habits don't form overnight! Slip ups will happen, especially at first. Don't let them derail your entire goal. Just re-commit when you are able.

**Example:** A busy week or disruption may throw you off track, but you can start again when your routines resume.

## Technology tools

**Daylio:** [daylio.net](https://daylio.net)

Make it easy to track your mood and daily activities with this mobile app.

**Habitica:** [habitica.com](https://habitica.com)

"Gamify" your goals with this mobile app. Track your habits/goals and earn rewards.

**Moodfit:** [www.getmoodfit.com](https://www.getmoodfit.com)

This mobile app helps you track your mood, nutrition, and more. Also includes techniques to lighten a low mood.

**StickK:** [www.stickk.com](https://www.stickk.com)

Put your money where your mouth is! This mobile app holds you accountable through a financial "Commitment Contract."