

3 short-term fitness goals that can lead to long-term success

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

As New Year's Day 2025 approached, millions of individuals were preparing to make changes they hoped would improve their fitness. In a Forbes Health/One Poll survey of 1,000 adults in the months leading up to the start of 2025, nearly half (48%) of respondents indicated improving their physical fitness would be a top priority over the course of the new year.

Fitness-based resolutions are popular every year, but people who aspire to make such changes recognize how difficult it can be to achieve them. In fact, the Forbes Health/One Poll survey found that roughly 44% of respondents indicated their resolutions flamed out at the two- or three-month marker. Though there's no one-size-fits-all strategy for sticking with and ultimately achieving a resolution, identifying short-term goals that can help people stay motivated can lead to long-term progress. Individuals who want to improve their physical fitness can consider these three short-term goals and use them as measuring sticks as they pursue more long-term objectives.

1. Aspire for incremental weight loss. Weight loss goals were the fourth most popular



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

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New Year's resolution for 2025 among participants in the Forbes Health/One Poll survey. Though that survey separated fitness goals from weight loss goals, the two are certainly linked. Individuals who aspire to lose 10 pounds undoubtedly recognize that such a goal cannot be achieved overnight,

so why not aspire to lose small amounts of weight at predetermined intervals? For example, if the end goal is losing 10 pounds, aim to lose two pounds by the end of January. Incremental progress can motivate individuals to stay the course and ultimately propel them toward achieving a more

substantial, long-term goal.

2. Exercise for a predetermined number of days each week. Another way to gradually build toward achieving long-term fitness goals is to establish monthly minimum exercise sessions. Individuals accustomed to a sedentary lifestyle can resolve

to exercise three days per week in the first month of their resolution, and then increase that by a day in the second month. A consistent schedule when designing this goal is imperative, which is why it can make more sense to plan for three days per week as opposed to 12 days per month.

3. Resolve to walk a mile per day. Walking is an accessible cardiovascular activity that can have a profound effect on overall health. Walking also can help condition sedentary individuals' bodies for more strenuous activity, which is a transition many people aspire to make when setting long-term fitness goals. A daily one-mile walk won't require a significant commitment of time, but it can help acclimate the body to routine exercise. As the effects of a daily walk begin to take hold, individuals may find it easier to engage in more strenuous physical activities, making this an ideal stepping stone on the way to achieving long-term fitness goals.

Short-term goals can help people remain motivated as they pursue more substantial goals that take longer to achieve. Such an approach can be especially useful for individuals resolving to improve their physical fitness at the start of a new year.