



New Year Resolutions!

The Babylonian New Year was adopted by the ancient Romans, as was the tradition of resolutions. The timing, however, eventually shifted with the Julian calendar in 46 B.C., which declared January 1st as the start of the new year. [January was named for the two-faced Roman god, Janus](#), who looks forward to new beginnings as well as backward for reflection and resolution. The Romans would offer sacrifices to Janus and make promises of good behavior for the year ahead



Resolutions From 1947 – Gallup Poll

1. Improve my disposition, be more understanding, control my temper
2. Improve my character, live a better life
3. Stop smoking, smoke less
4. Save more money
5. Stop drinking, drink less
6. Be more religious, go to church more often
7. Be more efficient and do a better job
8. Take better care of my health
9. Take a greater part in home life
10. Lose (or gain) weight

Today's Resolutions

1. Lose weight
2. Get organized
3. Spend less, save more
4. Enjoy life to the fullest
5. Stay fit and healthy
6. Learn something exciting
7. Quit smoking
8. Help others fulfill their dreams
9. Fall in love
10. Spend more time with family

10 Tips for Making Resolutions

- **1. Avoid wording your resolution negatively, such as “quitting” or “stopping” a behavior.** For example, say, “I want my nails to grow” instead of “I want to stop biting my nails.” Take a photo of your nails every day and log your progress.
- **2. Set aside time on your calendar to pause and reflect.** Love coffee? Sit down during coffee mornings with a journal or notebook and write out your status. If it helps, piggyback this task with another one you

already do. For example, if you check your calendar and day's events at a certain time, this is a good time to check your progress against your goal.

- **3. Keep it simple.** Settle on one or two goals. Not a big list. For example, our founder, Robert B. Thomas, resolved to “begin the New Year’s square with every man.” This meant that he settled his debts.
- **4. Pick a goal you think will make you feel better.** Not just something that you think you should do or what society is telling you to change. For example, if you do wish to lose weight for health, how about saying, “I want to eat more interesting salads” for lunch and then go find all the yummy toppings you can find—artichoke hearts, avocados, tomatoes, pickles, capers, olives, and protein.
- **5. Define a goal that is specific and measurable.** Saying, “I want to be more helpful to others” is vague. But saying, “I am going to help the needy by signing up for the church’s food pantry each month” is specific. Keep track of your progress in a notebook or journal.
- **6. When you think about what you wish to achieve, consider what obstacles could get in your way and see how to remove those barriers.** If your goal is to take your pills or vitamins each day and you are forgetful, get a 7-day pill box. When you refill once a week on Saturday night, check to see whether you need to renew your prescriptions.
- **7. Define a goal that is time-bound and realistic.** Plan for a month at a time, not a lifetime. For example, resolving to retire in 5 years may not be realistic, but creating a monthly budget and setting aside all your surplus towards retirement may be an achievable goal. Each month, track your spending and then see where you’re overspending without realizing it.
- **8. Create an incentive.** For example, if you want to stop using your phone at dinner, put it in a basket nearby. If you take it out of the basket, you must give a family member at the table a dollar.
- **9. Change up your routine.** For example, if you aren’t brushing your teeth long enough, perhaps come up with another task to do while you brush your teeth—such as wiping down the bathroom mirror! Perhaps you need a tool to help reach your goals! For example: “I resolve to be on time to meetings this week.” To achieve your goal, set an alarm with a 5-minute reminder before any meetings.
- **10. If you slip up, don’t worry about it.** But if you slip again, reconsider your plan. Are you too ambitious? If you plan to walk five days a week, scale it back to 3 days and plan which days you’ll walk to get into a schedule; how about walking before you eat lunch so that you can enjoy it after your walk?