

## Why have goals?

**Studies show that people who set challenging but achievable goals are more likely to be active.**

### How to set exercise goals

- 1) Establish what you can do now. Example: Ride a stationary bike for 10 minutes, once a week.
- 2) Set a goal for this week. Example: Ride a stationary bike for 10 minutes, with a little resistance, twice a week.
- 3) Set a goal for this month. Example: Add 5 minutes to my stationary bike ride each week.
- 4) Check in at the end of each week to see how you are doing. Did you reach your goal? Adjust your goal so it is challenging but doable.

“TRY. There is so much emphasis on what a person cannot do; focus on what you *can* do. Keeping a journal or log of how much activity you are getting is a great way to track your progress and to create a commitment to the goals you have set.”

– Ravin Persad,  
Kinesiologist and  
CSEP Certified Exercise  
Physiologist

### Create a goal setting sheet.

First, think about what you can do right now. Then write down:

- 1) Your goal for the week
- 2) Your goal for the month

### Tips to achieve your realistic goals

**Be flexible:** Life is unpredictable. You may need to modify your goals to accommodate symptoms or unexpected events.

**Be steady:** You don't always have to increase the amount of activity you are doing; maintaining your level of physical fitness can be a goal.

**Share your goals:** Tell someone what you are aiming for, and find a buddy to exercise with.

**Be aware of your body:** Note how you're feeling and do a little if you can't do a lot.

**Take note of your success:** Track your progress on your calendar or use an app on your smartphone.

# Making an Action Plan

Include in your plan **what** activity you are going to do, **where** you'll do physical activity, **when** you'll do it, for **how long**, and the **intensity level** you are aiming for. The Canadian Physical Activity Guideline for Adults Living with MS recommend activities performed at a moderate intensity.

## Sample Action Plan

Here is a sample plan action plan for meeting the guidelines.

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<b>Activity:</b>	Stationary bike, then sit-ups, push-ups and squats	Off	Resistance Band	Off	Swim	Off	Off
<b>Where:</b>	Community Centre		Home		Community Pool		
<b>When:</b>	11 am		8 am		5:30 pm		
<b>How long:</b>	30 min. bike and 20 min. strength		10 min. legs, 10 min. arms		30 min.		
<b>Intensity:</b>	Moderate		Moderate		Moderate		

## Back-up Plan

Things may get in the way of your physical activity plan. Be flexible and adjust the plan. Think about the unexpected events that might pop up in your life. Have a back up plan for the days life throws you a curve.

Unexpected event	Back-Up plan
Fatigue/symptoms	Change workout from Saturday to Sunday
Bad weather	Use treadmill instead of walking outdoors
Working late	Do 10 min. instead of 20 min.

For more sample action plans and to download your own goal setting and planning worksheet, go to:

[www.csep.ca/guidelines](http://www.csep.ca/guidelines) or  
[www.mssociety.ca/physicalactivity](http://www.mssociety.ca/physicalactivity)

## How to stick with your plan

Need help actually sticking to your action plan? Here are three ways to make sure you keep going:

- 1) Use action cues. Cues are triggers for a planned behaviour. For instance, if you are planning to do strength training later while watching TV, place the resistance band beside the TV, so it's right there.
- 2) Focus on the first stage of getting ready. If you've set your alarm clock and planned a morning activity, but you're losing motivation because of all that's involved, just focus on dressing appropriately and getting out the door.. the rest will fall into place!
- 3) Make physical activity plans with others. They will help keep you on track.