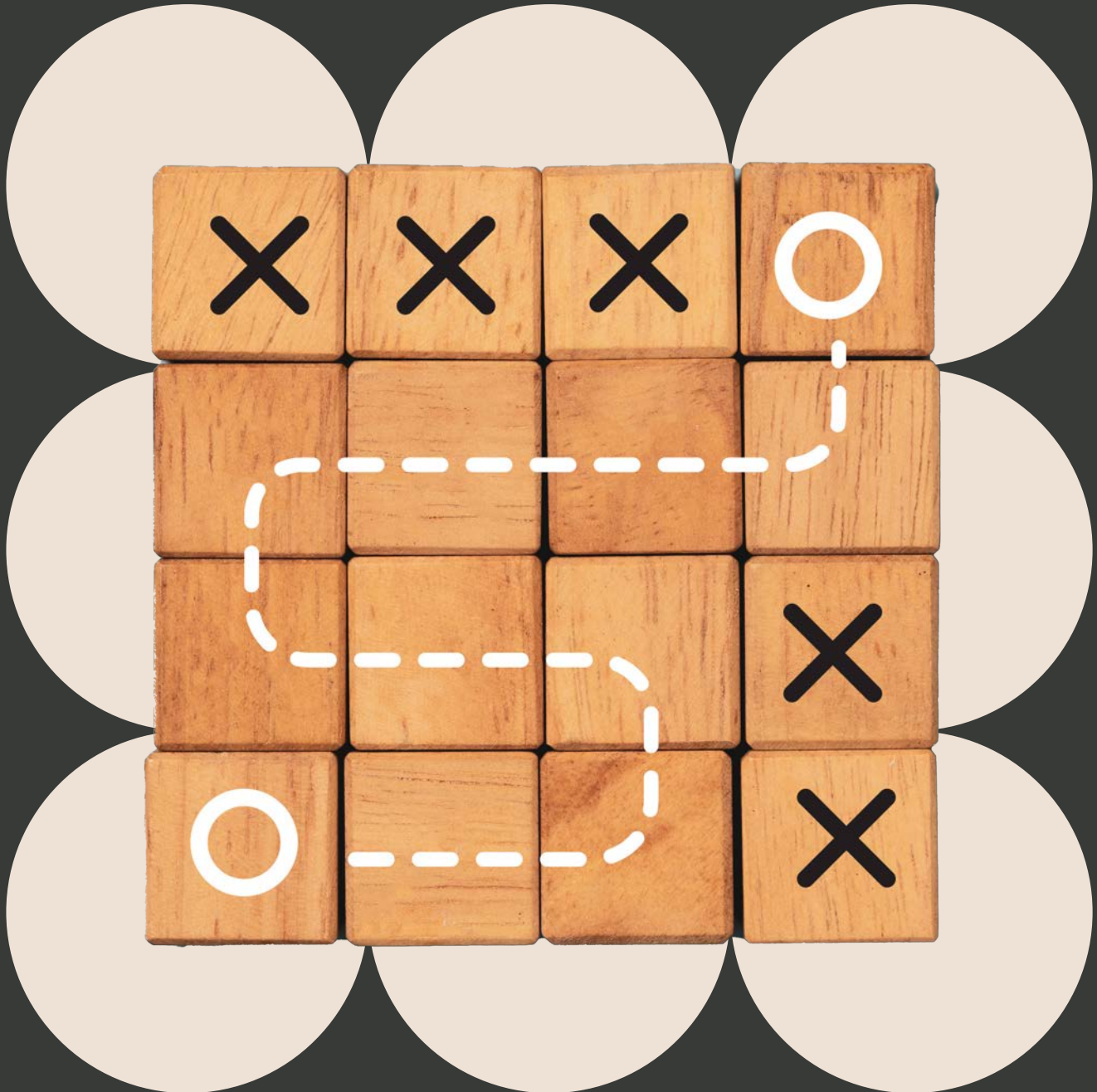


Tricky situations



Common tricky situations

When we are working on healthy habits, we might know what we need to do, but putting it into practice can be harder than we think. It's normal to experience challenges or tricky situations when working towards new health goals.

Here are some common tricky situations that may make it difficult to stick to your health goals, and some solutions to try next time they come up.



Write down the ideas you'd like to try in the space below each tricky situation.

Social pressure from others to eat unhealthy or be inactive

- Take the lead on social events. Organise to do something active before a social catch up.
- Involve other family members or friends in the process. For example, ask others to help cook meals or nominate an activity to do together.
- Choose to work on healthy habits with like-minded people. For example, join a fitness class or team sport to surround yourself with others that want to be active to.
- Role model the healthy habits you are working on for others. This can be the motivation they need to get on board.
- Talk about your health goals ahead of time. For example, send friends or family a message ahead of time to let them know what you are working on.
- Stick to your goals if they are working for you. Remember, keep your 'why' in front of mind. Try not to give in social pressure from others.
- Discuss healthy habits you are working on with family and friends. Explain why it's important for you and ask them for support.

Next time I experience social pressure from others I will...

Eating at a restaurant or getting takeaway

- Eat out with other family members or friends to make mealtimes more social and enjoyable.
- Scan the menu for food that has been cooked in a healthy way (e.g. grilled instead of fried).
- Listen to your bodies hunger cues while eating out and stop when you are feeling full. It's okay to ask for a takeaway box if you don't finish your meal.
- Scan the menu for options with wholegrains (e.g. wholemeal roti or naan bread instead of white grain options)
- Don't forget to drink water. Even if you order another drink, try to have a glass of water alongside it.
- Scan the menu for an option with vegetables listed in the ingredients.
- Order a side salad or add extra vegetables. You can always ask for extra vegetables to be added to your meal or go for a vegetarian option. Remember, lentils or beans count as vegetables too!



Next time I eat out at a restaurant or get takeaway I will...

Parties or celebrations

- Bring a plate of nutritious food to share with everyone. This way everyone can have a nutritious meal and you can inspire friends and family to eat in a healthy way too.
- Enjoy the party or celebration food. If you're worried about overeating, try to choose 2 – 3 foods to eat, then check in with your hunger cues.
- If you're hosting, serve a variety of snacks with foods from the five food groups, make sure there are some nutritious options available.
- Listen to your bodies hunger cues and stop eating when you are truly feeling full. If you're hosting and there's lots of food left over, offer some to your guests to take home.
- Bring a bottle of water with you, or if you are hosting make sure to have a jug of water available.
- When you're hosting, try to bring the food out at a specific time. Once everyone has finished, remove it from the table.
- Eat a nutritious meal before you go. That way you're not going to the party or celebration starving hungry.



Next time I am at a party or celebration I will...

Too busy

- Aim to plan and prepare meals and snacks in advance. That way they'll be quick and easy to prepare when you need them. For example, cook soups or pasta sauce in bulk and freeze into portions for weeknight dinners.
- Break activity time up into shorter blocks. Finding time for a few 10 – 15 minutes blocks of activity might be easier to fit into your day than trying to fit it in an hour all at once.
- Focus on one thing at a time. When life gets busy it can feel overwhelming to make changes, and healthy habits might not be a priority. Try to choose one or two things to focus on each week and make them achievable, then build up over time.
- Try to make activity fit into your daily routine. For example: stop at the park, gym, or sports centre on your way home. Try walking or riding to get to places. Create a routine of doing something active for 20 minutes after dinner each night, like an evening walk.
- Work together with family members or friends to support each other. Having someone to talk about healthy choices can be helpful for ideas, and to keep up motivation. You might like to arrange social activities or meals together.
- Make everyday tasks active. For example, folding and putting laundry away, cooking and preparing food, cleaning and tidying.



To prepare for times I am too busy I will...

Problem solving cycle

The problem-solving cycle can help you when facing tricky situations. It helps us break down problems into small steps and to find the solution that works best.



When you find a problem or tricky situation, work through the problem-solving cycle by answering each of the questions. Write your responses below.

A

Ask. Ask yourself, what is the problem you want to solve?

B

Brainstorm. Brainstorm possible solutions to the problem.

C

Compare. Compare the solutions you have brainstormed. What are the pros and cons of each?

D

Decide. Decide on a solution and turn it into a SMART goal.

E

Evaluate and reflect. Did it work? If not go back to step B to brainstorm new possible solutions.



SMART stands for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime limited.

Problem solving cycle in action

Here are some examples of how you can use the problem-solving cycle to find solutions to some common tricky situations.

I want to eat more vegetables

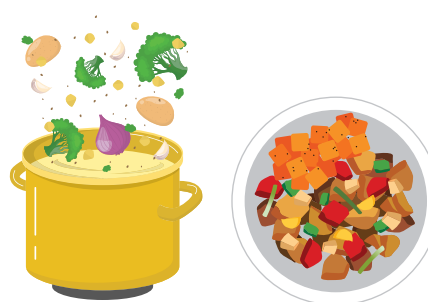
Ask. Ask yourself, what is the problem you want to solve?

I want to start eating more vegetables. I only like potato and carrot at the moment.



Brainstorm. Brainstorm possible solutions to the problem.

- Hide vegetables in food by mixing them in with other ingredients.
- Serve a new vegetable alongside carrots and potato at meals.



Compare. Compare the solutions you have brainstormed.

What are the pros and cons of each?

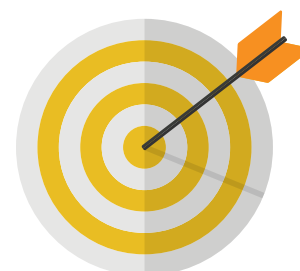
- Hide vegetables in food by mixing them in with other ingredients – A good short-term solution but it probably won't help me like vegetables.
- Serve a new vegetable alongside carrots or potato at meals – This way I know if I don't feel like trying the new vegetable, I will still have one vegetable I enjoy eating on my plate.



Decide. Decide on a solution and turn it into a SMART goal.

Serve a new vegetable alongside carrots or potato at every meal.

SMART goal: I will serve a new vegetable alongside potato or carrot for dinner 3 days this week.



Evaluate and reflect. Did it work? If not go back to step B to brainstorm new possible solutions.

I spend too much time on screens

Ask. Ask yourself, what is the problem you want to solve?

I'm spending too much time watching TV. I watch 5 hours in the evening when I get home.



Brainstorm. Brainstorm possible solutions to the problem.

- Do something active in the evening instead with my family.
- Allocate some time to do chores each night.



Compare. Compare the solutions you have brainstormed. What are the pros and cons of each?

- Do something active in the evening instead with my family. – This will help everyone keep active.
- Allocate some time to do chores each night. – This might not increase my activity levels.



Decide. Decide on a solution and turn it into a SMART goal.

Do something active in the evening instead with my family.

SMART goal: We will go for a 30-minute walk instead of watching TV three nights this week. Don't forget to make an action plan!



Evaluate and reflect. Did it work? If not go back to step B to brainstorm new possible solutions.

I don't have time to be active

Ask. Ask yourself, what is the problem you want to solve?

By the time I get home in the evening, I don't have time to be active.



Brainstorm. Brainstorm possible solutions to the problem.

- Walk or ride my bike to and from school/work.
- Turn household chores like cleaning and gardening into an activity.



Compare. Compare the solutions you have brainstormed. What are the pros and cons of each?

- Walk or ride my bike to and from school/work. – This won't take too much extra time out of my day.
- Turn household chores like cleaning and gardening into an activity. - This isn't high intensity activity



Decide. Decide on a solution and turn it into a SMART goal.

Walk or ride my bike to and from school/work.

SMART goal: I will ride my bike to school/work and back 3 days a week this week.



Evaluate and reflect. Did it work? If not go back to step B to brainstorm new possible solutions.

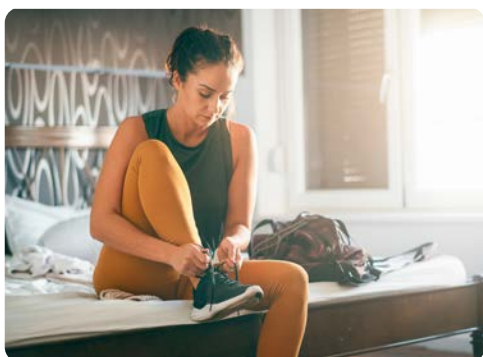
What's a routine?

A routine is a series of habits performed together so many times that they become automatic. When healthy habits are part of a routine, it's easier to manage tricky situations when they come up. We all have routines that we perform every day without thinking about it.



Morning routine:

- Waking up at the same time every day.
- Washing your face and brushing your teeth.
- Eating a nutritious breakfast.
- Getting dressed and preparing for the day ahead.



Afternoon routine (after school or work):

- Coming home and washing your hands.
- Having a healthy snack.
- Engaging in physical activity or playing outdoors.
- Prepare and cook dinner.



Bedtime routine:

- Taking a bath or shower.
- Brushing your teeth before going to bed.
- Reading a book or engaging in a calming activity.
- Going to sleep at a consistent time each night.

Benefits of having routines

- Routines provide structure. They help us know what to expect and create a sense of stability in our lives.
- Routines reduce stress. When we have set habits, we don't need to worry about what comes next; it becomes second nature.
- Routines improve health. By incorporating healthy habits, like eating nutritious meals and getting enough sleep, we take care of our bodies and minds.
- Routines make us more efficient. When we follow a routine, we can complete tasks more quickly, leaving more time for enjoyable activities.

Build a healthy routine



We can create routines to help us stick to our healthy habits. Use this template to build a healthy routine for different times of the day. Write down the different tasks that will make up your routine, and the time you will do each task.

Morning routine

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Examples of healthy habits you may like to include in your morning routine

- Eat breakfast.
- Drink a glass of water.
- Walk or ride to get to your destination.
- Practice mindful eating.
- Pack a healthy lunchbox.
- Brush your teeth.
- Get dressed.



Afternoon routine

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Examples of healthy habits you may like to include in your afternoon routine

- Walk or ride home.
- Prepare and eat a healthy snack.
- Drink a glass of water.
- Change into activewear and runners.
- Do something active, like go for a walk.
- Do some chores like cleaning, or gardening.



Evening routine

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

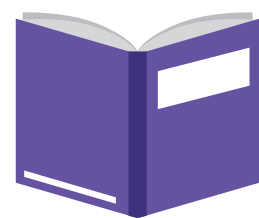
Time:

Task:

Time:

Examples of healthy habits you may like to include in your evening routine

- Cook and prepare dinner.
- Eat dinner.
- Clear the table and wash up.
- Go for an evening walk.
- Read a book.
- Practice gratitude or mindfulness by writing in a journal.
- Brush your teeth.



Mealtime routine

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Task:

Time:

Examples of healthy habits you may like to include in your mealtime routine

- Find a recipe to try
- Check what food is in the pantry, fridge, or freezer
- Write a shopping list
- Go to the supermarket to buy groceries
- Prepare the ingredients
- Cook the meal
- Serve up and eat with others at the table
- Clear the table and wash dishes



Putting this into practice

Below is a list of suggested SMART goals that you may choose to work on.



Tick ✓ the goals you would like to work on right now and cross ✗ the goals you don't need to work on right now. Then, select two to three goals to work on at a time. Or write your own goals in the section below. Remember, goals can be adapted to be easier or harder, so they are suitable for you and your current situation.

SMART Goal suggestions

- The next time you eat out or get takeaway, search the menu for a healthier choice.
- Wake up 15 minutes earlier every day this week to add a new healthy habit to your morning routine.
- Add a serve of vegetables to your meal next time you eat out or get takeaway.
- Choose a meal that has been cooked in a healthy way (e.g. grilled not fried) next time you eat out or get takeaway.
- Do something active for 20 minutes in your evening routine every day this week.
- Next time you are at a party or celebration, listen to your hunger signals and stop eating when you feel full.
- Write a shopping list before you go to the supermarket once this week.
- Have a set regular bedtime and wake up time, every day this week.
- Use the problem-solving cycle to make a SMART goal to help you be more active this week.
- Use the problem-solving cycle to make a SMART goal to help you eat in a healthy way this week.

My goals to work on are: