

# GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

No matter what your plans are for New Year's 2020 — whether you're heading out to a festive New Year's Eve party or kicking back with one of the best New Year's movies — there's one tradition you need to uphold: making a New Year's resolution. The first day of the year is the perfect time to reprioritize your life and set goals for the months to come.

This year, fill your resolution list with easy, good-for-you goals. Try one of these simple lifestyle tweaks each day, and you'll not only jumpstart a healthier body and mind — you'll feel fantastic and so psyched to make 2020 your best year ever. There are tips here that will calm you down and ease your stress, help your skin glow, and organize the crazy in your life — maybe you'll even pick up a cute new daily planner. You'll find easy ways to squeeze a little more fitness into your busy days and sane strategies for decluttering. Hoping to make 2020 the year you slim down a bit? We've got some surprising, fresh ideas that will help you get there. This year, it's time to put you first. For even more "new year, new you" inspiration, don't miss these inspirational New Year's quotes.

### **1. Build a better budget.**

If there's one New Year's resolution that will help you the most in the long run, it's making a vow to save more money. Before you head back to the office, outline a budget that works for you — and make a plan for how you'll stick to it. Apps like Mint and You Need a Budget (YNAB) can help you do this as painlessly as possible.

### **2 Cook one new thing each week.**

Everyone wants to eat healthier in the new year, but you should also try to eat more diverse foods. After all, variety is the spice of life. This year, choose an easy dinner recipe you've never tried before at least once a week. (Pick up a copy of the Good Housekeeping Cookbook for over 1,200 triple-tested recipes!)

### **3 Read more books.**

January is the perfect time of year to snuggle up with a new book. Keep yourself accountable to this New Year's resolution by opening a Goodreads account and reviewing each book you read. By next year, you'll have a clear snapshot of how well you accomplished this goal.

### **4 Join a club.**

Starting a new hobby is one thing, but joining a club will help you meet new people in the process. Sites like Meetup can help you find a group of people with similar interests in your area.

### **5 Drink less alcohol.**

You already know you don't need to drink to have fun — and so why not make this year the one you cut back and join the sober curious movement? Doing so could improve your mood, sleep, skin, and immune system. Plus, it'll also help you save money.

## **6 Share your resolutions one-on-one.**

"Some research shows that telling others your goal makes you feel like you've already achieved it," says Dr. Oz. But other studies indicate that sharing progress can help you keep going, he adds. Dr. Oz's advice: Confide in one friend, "then share achievements with others when you're on the road to success."

## **7 Eat veggies regularly.**

Whether you're slimming down or just staying healthy, vegetables are your friends, says Mehmet Oz, M.D. One woman who appeared on his show — Tiffany, who lost 31 pounds — says, "I sauté onions, peppers, mushrooms, corn — whatever I have in the freezer — and toss that on a bed of baby arugula and spinach." Sounds delicious.

## **8 Book all your doctor's visits for the year.**

Open your calendar app and make your appointments for the year in one sitting — not only will you get the anxiety-inducing nuisance over with, but exams will be less likely to get squeezed out as life gets bonkers. Start with your GP, and ask which screenings (e.g., mammogram, colonoscopy) you're due for. Slot those in, then move on to the dentist's office, etc.

## **9 Cut calories without going crazy.**

Who has time to eat healthy!? You do, with our new cookbook. With recipes from Good Housekeeping's Test Kitchen, the cookbook makes it simple to use your Instant Pot to make nutritious, yummy meals. Or try out our new meal plan, 1,200 Calories and More: The Complete Guide to Building Your Perfect Weight-Loss Meal Plan.

## **10 Take the stairs.**

Take 10 minutes to run up the stairs in your office or home. A study in the journal *Physiology & Behavior* found that tired women who climbed stairs for 10 minutes got a bigger energy boost than those who had the caffeine equivalent of a can of soda or half a cup of coffee (and burned calories too!).

## **11 Become a plant owner.**

Swing by the garden center after brunch this weekend. Just the presence of indoor plants can lower human stress levels, research shows, and one study found that actively caring for plants calmed the autonomic nervous system and lowered blood pressure. And when people work near plants, they report greater concentration, satisfaction, and perceived air quality.

## **12 Plan a vacation.**

Women who vacation at least twice a year have a lower heart attack risk than those do so rarely. And researchers have found that even thinking about an upcoming trip can boost happiness for weeks. REI's Outessa weekend retreats for women are relaxing and active: Enjoy sunrise yoga, kayaking, rock climbing, and hiking with your crew.

## **13 Start doing yoga with your partner.**

A Sunday morning couples' class could make Sunday afternoon much more fun. Experts at Loyola's Sexual Wellness Clinic believe partner yoga helps couples get more comfortable with each other's bodies, a boon for better sex. Solo yoga can increase enjoyment as well, affecting arousal, desire, and satisfaction — the practice helps relax your mind and strengthen pelvic muscles.

## **14 Drink up.**

You know you need to hydrate—but it's especially important when you get only six hours of sleep (or less!). You're more likely to be dehydrated the day after a short night of zzz's—because a hormone that regulates your body's water conservation is released in later stages of sleep. So down some extra water on those days.

**15 Listen to novels while you work out.**

Exercisers who saved an audiobook for the gym worked out 51% more often than those who didn't, per a study in Management Science. Sweat while listening to an intense thriller, and the treadmill time will fly by.

**16 Volunteer, volunteer, volunteer.**

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is also the National Day of Service, so it's a great time to volunteer to clean up a park or help at an animal shelter. And research shows that pitching in regularly can lead to less stress and lower blood pressure. So use this day to jumpstart a longer-term personal commitment.

**17 Decorate with family history.**

In happy and long-lived cultures, people often display items from their families' pasts, says The Blue Zones of Happiness author Dan Buettner. "They remember and honor where they come from," he says. "We find that in happier cultures around the world, folks feel like part of a continuum." So hang your grandparents' wedding portrait, or put meaningful memorabilia on shelves..

**18 Sanitize your phone weekly.**

Like, now! We check our phones a gazillion times a day, and if you've taken yours into the ladies' room, you're not the only one. But that means phones carry about 10 times as much bacteria as most toilet seats, says Charles Gerba, Ph.D., a microbiologist and professor at the University of Arizona, Tucson. (British researchers even found that one in six devices was contaminated with E. coli — blech!). The GH Cleaning Lab likes Lysol Disinfectant Wipes (around \$5 for a three-pack), which kill 99.9% of viruses and bacteria. They don't contain bleach, so they're safe to use on smartphones and tablets (but double-check your phone manufacturer's recs).

**19 Try hydrotherapy.**

Feeling sore? Clients at The Spa at Rancho Valencia in Rancho Santa Fe, California, switch between 10 minutes in a hot sauna and 30 seconds in a 60°F bath, a treatment known as hydrotherapy. "The drastic temperature change increases blood flow and flushes out lactic acid," says spa director Kristi Dickinson, making them feel energized. Research suggests that hydrotherapy may aid in muscle recovery more than a day of rest. For at-home treatment, end a hot shower with a burst of ice-cold water.

**20 Do one new exercise move.**

Plyometric exercises — like burpee push-ups — get you fast results, says fitness expert Jillian Michaels:

1. Squat and place hands on floor (as shown).
2. Jump feet into plank.
3. Drop chest to ground and perform a push-up.
4. Jump feet forward into squat position.
5. Jump up, reaching hands over head, and repeat sequence for 30 seconds. Rest. Do two more sets.

Make it easier: Step back instead of jumping and do push-up on knees.

### **21 Delegate more chores.**

Money can't buy happiness — but it can buy time, which is the next best thing. A large study found that people who spent money on time-saving services, such as using GH Lab-tested TaskRabbit to get someone to clean out the garage, obtained greater life satisfaction and happiness than those who shelled out for material goods. If money is tight, take on the least favorite chore of a friend and have her do the same for you.

### **22 Keep clutter out of the kitchen.**

If you can hardly see your counters through all the papers, Post-its, and not-yet-put-away groceries, you may pay for that chaos on the scale. In one study, researchers found that when women were surrounded by clutter, they tended to eat more cookies — especially when stressed. Take 20 minutes to whisk it all where it belongs, and it can help you eat more mindfully in days to come.

### **23 Wear workout gear that makes you feel good.**

Spend the afternoon shopping for workout clothes that flatter your body: Studies show that what we wear affects the way we feel, which impacts our ability to get stuff done, says Hajo Adam, Ph.D., a professor at Rice University. It's a phenomenon known as "enclothed cognition," and it's as true in Zumba as at work. The GH Textiles Lab are fans of the Lululemon Align Pant II, which are lightweight with a high rise fit, so they're flattering without making you feel like you're wearing shapewear.

### **24 Explore new hobbies.**

Another sleepy Sunday? Today's the day you try Ethiopian food, attend a ballet, or take a painting class — whatever feels fun. When researchers followed 7,500 people for 25 years, they found that those who complained of major boredom were roughly twice as likely to die from heart disease.

### **25 Play upbeat music.**

Blasting any happy-making tune can work multiple mind-body wonders including reducing pain during exercise, elevating mood, and lowering stress, research shows. So make a playlist — any songs that oat your spirit will do the job.

### **26 Take back your lunch break.**

If you scarf your sammie at your desk while skimming the web, you're in good company: Only one in five Americans actually takes a lunch break, according to a survey, even though doing so has been linked to increased productivity. Grab a copy of *Gone for Lunch* by Laura Archer, a pocket-size guide featuring 52 fun ways to spend your midday hiatus, from scoping out cool architecture to making a film on your smartphone to getting your steps in for 30 minutes.

### **27 Donate old clothes.**

Bye-bye, too-tight jeans. "Keeping smaller clothes as motivation to slim down is baloney," says Kit Yarrow, Ph.D., a psychologist at Golden Gate University, "and it tends to backfire." Studies show that muffin-top shaming doesn't help, but focusing on being healthy does. After doing your Goodwill drop-off, take a lighter-cooking class or meet a pal for a hike.

### **28 Write to yourself.**

When your inner critic picks up her bullhorn, jot down the kind words you'd say to a friend in the same situation. "We have such a hard time channeling compassion for ourselves," says Emma Seppala, Ph.D., of Stanford's Center for Compassion and Altruism Research. "Writing it down makes it easier to shift perspective."

### **29 Do one thing at a time.**

Multitasking doesn't make you more efficient, but it does stress you out, says mindfulness expert Pedram Shojai, author of *The Art of Stopping Time*. "If your focus is fragmented, you'll likely find yourself getting anxious as new items come up when old ones are still incomplete," he says. Instead, he suggests, organize your activities into chunks of time, such as kid time and cooking time, and then "commit to being focused in those allotted minutes and see what happens."

### **30 Switch up your routine.**

Any exercise is good for you, but one study found that people who worked out in multiple ways were less likely to have shortened telomeres, the DNA segments on the ends of chromosomes that tend to break down as we age (longer telomeres are thought to be an indication that a body is aging slowly). Sign up for tai chi, rock climbing, crew, and Pilates... so many choices!

### **31 Make chaotic zones (like the entryway) calm.**

Make the chaotic zone by the door a calm, happy space, advises Carly Moeller, founder of interior design firm Unpatterned. Set up simple systems (a mail basket, a shoe bench, hooks) for tidying. Then move art or flowers from the living room and invest in a mirror or a colorful rug. "You can be a little cheeky because it's a small area," she says.

### **32 Shop for new sneakers.**

Check out these GH Wellness Lab tips to start the year off on the right foot:

Shop in the p.m. When feet are slightly swollen, it's easier to find the right size and avoid pinchy shoes.

Bring your old pair. Staff at specialty stores can assess which areas are most worn so as to suggest a pair with appropriate support for your gait.

Do squats. Lace up and do a couple of knee bends. If the shoes are properly supportive, your knee should move over your foot, not inward.

Buy the best walking shoes. The Brooks Adrenaline GTS 18 has good support for walking and running.

### **33 Go to bed on time, with your partner.**

Getting sufficient zzz's can make you feel ready for action. A study in the *Journal of Sexual Medicine* found that women who got more sleep had more desire the next day and an overall easier time becoming aroused. Every additional hour they slept increased their likelihood of having sex by 14%. So skip late-night web searches and hit the hay.

### **34 Treat yourself to affordable facials.**

Give yourself a spa-level nutrient infusion. Yes to Super Blueberries combines berry power with the probiotics from Greek yogurt to refresh and recharge your skin in minutes.

### **35 Give yourself more compliments.**

Repeat after us: "Today is my day. I'm thankful for me." Positive self-talk can help you focus on what's good in your life, says psychologist Joy Harden Bradford, Ph.D. Research shows that a little vitamin G (for gratitude) can make you feel happier and more satisfied and even improve your sleep. "If you repeat an affirmation related to gratitude in the morning, you're likely to show and feel more of it throughout that day," Bradford says. You're so welcome!

### **36 Spend less time glued to your phone.**

In a GH survey, 83% of readers told us they lost track of how long they spent on their devices. But short of deleting all social apps, it can be hard to trade screen time for more productive pastimes like walking the dog and coffee with friends. Whether you're Team iPhone or Team Android, download the latest software to access built-in tools that help you track your personal app usage.

### **37 Learn a new skill.**

Physical exercise keeps your body healthy, and mental exercise is key to keeping your mind sharp. Trying something new can boost memory skills and more. Turn to the (celeb) pros! Visit MasterClass's site to take lessons from writer David Sedaris or dancer Misty Copeland. You'll get instruction videos, assignments and extras. Courses are \$90, or sign up for a year of unlimited ones for \$15/month.

### **38 Be current about current events.**

It can be hard to keep up with what's going on in the world given the lightning-fast news cycle, #fakenews and our own hectic lives. But it's more important than ever to stay informed. If you're sick of sifting through clutter on Facebook or Twitter, join Flipboard. Think of it as your personal news hub. Download the app, then list your interests, pick outlets to get updates from, follow your fave Twitter users and more. The app curates it all in one place with a smart, stunning design that makes scrolling easy.

### **39 Meditate every day.**

The benefits are endless (think better sleep, less stress and more focus), but it can be hard to switch off your mind at first. Turn to devices and apps to get a jump-start. In Wellness Lab tests, consumers said Muse: The Brain Sensing Headband helped lower their stress levels. You wear the headband, and it guides you through sessions with instant feedback.

### **40 Add more citrus to your grocery cart.**

When you see all those gorgeous in-season grapefruits, oranges, clementines, and pomelos in the produce aisle, grab an armful. Winter citrus can help keep skin looking healthy thanks to vitamin C, which aids in collagen production. In fact, an American Journal of Clinical Nutrition study found that people who ate foods high in C had fewer wrinkles and less age-related dry skin than those who didn't. Try clementine sections sprinkled with pistachios or sweet grapefruit dipped in Greek yogurt for a snack.

### **41 Try this trick for a better night's sleep.**

Next time you have trouble nodding off, there's a research-backed idea that could help: Take a hot bath. It helped people fall asleep about 10 minutes earlier and have a better quality snooze. The best time to do it? About an hour or two before bedtime, says other research.

### **42 Ease stress with kindness**

Kindness toward yourself! Recent research shows that practicing self-compassion slowed people's heart rate and sweating, two symptoms our bodies produce when under chronic stress. So take some time each day to focus on something you love about yourself.

### **43 Get artsy.**

To help ward off the blues, engage in a bit of culture—a trip to the museum, a night at the theater, or attending a concert. A new study found that people who make regular trips to these types of attractions have a lower risk of developing depression than those who don't.

#### **44 Chow down on blueberries and walnuts.**

Separately or together, these berries and nuts have health superpowers: Blueberries have been shown to help people with metabolic syndrome (a cluster of conditions such as high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and too much belly fat), and walnuts can help reduce LDL, the bad kind of cholesterol. Toss them on oatmeal or in a salad, and eat up for a healthier 2020!

#### **45 Make your home more fragrant.**

Because smell is associated with the parts of the brain that process emotion and store memories, certain aromas can affect mood, says olfactory expert Rachel Herz, Ph.D., author of *The Scent of Desire*. Research shows that vanilla makes people more relaxed and joyful (mmm, baking), while peppermint can boost energy and lavender can zap stress.

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