

# What's Your Goal?

What's important to you? Good grades? Enough energy for in-line skating? Looking your best? You can reach your goals. It just takes a little thinking, some planning, and a commitment to face a challenge.

Here are six steps to help you reach your goals.

**1. Set a realistic goal.** This is the most important step. Be honest with yourself. Set a goal that is within your abilities but that will also challenge you.

**2. Make a plan.** Think of all the small steps you can take to meet your bigger goal. When you take things slowly—step by step—you'll see progress faster. And that will feel great.

**3. Prepare for challenges.** Lack of time or energy are common challenges for many teens. Think of creative ways to deal with them.

**4. Ask for help.** There's no need to go it alone. A little support and encouragement from people who care about you can go a long way.

**5. Give yourself a break.** It's okay to stray from your plan now and then. Nobody's perfect.

**6. Pat yourself on the back.** Check your success. Whether you take only a few small steps, or get to your final destination, enjoy the rewards of being your best.

## Janine

**NAME:** Janine

**AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITY:** Basketball

**HER STORY:** At every lunch, Janine spends so much time visiting with friends, she barely eats. When school is over and basketball practice begins, she's starved and buys something from a vending machine. It's the same food everyday. In the first half of practice she feels pooped—and she's still hungry.

**1. Set a realistic goal.** Janine decided to take charge of her food choices so she wouldn't be hungry at basketball practice.

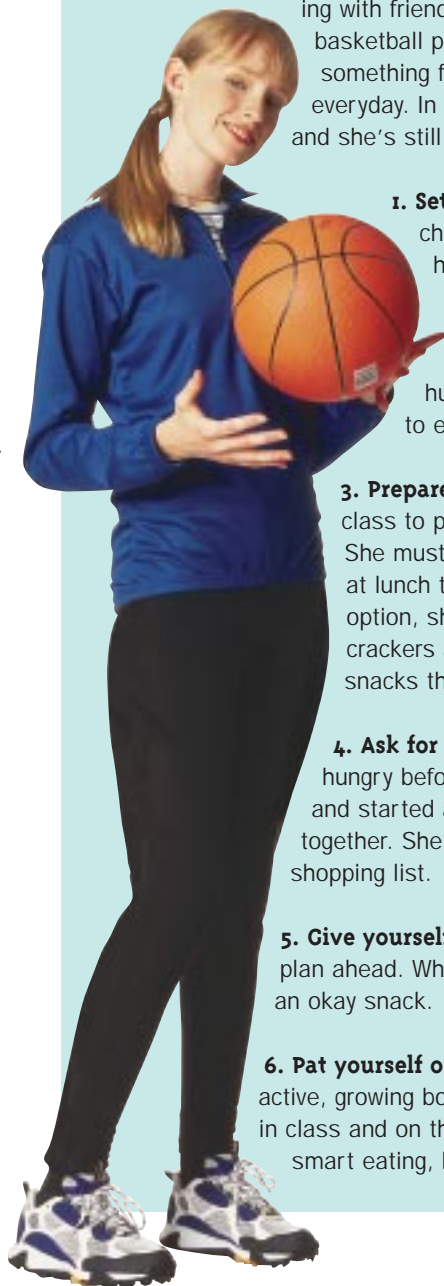
**2. Make a plan.** Janine's 2-step plan:  
1) Eat more at lunch so she's not so hungry after school. 2) Plan snacks ahead, to eat before practice.

**3. Prepare for challenges.** Janine goes right from class to practice, so her snack choices are limited. She must remember to buy a piece of fruit or juice at lunch to save for a pre-practice snack. As another option, she can take a few minutes at night to pack crackers and cheese, pretzels, or baby carrots for snacks the next afternoon.

**4. Ask for help.** Janine knew the whole team was hungry before and after practice. So they made a deal and started a lunch-time training table so they'd all eat together. She also added her list of snacks to the family shopping list.

**5. Give yourself a break.** Once in a while, Janine forgets to plan ahead. Whatever she finds in the vending machine is an okay snack.

**6. Pat yourself on the back.** Janine knew she was giving her active, growing body nutrients needed for best performance—in class and on the court. For fun, she rewarded herself for smart eating, but not with food. She bought a new CD.



## Derek

**NAME:** Derek, alias Mouse Potato

**AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITY:** Surfing the 'net

**HIS STORY:** Unknowingly, Derek linked to a nutrition website and discovered that his meals and snacks are coming up short on fruits and vegetables. As he surfs the 'net, he mindlessly nibbles away until dinner—but fruit or vegetables rarely cross his lips. He also realized his in-line skates (that he saved six months to buy) are somewhere under his bed. (Here's the nutrition web site he found: <http://www.usda.gov/fcs/team.htm>)

**1. Set a realistic goal.** Derek has two goals: 1) Eat at least two servings of fruit each day and three of vegetables. 2) Spend 30 minutes each day away from the computer, getting some exercise.

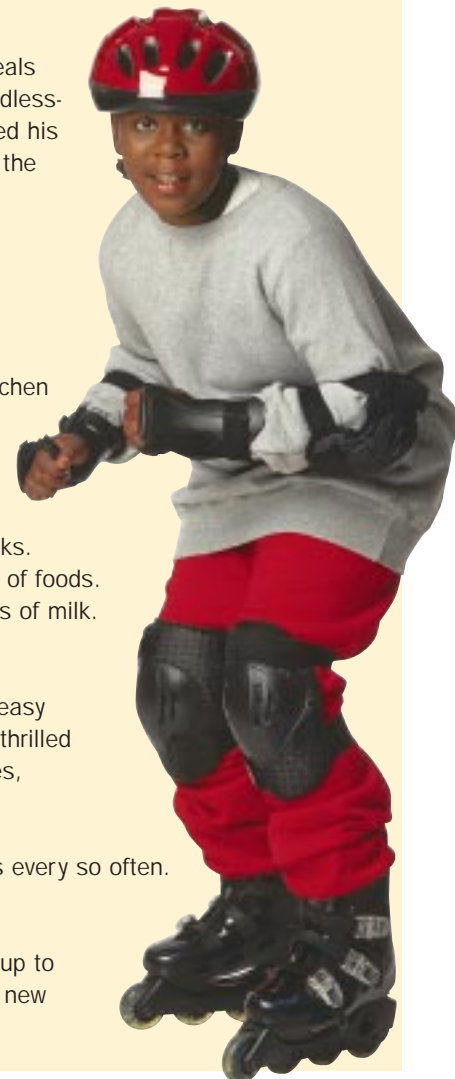
**2. Make a plan.** Derek's steps: 1) Ask his family to have fruit and vegetables in the kitchen to snack on. 2) Have fruit juice at breakfast. 3) Eat a salad with dinner. 4) Make a point of using his in-line skates at least three times a week, for at least 30 minutes each time. Added bonus: he hopes his plan will get him a new nickname!

**3. Prepare for challenges.** Derek doesn't want to spend time making after-school snacks. So he decided to make a list of quick-to-fix snacks. The kitchen is loaded with all kinds of foods. For starters, he prepares a bowl of cereal with sliced fruit, cleans up, and pours a glass of milk. It takes him only 2 minutes 15 seconds.

**4. Ask for help.** Derek searched the Web for a snack site and downloaded a bunch of easy ideas. He even participated in a snack chat with other hungry teens. His parents were thrilled when he contributed his ideas to the family grocery list. His best friend found his skates, too, and joined him.

**5. Give yourself a break.** It's okay for Derek to come up short on fruits and vegetables every so often. He knows that it's what he eats over a few days that counts.

**6. Pat yourself on the back.** Derek's proud of eating more fruits and vegetables; he's up to a combined five a day. For exercise, skating is great, especially with his friend. And his new nickname: Skatestar.



## What's your Personal Goal?

Would it be easy or tough for you to reach? Write your goal on a sheet of paper. How will you achieve this goal? Make a plan. Anticipate challenges. Line up your support team. Finally, get moving and reach your goal. **YOU CAN DO IT!**