

Productivity & Planning / Goal Planning

SMART Goal Formatter

Convert vague aspirations into Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound goals — goal specification for execution.

Difficulty: Beginner

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Goal Setting, Personal Planning

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Why This Prompt Exists

Vague goals like “get in shape” or “grow my business” never happen. They lack specificity, measurement, and deadlines. Most people set goals they can’t achieve because they don’t know how to write them.

You get:

- vague aspirations that never get accomplished
- no way to measure progress (is “getting there”?)
- unrealistic goals that lead to failure and quitting
- goals that don’t matter (no relevance check)
- no deadline, so no urgency

But SMART goals have structure:

- Specific: exactly what you want to accomplish
- Measurable: how you track progress and know you’re done
- Achievable: possible given your resources and constraints
- Relevant: aligned with your values and larger objectives
- Time-bound: deadline or timeframe for completion

Without SMART criteria, goals are wishes.

This prompt converts vague aspirations into SMART goals.

The Prompt

Assume the role of a goal-setting coach who writes SMART goals.

Your task is to convert vague aspirations into Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound goals.

Generate:

1. ORIGINAL ASPIRATION

- What you want to achieve: [vague statement]

2. SMART CRITERIA CHECKLIST

Criteria	Question	Current Status	SMART Version
Specific	What exactly do you want to accomplish?	[vague] [specific]	
Measurable	How will you measure progress and success?	[not measurable] [measurable]	
Achievable	Is this realistic given your resources?	[unknown] [realistic target]	
Relevant	Why does this matter to you right now?	[unclear] [clear relevance]	
Time-bound	What's the deadline or timeframe?	[none] [specific date]	

3. SMART GOAL STATEMENT

`By [date], I will [specific action] achieve [measurable outcome] as measured by [metric]. This is achievable because [reason], and it matters because [relevance].`

4. COMPLETION EVIDENCE

- How will you know you've succeeded? [concrete evidence]
- What does "done" look like? [description]

5. MILESTONE BREAKDOWN (if timeframe > 4 weeks)

Milestone	Target Date	Success Criterion
25% complete	[date]	[evidence]
50% complete	[date]	[evidence]
75% complete	[date]	[evidence]
100% complete	[date]	[evidence]

6. RESOURCE CHECK (Achievability)

Resource Needed	Do You Have It?	If Not, Plan
Time	[Yes/No]	[hours per week]
Money	[Yes/No]	[budget]
Skills	[Yes/No]	[learning plan]
Support	[Yes/No]	[who can help]

7. COMMON SMART GOAL MISTAKES

Mistake	Why It Fails	Correct Approach
"Lose weight" (not specific)	No target	"Lose 10 pounds"
"Exercise more" (not measurable)	No metric	"Exercise 3x per week"
"Become CEO" (not achievable)	Unrealistic	"Complete leadership training"
"Learn Spanish" (not relevant)	No connection	"Learn Spanish for upcoming trip"
"Get a job" (no deadline)	No urgency	"Get job by Sept 1"

INPUTS:

Vague aspiration:

[PASTE YOUR GOAL]

Timeframe (if any):

[E.G., "3 months", "by end of year", "no deadline"]

Resources available:

[E.G., "5 hours per week, \$500 budget"]

Why this matters to you:

[E.G., "To advance my career", "To feel healthier"]

RULES:

- Specific: answer who, what, where, when, which, why
- Measurable: use numbers, percentages, frequencies, or binary (done/not done)

- Achievable: stretch goals are good; impossible goals are not
- Relevant: connect to your values, priorities, or larger objectives
- Time-bound: deadline creates accountability and urgency
- Write the goal as a statement, not a list (one sentence)
- Review SMART goals quarterly; adjust as circumstances change

How To Use It

- Specific: answer who, what, where, when, which, why — leave no ambiguity.
- Measurable: use numbers, percentages, frequencies, or binary (done/not done) — track progress.
- Achievable: stretch goals are good; impossible goals are not — be realistic about resources.
- Relevant: connect to your values, priorities, or larger objectives — if it doesn't matter, why do it?
- Time-bound: deadline creates accountability and urgency — without a date, it's a wish.
- Write the goal as a statement, not a list — one sentence that captures all five elements.
- Review SMART goals quarterly — adjust as circumstances change; goals can evolve.

Example Input

Vague aspiration: "I want to get better at public speaking"

Timeframe: "6 months"

Resources available: "2 hours per week, access to Toastmasters, \$200 for courses"

Why this matters to you: "To get promoted to team lead, which requires presenting to leadership"

Why It Works

Vague goals like "get in shape" or "grow my business" never happen. They lack specificity,

measurement, and deadlines.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- specificity (what exactly? no ambiguity)
- measurability (how will you know you're done?)
- achievability (is it realistic given your resources?)
- relevance (does this actually matter to you?)
- time-bound (deadline creates urgency)

Failure modes this prevents:

- vague aspirations that never get accomplished
- no way to measure progress (is "getting there"?)
- unrealistic goals that lead to failure and quitting
- goals that don't matter (no relevance check)
- no deadline, so no urgency

This improves on: Vague goal statements. SMART goals create clarity, accountability, and a path to completion.

Related to: GP-02 (Goal Decomposition) for breaking down; GP-06 (Progress Tracker) for monitoring.

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