



Making Healthy Habits Stick

Why change is hard, and how to make it last

Knowing what to eat is the easy part. Actually changing your habits, and keeping them, is where most of us struggle. Lasting change is not about willpower or being told what to do. It is about readiness, small steps and the right support.

Change happens in stages

Most people move through stages rather than flipping a switch: not yet thinking about it, weighing it up, getting ready, taking action, then maintaining. Knowing your stage helps you pick the right next step instead of forcing a leap you are not ready for.

What actually works

- Start where you are, and change one thing at a time.
- Make it specific with SMART goals: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.
- Use prompts and cues in your environment, like a filled water bottle or prepped meals.
- Practise the new behaviour and build up gradually.
- Reward the effort and the process, not only the outcome.

Set goals that fit your life

"Eat better" is a wish. "Add a portion of vegetables to lunch on weekdays" is a plan. Vague goals fail, so make them concrete, then revisit and adjust them regularly to stay focused and motivated.

Relapse is part of the process, not failure. A slip is data, not a disaster. Notice what tripped you up, adjust the plan, and carry on. The people who keep going, rather than starting over, are the ones who succeed.

Track in a way that suits you

Food diaries, quick recalls or simple weekly check-ins all help you see patterns and progress. Pick the lightest method you will actually keep up with. Honest awareness beats a perfect record you abandon in a week.

Where to learn more: the NHS, the British Dietetic Association (BDA), and the British Nutrition Foundation. Coaching and accountability can make all the difference, so get in touch if you would like support.

This leaflet is general nutritional guidance for education only. It is not medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, and it does not replace advice from your GP or a registered dietitian. Always check with a qualified professional before making significant changes, particularly if you have a health condition, are pregnant, or take medication.

Ready to take the next step? Book a free call or start your food diary analysis at performancenutritionlondon.co.uk