



A SMART goal is a goal that is specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-based. SMART goals are detailed, clear, and provide a path to reach your goal.

Before you can break down the parts of a goal, you have to consider: what is your intention in setting your goal? What change will it make in your life? Why does it matter to you? What makes it significant?

Once you know why a goal matters, you can break it down using the SMART framework. The following example turns the basic goal “get good grades” into a SMART goal and explains how you can make your goals SMART too.



SPECIFIC

A specific goal includes all of the details on what you will accomplish, by whom, and when and where it will be accomplished. Ask: What exactly do I hope to accomplish?

Example: I will increase my cumulative GPA during the fall semester at SRU.



MEASURABLE

Measuring a goal helps track your progress along the way and measure to see if you reach your goal. Ask this question: How will I know when I've reached my goal?

Example: I will increase my CGPA by 0.5 by earning a 3.75 GPA fall semester at SRU.



ACTION-ORIENTED

Ensure that the goals you set are achievable by setting smaller action steps. It is also a good idea to set benchmarks for when you should accomplish each step.

Example: I will: earn all A's and B's for midterm grades, complete all of my coursework by the deadlines in the syllabi, and read and review notes regularly.



REALISTIC

Take stock of what you need to make following this plan a reality. For each action-step you outlined, identify the knowledge, skills, attitude, and resources you need to accomplish this goal.

Example: I need: to attend tutoring, to see my professors in office hours when I have questions, to buy the class textbooks (need \$, so I also need a job), to balance my time between work, class, and studying.



TIME-BASED

While this section overlaps with all of the categories above, think of this part as assigning a deadline to everything you have thought about so far. Do not forget to set a final deadline for when the overall goal will be accomplished.



Why does this goal matter in your life? What does achieving this goal mean for your present, for your future?

Specific: What is the specific goal? (Who? What? When? Where? Why?)

Measurable: How will you know when you have achieved this goal? (How many? How much?)

Action-Oriented: What action steps will you take to reach this goal?

Realistic: What resources and support systems are available to help you reach this goal? What knowledge, skills, and attitudes do you need to complete this goal? Do believe you can accomplish this goal?

Time-Bound: Provide deadlines for each step that you will take to reach this goal. When will you accomplish this goal?

Also Consider:

❖ What are anticipated barriers for reaching these goals? What are potential solutions?

❖ Who is in your support network?

❖ How will you hold yourself accountable? Who will be your accountability partners?
