

The 30-Day Habit Builder

Small daily steps and a printable tracker for habits that finally stick.

**30**

two-minute daily
pages

100

tiny habits to try

8

question habit-style
quiz

1

surprise to open

**SkillNugget**

● SKILLNUGGET HABIT WORKBOOK

The 30-Day Habit Builder

Small daily steps and a printable tracker for habits that finally stick.

2026 edition · Large print · Printable

● THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

This book belongs to: _____

My habit: _____

Day 1: _____



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This is a practical self-help workbook. It is not medical, psychological or addiction treatment advice. If a habit is harming your health, please talk to a doctor or qualified professional. Research findings are summarized in plain English; full references are on the Sources page. The habit-style quiz is for fun and is not a scientific test.

FREE SAMPLE

Inside this free sample

The welcome, two chapters and two daily pages.

This sample includes the Welcome, Chapter 3 (how long habits really take), Chapter 4 (start ridiculously small) and the first two daily pages. The full workbook has 14 chapters, the habit-style quiz, 30 daily pages with weekly reviews, 100 tiny habits and a printable toolkit with a 30-Day Tracker, habit cards and a surprise.

GET THE FULL WORKBOOK

skillnugget.com/course/habit-builder

WELCOME

Thirty days, one tiny promise

How this book works, in five minutes.

You don't need more willpower. You need a smaller start, a better plan and thirty days of proof that you can keep a promise to yourself.

That's what this book gives you. Not a lecture, not a 5 a.m. routine borrowed from a billionaire, and not a list of fifty habits to start on Monday. Just **one habit**, chosen by you, designed so well that you'll do it even on your worst day.

How this book works

Part 1 • How habits work

Five short chapters, about 20 minutes in total. What a habit really is, why motivation fades, how long it really takes and the three tricks that make any habit easier.

Part 3 • The 30 days

Thirty short daily pages. Each one takes two minutes: a small idea for the day, a box to tick and one question: *how automatic did it feel today?*

Part 2 • Design your habit

Four worksheets, about 45 minutes. Choose the right habit, write a plan your brain can follow on autopilot, prepare for bad days and set up Day 0.

Part 4 • After day 30

Lock the habit in (days 31 to 66), add your next habit, break a bad one, plus 100 tiny habits to try and a troubleshooting guide.

THE HONEST TRUTH ABOUT "30 DAYS"

In the best-known study of how habits form, it took a **median of 66 days** for a new daily habit to feel automatic, and anywhere from 18 to 254 days depending on the person and the habit. So why a 30-day book? Because the first 30 days are when most new habits are abandoned, and when the habit grows fastest. Day 30 isn't the finish line. It's the point where the habit starts carrying *you*. Part 4 walks you all the way to day 66.

What you need

- ☐ This book (or the pages you've printed)
- ☐ A pen you like
- ☐ The printable **30-Day Tracker** from your toolkit
- ☐ One habit you'd love to have. Don't worry if you're not sure yet: Chapter 6 helps you choose.

A SURPRISE IS WAITING

Your toolkit includes a printable surprise. Please don't open it yet. You'll put it together on Day 0, in Chapter 9, and it will make every single day of the next thirty a little more fun.

CHAPTER 3

How long it really takes

The 66-day study, the habit curve and the 21-day myth.

You've probably heard that it takes 21 days to form a habit. It's one of the most repeated "facts" in self-help, and it isn't true. Here's what the research actually found, and why it's good news.

Where "21 days" came from

In 1960, a plastic surgeon called Maxwell Maltz wrote a best-selling book, *Psycho-Cybernetics*. He noticed that his patients seemed to need a *minimum* of about 21 days to get used to a change, like a new face in the mirror. Over the years, "a minimum of about 21 days" became "21 days", and "getting used to a change" became "forming a habit". Nobody had actually measured it.

The study that measured it

In a study published in 2010, a team at University College London led by Phillippa Lally asked 96 volunteers to choose one new daily habit, always done in the same situation, such as drinking a glass of water with lunch or going for a short run before dinner. Every day for twelve weeks, the volunteers logged in and rated how **automatic** the habit felt, with statements like "I do it without thinking."

Here's what they found:

- **Automaticity grew in a curve, not a straight line.** It rose quickly in the early weeks, then slowly leveled off.
- **The median was 66 days** to get 95% of the way to the habit's peak automaticity.

- **The range was huge: 18 to 254 days.** (The longest times were estimates, projected beyond the 84 days of the study.)
- **Simpler habits formed faster.** Drinking water became automatic sooner than doing sit-ups.
- **Missing one day didn't ruin anything.** A single missed opportunity made no real difference to the habit's growth.



An illustration of the typical shape found by Lally and colleagues (2010). Everyone's curve is different; yours will be on your Day 30 page.

What this means for your 30 days

- 1 **The first weeks matter most.** That's where the curve climbs fastest. Every repetition in the next thirty days counts double.
- 2 **Expect it to feel effortful for a while.** That isn't failure. It's the normal shape of the curve. Effort now buys autopilot later.
- 3 **A missed day is a pothole, not a cliff.** Pick it up at your next anchor. We'll use a simple rule of thumb: *never miss twice in a row*.

- 4 **Track how automatic it feels, not just whether you did it.** That's why every day page in Part 3 asks you to rate it from 1 to 5. On Day 30 you'll draw your own curve.
- 5 **Small habits win.** The simpler the habit, the faster it becomes automatic. So in the next chapter, we're going to make yours very, very small.

RATE IT LIKE THE RESEARCHERS DID

Each day, ask yourself: *How automatic did it feel today?* **1** = I had to force myself · **2** = I had to remember and push · **3** = it took a small effort · **4** = it mostly happened by itself · **5** = I did it without thinking.

CHAPTER 4

Start ridiculously small

The Shrink Ray, the minimum version and the Habit Ladder.

The biggest mistake people make with a new habit is starting too big. The second biggest mistake is growing it too fast. This chapter fixes both.

Why tiny beats ambitious

On a good day, you could do a 45-minute workout. But habits aren't built on good days. They're built on the tired Tuesday, the rainy Sunday, the day your child is sick and your boss is cross. A habit that only survives good days isn't a habit yet.

So here's the rule for the next thirty days: **your habit must be small enough to do on your worst day**. In the beginning, you're not trying to get results. You're training your brain to start, every time the cue appears. Results come later, and they come because you never stopped.

BJ Fogg, the Stanford researcher behind *Tiny Habits*, famously began his flossing habit by flossing *one tooth*. It sounds ridiculous. That's the point. Nobody is too tired to floss one tooth, and once you've started, you often floss them all.

The Shrink Ray

Take the habit you want and shrink it until it feels almost silly. Then shrink it once more.

INSTEAD OF	TRY
✗ Read for 30 minutes	✓ Read one page
✗ Run three times a week	✓ Put on your running shoes and step outside
✗ Meditate for 20 minutes	✓ Take three slow breaths with your eyes closed
✗ Write in a journal	✓ Write one sentence about today
✗ Learn Spanish	✓ Learn two new words
✗ Get the house in order	✓ Put away five things
✗ Save more money	✓ Move a small amount to savings
✗ Drink more water	✓ Fill a glass and drink it with breakfast
✗ Stretch every day	✓ Touch your toes once (or try to)
✗ Be more grateful	✓ Name one good thing from today
✗ Call family more often	✓ Send one message to one person you love
✗ Practice the guitar	✓ Play one chord

Two versions of every habit

From now on, your habit has two versions:

The minimum

The tiny version. It always counts as a win. On a hard day, you do the minimum and you're done. No guilt, no "it doesn't count". **It counts.**

The full version

What you do when you have the time and energy. Often, once you've started the minimum, you'll want to keep going. Wonderful. But you never *have to*.

This is the secret weapon of the whole book. Most people quit because they miss a day, feel they've failed and give up. With a minimum version, you almost never need to miss a day.

Grow it slowly: the Habit Ladder

When your habit starts to feel automatic, you can grow it, one rung at a time.

- 1 Rung 1, the minimum.** Stay here until your daily rating has been 4 or 5 for about a week.
- 2 Rung 2, a little more.** Two pages, ten squats, two minutes of breathing. Stay until it feels automatic again.
- 3 Rung 3, the real thing.** Ten pages, a short walk, five minutes of meditation.
- 4 Rung 4, the full habit.** The version you dreamed of on page one.

DON'T CLIMB TOO FAST

If you climb a rung and start missing days, step back down. The habit is the *starting*, not the size. A tiny habit you keep is worth far more than a big habit you drop in week two.

TRY IT: SHRINK YOUR HABIT

Think of a habit you'd like to build. Write its full version, then shrink it with the Shrink Ray.

Full version _____ Minimum version _____

DAY 01

Just start

WEEK 1

Today is not about results. It's about one thing: doing your habit, right after your anchor, even if it's only the minimum. The first repetition is the hardest one you'll ever do, and you're about to do it. Don't wait until you feel ready. Nobody ever feels ready.

TRY TODAY Do the minimum only, even if you want to do more. Then celebrate, out loud.

☐ Full ☐ Minimum ☐ Missed

How automatic? (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

NOTE

DAY 02

Notice your anchor

WEEK 1

Yesterday, did your anchor remind you, or did you have to remember? Today, pay close attention to the exact moment your anchor happens: the click of the kettle, the key in the door. That moment is the trigger you're training. The more precisely you notice it, the faster it starts to pull the habit along.

TRY TODAY Do your habit within ten seconds of your anchor.

☐ Full ☐ Minimum ☐ Missed

How automatic? (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

NOTE
