

Apps to help you keep your New Year's resolutions

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Making New Year's resolutions is as old as time. Making New Year's resolutions and using technology to help you create new habits, well, that's much more modern.

We combined traditional New Year's resolutions with popular and highly regarded smartphone apps to create digital accountability partners for you, so that hopefully by the end of January you're making progress on your goals.

These apps are available for both Android and iOS systems and all are rated at least four stars or more on both iTunes and Google Play, with at least 1,000 reviews or more on either site.

1. Get Fit. Who hasn't made a goal to get more fit, only to wind up back on the couch by late January? There's just no time, right? The J&J Official Seven Minute Workout App will try to prove you wrong. Several publications, such as Tom's Guide and Medical News Today, say this app is good for beginners and experienced users. The science-based exercise physiology workout was designed at the Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute. There are 22 preset workouts, ranging from seven to 32 minutes, or you can create your own. The Smart Workout feature gauges your fitness and motivation level and creates a variety of workouts specifically for you. Free. 7minuteworkout.jnj.com

If traditional workouts aren't your thing, Tom's Guide and Medical News Today suggest the Yoga Studio app, the top yoga app on Google Play.

There are 70 classes available, from beginner to advanced, with some as short as 15 minutes or as long as an hour. More than 280 poses are available, with detailed instructions. The app also lets you sync classes with your phone's calendar, giving you no excuse to say you're too busy. About \$20 a year. www.yogastudioapp.com

2. Eat Better. Keeping a food diary can go a long way toward eating better, and two top calorie counting apps can make it easier. MyFitnessPal is the biggest and best known—it's an editor's choice on both Google Play and iTunes. It has the largest food database, with over 5 million foods, and has a feature to let you add recipes to get breakdowns of home-cooked meals. If there's something you eat regularly you can save it so there's no need to look it up each time. Free. www.myfitnesspal.com

For people who like to set goals, Lose It!, a Google Play editor's choice app, allows users to set goals for body weight. Once you've entered your profile details, the app will calculate your daily calorie needs. Free. www.loseit.com

3. Save Money. It's hard to save money if you don't know where your cash is going. Mvelopes is a budgeting app that relies on the old-fashioned envelope system of earmarking funds for different goals. Highly rated by both Tom's Guide and the Daily Worth newsletter, Mvelopes has you complete a budget and set income before you fill the envelopes. Daily Worth says this gives users a more realistic picture of what you can spend and what's reasonable for you. Free. www.mvelopes.com

App reviewers love Spendee's look and easy user interface, with Google Play's editors pointing out that the infographics of this app are especially beautiful. Tom's Guide cites its budget-tracking tools, including being able to take pictures of bills and receipts for storage, while the overview

tab has useful infographics on spending both over time and what you're buying. Free. www.spendee.com

4. Learn a new skill/hobby. Learning a new language is often high on the list of new skills. The most popular language-learning app is Duolingo, and is the choice of many app reviewers. Lessons are created in brief sessions, so you can learn whenever it's convenient, and it motivates you by keeping track of your usage, which can help you reinforce daily what you've learned. More than two dozen languages are available, including Japanese, Greek, Portuguese, Dutch and Hebrew. Free. www.duolingo.com

You're already taking photos with your camera, how about learning to edit those photos? A top pick among several app reviewers, PicsArt goes beyond simple editing. Users can fine-tune photos by selectively editing just parts of the image, create double exposures and tap many other advanced features. Free. www.picsart.com

5. Be more mindful. In our ever-connected world, finding time to relax is harder. So it shouldn't be a surprise that Apple's App Store editors said in December that apps focused on mental health and mindfulness were one of four breakout trends in 2017. Their iPhone app of the year was meditation app Calm (It's also an editor's choice at Google Play). Calm has routines for meditation, focusing, stress and anxiety reduction and sleep. It has both free and premium versions available. www.calm.com

Another highly rated meditation app is Headspace, created by an ex-Buddhist monk. Digital Trends magazine likes that it has lessons for people interested in health, creativity and advanced meditation. There's a free 10-day beginner's course, with subscriptions starting at \$7.99 a month, paid upfront for a year. www.headspace.com

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