



How to create a routine to benefit your mental health and wellbeing



Establishing a daily structure can significantly enhance your sense of security and confidence. Knowing what to expect allows you to manage your time effectively and approach each day with greater ease. While you can't control every aspect of life, creating a routine can provide mental health benefits for you and those around you, including:

- Increased independence and control over your life
- Reduced stress because you know what to expect and have planned accordingly
- Improved time management, allowing more time for the people and activities you enjoy
- Healthy habits that promote self-care, including better sleep, nutrition and physical activity
- Enhanced organizational skills
- Stronger relationships since predictability fosters trust

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Follow these 5 steps to get started:

Step 1: Understand the goal

Many people wait for a trigger – like starting school, a new job or a New Year's resolution – but there's no need to wait. In fact, by reading this, you've already begun. The goal is to make a routine that's:

- Simple, so it's easy to follow
- Consistent, so it's effective for your everyday life
- Flexible, so it can accommodate changes that come

Step 2: Build your schedule

Start by considering your current schedule:

- What time do you need to wake up for school or work?
- When will you be hungry and have time to eat?
- What activities do you enjoy that you want in your routine?
- What chores need to be done during the week?
- Who relies on your help and when do they need it?
- Are there any commitments you can let go of?
- What goals do you want to achieve?

Focus on covering the main tasks and commitments. (You don't need to account for every minute.)

Step 3: Prioritize must-dos and nice-to-haves

Separate your non-negotiable tasks (like work or school) from things you'd like to do, such as hobbies.

Must-dos	Nice to have

Next, for your **must-dos**, consider what tasks you can delegate and to whom.

Do	Delegate to



Step 4: Establish key actions

Identify the tasks you need to complete to follow your schedule. These are the building blocks of your routine.

Step 5: Review and adjust as needed

Life events and priorities change, so it's important to review and adjust your routine from time to time or as necessary.

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Interactive activity: Build your routine

Use the calendar below to outline your routine. For each day:

- Fill in your must-dos.
- Add in activities you want to do.
- Share the schedule with others in your household, so everyone knows what to expect.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Optum Wellbeing. [Creating a routine to benefit your mental health](#), Aug. 2023.

