

THE NON-NEGOTIABLE LIST

Your personal minimum standard for fitness, nutrition and health - especially when life gets busy.

Motivation changes. Schedules change. Stress happens. Vacations happen. Your non-negotiables are the small number of behaviours you commit to protecting anyway.

The goal isn't perfection. The goal is to decide, in advance, what you refuse to completely abandon.

What is a non-negotiable?

A non-negotiable is a behaviour or standard that is important enough that you keep it in place even during difficult weeks. It is not an ideal-world wish list. It is your minimum operating standard.

For example, you might **prefer** five workouts every week. But if work explodes, travel gets in the way or family responsibilities increase, your true non-negotiable might be: **I never go more than 48 hours without intentional movement.**

That distinction matters. If everything is non-negotiable, nothing is. Choose the few actions that keep you connected to the person you are trying to become.

Why this works

- It removes daily negotiation. You already decided what happens.
- It prevents one bad meal, missed workout or late night from becoming a bad week.
- It gives you a floor to fall back on when your normal routine is disrupted.
- It reinforces identity: you become someone who keeps commitments to yourself.

Think of your non-negotiables as guardrails - not handcuffs.

BUILD YOUR LIST

Step 1 - Brain dump

Write down every fitness, nutrition, recovery and lifestyle behaviour you believe helps you look, feel and perform at your best. Don't edit yourself yet.

- Training frequency or maximum time between workouts
- Daily walking, steps or general movement
- Protein at meals
- Water intake
- Weekly grocery shopping and meal prep
- Fruit and vegetable intake
- Sleep or bedtime routines
- Alcohol, restaurant meals or indulgence boundaries
- Progress check-ins, weigh-ins or food tracking
- Mobility, stretching, recovery or stress-management practices

Step 2 - Put the list away for 48 hours

Then review every item and ask: **Is this truly essential, or is it simply something I would like to do when conditions are perfect?**

Mark each item:

- **D - Definitely:** This belongs in my minimum standard.
- **M - Maybe:** Important, but I can adjust it depending on the season.
- **T - Take it off:** Helpful, but not essential if the most important behaviours are in place.

Step 3 - Make it measurable

Avoid vague rules like "eat better" or "exercise more." A strong non-negotiable tells you exactly what success looks like.

Vague	Non-negotiable
Exercise regularly	Never go more than 48 hours without intentional exercise or movement.
Eat healthy	Include a meaningful protein source at every main meal.
Drink more water	Start each day with water and hit my personal hydration target.
Meal prep	Schedule one grocery/prep block every week.

A useful rule: start with 3-5 non-negotiables. You can always add more later.

WHEN LIFE GETS MESSY

Your non-negotiables matter most when your normal plan falls apart.

A crazy schedule can easily become takeout, missed workouts, poor sleep and the feeling that you've gone "back to square one." The answer isn't to punish yourself with starvation or hours of cardio. It's to return to your minimum standards as quickly as possible.

Use the "Never Two" rule:

- One indulgence doesn't become two.
- One missed workout doesn't become two.
- One unplanned day doesn't become an unplanned week.
- Don't wait until Monday. Win the next decision.

Examples you can borrow

- I never go more than 48 hours without exercise.
- I get some form of intentional movement every day, even if it is only a walk or mobility session.
- I eat protein at every main meal.
- I keep easy, high-protein foods available so being busy isn't an excuse.
- I grocery shop and prepare food every week.
- I protect my sleep because recovery is part of the program.
- I don't try to "make up" for an indulgence. I simply return to my normal plan at the next meal.
- I keep learning and improving instead of looking for a perfect plan.

Remember: these should fit *your* life. The best list is not the hardest list. It is the list you can still execute on a difficult Tuesday in November.

YOUR NON-NEGOTIABLE WORKSHEET

My fitness non-negotiables

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

My nutrition non-negotiables

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

My recovery / lifestyle non-negotiables

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

My minimum-standard plan for a chaotic week

If everything goes sideways, I will still:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

THE FINAL TEST

Read each rule and ask yourself:

- Is this important enough that I am genuinely willing to protect it?
- Can I measure whether I did it?
- Can I still do it when life is busy?
- Does it move me toward the identity, health and performance I want?

Your plan doesn't need to be perfect. It needs to be strong enough to survive real life.

100% committed to your success,

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