

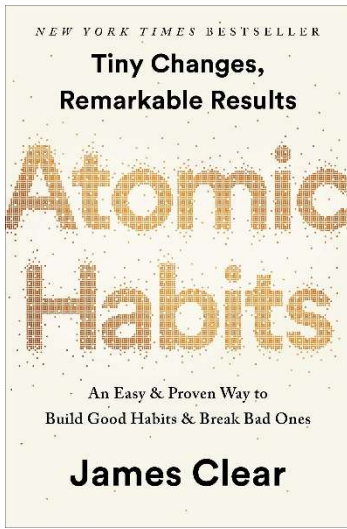


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Atomic Habits

An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones

By: James Clear

Book Description (from Amazon)

Publication Date: Oct. 16, 2018

The instant *New York Times* bestseller. Over 1 million copies sold!

Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results

No matter your goals, *Atomic Habits* offers a proven framework for improving--every day. James Clear, one of the world's leading experts on habit formation, reveals practical strategies that will teach you exactly how to form good habits, break bad ones, and master the tiny behaviors that lead to remarkable results.

If you're having trouble changing your habits, the problem isn't you. The problem is your system. Bad habits repeat themselves again and again not because you don't want to change, but because you have the wrong system for change. You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems. Here, you'll get a proven system that can take you to new heights.

Clear is known for his ability to distill complex topics into simple behaviors that can be easily applied to daily life and work. Here, he draws on the most proven ideas from biology, psychology, and neuroscience to create an easy-to-understand guide for making good habits inevitable and bad habits impossible. Along the way, readers will be inspired and entertained with true stories from Olympic gold medalists, award-winning artists, business leaders, life-saving physicians, and star comedians who have used the science of small habits to master their craft and vault to the top of their field.

Learn how to:

- make time for new habits (even when life gets crazy);
- overcome a lack of motivation and willpower;
- design your environment to make success easier;
- get back on track when you fall off course;

...and much more.

Atomic Habits will reshape the way you think about progress and success, and give you the tools and strategies you need to transform your habits--whether you are a team looking to win a championship, an organization hoping to redefine an industry, or simply an individual who wishes to quit smoking, lose weight, reduce stress, or achieve any other goal.

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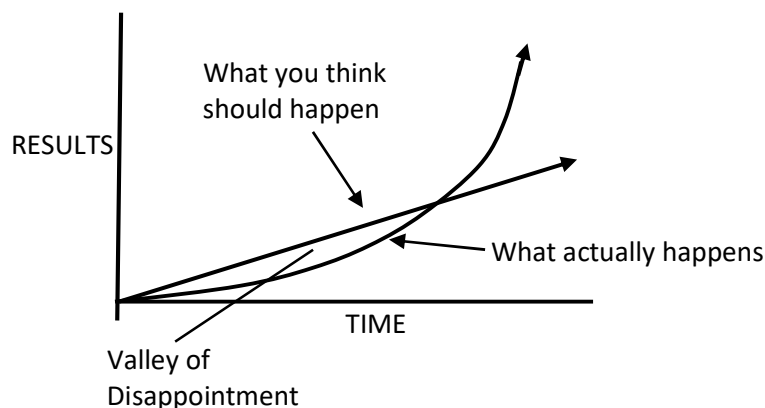
My Synopsis:

I struggled with this book. The author makes some valid points and includes quite a few quotes (as evidenced by my notes), but I struggled because there's not much new in the main idea. Maybe it's because I've read a few other books on habit that I think are better than this, but a lot of what Clear shows seems pulled from those, either directly or indirectly. If you haven't read those other books, this will be a great read and valuable information. But if you've read *Today Matters*, by John Maxwell, *The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg, or *The Compound Effect* by Darren Hardy, you've already read 95% of this book...and those books are better!

Atomic Habits

An Easy and Proven Way to Build Good Habits and Break Bad Ones

- p. 1 **Introduction: My Story**
- p. 5 ...if things were going to improve, I was the one responsible for making it happen.
- p. 7 ...changes that seem small and unimportant at first will compound into remarkable results if you're willing to stick with them for years.
- p. 11 **The Fundamentals: Why Tiny Changes Make a Big Difference**
- p. 13 **The Surprising Power of Atomic Habits**
- p. 15 It is so easy to overestimate the importance of one defining moment and underestimate the value of making small improvements on a daily basis.
- p. 17 We make a few changes, but the results never seem to come quickly and so we slide back into our previous routines.
- p. 17 A very small shift in direction can lead to a very meaningful change in destination.
- p. 18 Success is the product of daily habits – not once-in-a-lifetime transformations.
- p. 18 Your outcomes are a lagging measure of your habits...You get what you repeat.
- p. 20 Breakthrough moments are often the result of many previous actions...
- p. 21 Change can take years – before it happens all at once.
- p. 22 The Plateau of Latent Potential



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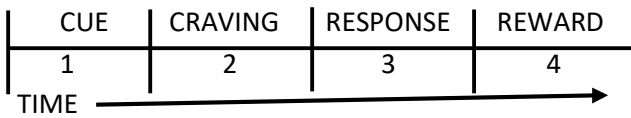
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- p. 23 ...my results had very little to do with the goals I set and nearly everything to do with the systems I followed.
- p. 24 Goals are good for setting a direction, but systems are best for making progress.
- p. 24 A handful of problems arise when you spend too much time thinking about your goals and not enough time designing your systems.
- 1) Winners and losers have the same goals
 - 2) Achieving a goal is only a momentary change
 - 3) Goals restrict your happiness
 - 4) Goals are at odds with long-term progress
- p. 25 Fix the inputs and the outputs will fix themselves.
- p. 26 It makes no sense to restrict your satisfaction to one scenario when there are many paths to success.
- p. 27 The purpose of setting goals is to win the game. The purpose of building systems is to continue playing the game.
- p. 27 You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.
- p. 29 **How Your Habits Shape Your Identity (and Vice-Versa)**
- p. 29 Few things can have a more powerful impact on your life than improving your daily habits.
- p. 30 Outcomes are about what you get. Processes are about what you do. Identity is about what you believe.
- p. 32 ...they don't realize that their old identity can sabotage their new plans for change.
- p. 33 It's one thing to say I'm the type of person who *wants* this. It's something very different to say I'm the type of person who *is* this.
- p. 34 Once your pride gets involved, you'll fight tooth and nail to maintain your habits.
- p. 34 Improvements are only temporary until they become part of who you are.
- p. 37 The more evidence you have for a belief, the more strongly you will believe it.
- p. 38 Every action you take is a vote for the type of person you wish to become.
- p. 39 It is a simple two-step process:
- 1) Decide the type of person you want to be.
 - 2) Prove it to yourself with small wins.
- p. 39 Ask yourself, "Who is the type of person that could get the outcome I want?"
- p. 41 ...your habits matter because they help you become the type of person you wish to be.
- p. 43 **How to Build Better Habits in 4 Simple Steps**
- p. 44 ...behaviors followed by satisfying consequences tend to be repeated and those that produce unpleasant consequences are less likely to be repeated.
- p. 44 The process of habit formation begins with trial and error.
- p. 46 Habit formation is incredibly useful because the conscious mind is the bottleneck of the brain. It can only pay attention to one problem at a time.
- p. 46 Habits do not restrict freedom. They create it.
- p. 47 Building habits in the present allows you to do more of what you want in the future.
- p. 47 The process of building a habit can be divided into four simple steps: cue, craving, response, and reward.



p. 47



- p. 47 The cue triggers your brain to initiate a behavior.
- p. 48 Your mind is continuously analyzing your internal and external environment for hints of where rewards are located.
- p. 48 Cravings...are the motivational force behind every habit.
- p. 48 Cues are meaningless until they are interpreted. The thoughts, feelings, and emotions of the observer are what transform a cue into a craving.
- p. 48 The response is the actual habit you perform, which can take the form of a thought of an action.
- p. 49 Rewards are the end goal of every habit.
- p. 49 ...rewards teach us which actions are worth remembering in the future.
- p. 49 If a behavior is insufficient in any of the four stages, it will not become a habit.
- p. 51 ...the purpose of every habit is to solve the problems you face.
- p. 53 ...the *Four Laws of Behavior Change* provide a simple set of rules for creating good habits and breaking bad ones.
- p. 54 Whenever you want to change your behavior, you can simply ask yourself:
 - 1) How can I make it obvious?
 - 2) How can I make it attractive?
 - 3) How can I make it easy?
 - 4) How can I make it satisfying?

p. 54

	How to Create a Good Habit
The 1 st law (Cue)	Make it obvious.
The 2 nd law (Craving)	Make it attractive.
The 3 rd law (Response)	Make it easy.
The 4 th law (Reward)	Make it satisfying.

	How to Break a Bad Habit
Inversion of the 1 st law (Cue)	Make it invisible.
Inversion of the 2 nd law (Craving)	Make it unattractive.
Inversion of the 3 rd law (Response)	Make it difficult.
Inversion of the 4 th law (Reward)	Make it unsatisfying.

- p. 55 Your habits are shaped by the systems in your life.
- p. 57 **The 1st Law: Make It Obvious**
- p. 59 **The Man Who Didn't Look Right**
- p. 61 We underestimate how much our brains and bodies can do without thinking.
- p. 62 Over time, the cues that spark our habits become so common that they are essentially invisible.
- p. 62 Before we can effectively build new habits, we need to get a handle on our current ones.
- p. 64 We assume that the next time will be just like the last.



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- p. 65 Does this behavior help me become the type of person I wish to be?
- p. 66 The first step to changing bad habits is to be on the lookout for them.
- p. 66 The process of behavior change always starts with awareness.
- p. 69 **The Best Way to Start a New Habit**
- p. 70 *Implementation intention*: a plan you make beforehand about when and where to act.
- p. 71 Too many people try to change their habits without these basic details figured out...We leave it up to chance and hope that we will “just remember to do it” or feel motivated at the right time.
- p. 72 We often say yes to little requests because we are not clear enough about what we need to be doing instead.
- p. 73 You often decide what to do next based on what you have just finished doing.
- p. 79 The 1st Law of Behavior Change is to *make it obvious*.
- p. 81 **Motivation is Overrated; Environment Often Matters More.**
- p. 82 People often choose products not because of *what* they are, but because of *where* they are.
- p. 82 Environment is the invisible hand that shapes human behavior.
- p. 83 ...we are changed by the world around us. Every habit is context dependent.
- p. 83 ...many of the actions we take each day are shaped not by purposeful drive and choice but by the most obvious option.
- p. 84 When the cues that spark a habit are subtle or hidden, they are easy to ignore.
- p. 87 Most people live in a world others have created for them.
- p. 87 Environment design allows you to take back control and become the architect of your life. Be the designer of your world and not merely the consumer of it.
- p. 90 Every habit should have a home.
- p. 90 If you want behaviors that are stable and predictable, you need an environment that is stable and predictable.
- p. 91 **The Secret to Self-Control**
- p. 92 When the context changed, so did the habit.
- p. 93 Once a habit has been encoded, the urge to act follows whenever the environmental cues reappear.
- p. 94 ...I have never seen someone consistently stick to positive habits in a negative environment.
- p. 95 Instead of summoning a new dose of willpower whenever you want to do the right thing, your energy would be better spent optimizing your environment.
- p. 99 **The 2nd Law: Make It Attractive**
- p. 101 **How to Make a Habit Irresistible**
- p. 102 ...these exaggerated clues as supernormal stimuli ...a heightened version of reality – and it elicits a stranger response than usual.
- p. 104 The more attractive an opportunity is, the more likely it is to become habit forming.
- p. 106 Habits are a dopamine-driven feedback loop.
- p. 106 It is the anticipation of a reward – not the fulfillment of it – that gets us to take action.
- p. 108 Your brain has far more neural circuitry allocated for *wanting* rewards than for *liking* them.
- p. 108 Desire is the engine that drives behavior.
- p. 109 Temptation bundling works by linking an action you want to do with an action you need to do.
- p. 109 You're more likely to find behavior attractive if you get to do one of your favorite things at the same time.
- p. 110 Premack's Principle: more probable behaviors will reinforce less probable behaviors.

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p. 113 **The Rule of Family and Friends in Shaping Your Habits**

p. 114 ...whatever habits are normal in your culture are among the most attractive behaviors you'll find.

p. 115 In the long history of humankind, those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.

– Charles Darwin

p. 116 Behaviors are attractive when they help us fit in.

p. 116 We imitate the habits of three groups in particular:

- 1) The close.
- 2) The many.
- 3) The powerful.

p. 116 Proximity has a powerful effect on our behavior.

p. 117 We soak up the qualities and practices of those around us.

p. 118 Nothing sustains motivation better than belonging to the tribe.

p. 120 Whenever we are unsure how to act, we look to the group to guide our behavior.

p. 120 There is tremendous internal pressure to comply with the norms of the group.

p. 121 Running against the grain of your culture requires extra effort.

p. 121 When changing your habits means challenging the tribe, change is unattractive. When changing your habits means fitting in with the tribe, change is very attractive.

p. 125 **How to Find and Fix the Causes of Your Bad Habits**

p. 127 Every behavior has a surface level craving and a deeper, underlying motive.

p. 128 Your current habits are not necessarily the best way to solve the problems you face; they are just the methods you learned to use.

p. 129 A craving is the sense that something is missing. It is the desire to change your internal state.

p. 129 This gap between your current state and your desired state provides a reason to act.

p. 129 Desire is the difference between where you are now and where you want to be in the future.

p. 130 ...when emotions and feelings are impaired, we actually lose the ability to make decisions.

p. 130 Habits are attractive when we associate them with positive feelings, and we can use this insight to our advantage rather than to our detriment.

p. 131 Reframing your habits to highlight their benefits rather than their drawbacks is a fast and lightweight way to reprogram your mind and make a habit seem more attractive.

p. 131 ...living below your current means *increases* your future means.

p. 139 **The 3rd Law: Make It Easy**

p. 141 **Walk Slowly, but Never Backward**

p. 142 We are so focused on figuring out the best approach that we never get around to taking action.

p. 142 When you're in motion, you're planning and strategizing and learning. Those are all good things, but they don't produce a result.

p. 142 Action, on the other hand, is the type of behavior that will deliver an outcome.

p. 142 ...motion allows us to feel like we're making progress without running the risk of failure.

p. 143 When preparation becomes a form of procrastination, you need to change something.

p. 144 ...simply putting in your reps is one of the most critical steps you can take to encoding a new habit.

p. 145 ...habits form based on frequency, not time.

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p. 149 **The Law of Least Effort**

p. 151 ...our real motivation is to be lazy and to do what is convenient.

p. 152 ...it is crucial to make your habits so easy that you'll do them even when you don't feel like it.

p. 153 Rather than trying to overcome the friction in your life, you reduce it.

p. 154 ...when we remove the points of friction that sap our time and energy, we can achieve more with less effort.

p. 155 ...create an environment where doing the right thing is as easy as possible.

p. 158 Redesign your life so the actions that matter most are also the actions that are easiest to do.

p. 159 **How to Stop Procrastinating by Using the Two-Minute Rule**

p. 160 ...the habits you follow without thinking often determine the choices you make when you are thinking.

p. 162 Your options are constrained by what's available. They are shaped by the first choice.

p. 163 The truth is, a habit must be established before it can be improved.

p. 165 It's better to do less than you hoped than to do nothing at all.

p. 169 **How to Make Good Habits Inevitable and Bad Habits Impossible**

p. 170 A commitment device is a choice you make in the present that controls your actions in the future.

p. 174 Civilization advances by extending the number of operations we can perform without thinking about them. –
Alfred North Whitehead

p. 175 After I removed the mental candy from my environment, it became much easier to eat the healthy stuff.

p. 181 **The 4th Law: Make It Satisfying**

p. 183 **The Cardinal Rule of Behavior Change**

p. 184 The problem wasn't knowledge. The problem was consistency.

p. 185 We are more likely to repeat a behavior when the experience is satisfying.

p. 185 Pleasure teaches your brain that a behavior is worth remembering and repeating.

p. 186 The Cardinal Rule of Behavior Change: What is rewarded is repeated. What is punished is avoided.

p. 186 We are not looking for just any type of satisfaction. We are looking for immediate satisfaction.

p. 189 ...the costs of your good habits are in the present. The costs of your bad habits are in the future.

p. 190 if you're willing to wait for the rewards, you'll face less competition and often get a bigger payoff.

p. 192 Incentives can start a habit. Identity sustains a habit.

p. 195 **How to Stick with Good Habits Every Day**

p. 196 ...perhaps the best way to measure your progress is with a *habit tracker*.

p. 197 The mere act of tracking a behavior can spark the urge to change it.

p. 198 When we get a signal that we are moving forward, we become more motivated to continue down the path.

p. 200 It is better to consistently track one habit than to sporadically track ten.

p. 201 The first mistake is never the one that ruins you. It is the spiral of repeated mistakes that follow.

p. 201 Too often, we fall into an all-or-nothing cycle with our habits. The problem is not slipping up; the problem is thinking that if you can't do something perfectly, then you shouldn't do it at all.

p. 202 The dark side of tracking a particular behavior is that we become driven by the number rather than the purpose behind it.

p. 203 The human mind wants to "win" whatever game is being played.

p. 203 Measurement is only useful when it guides you and adds context to a larger picture, not when it consumes you. Each number is simply one piece of feedback in the overall system.

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p. 205 **How an Accountability Partner Can Change Everything**

p. 206 Just as we are more likely to repeat an experience when the ending is satisfying, we are also more likely to avoid an experience when the ending is painful.

p. 206 If you want to prevent bad habits and eliminate unhealthy behaviors, then adding an instant cost to the action is a great way to reduce their odds.

p. 210 Knowing that someone is watching can be a powerful motivator.

p. 215 **Advanced Tactics: How to Go from Being Merely Good to Being Truly Great**

p. 217 **The Truth About Talent (When Genes Matter and When They Don't)**

p. 218 The secret to maximizing your odds of success is to choose the right field of competition.

p. 218 ...you want to play a game where the odds are in your favor.

p. 219 When our environment changes, so do the qualities that determine success.

p. 222 You don't have to build the habits everyone tells you to build. Choose the habit that best suits you, not the one that is most popular.

p. 223 Pick the right habit and progress is easy. Pick the wrong habit and life is a struggle.

p. 223 If you are currently winning, you exploit, exploit, exploit. If you are currently losing, you continue to explore, explore, explore.

p. 225 When you can't win by being better, you can win by being different. By combining your skills, you reduce the level of competition, which makes it easier to stand out.

p. 226 Our genes do not eliminate the need for hard work. They clarify it. They tell us *what* to work hard on.

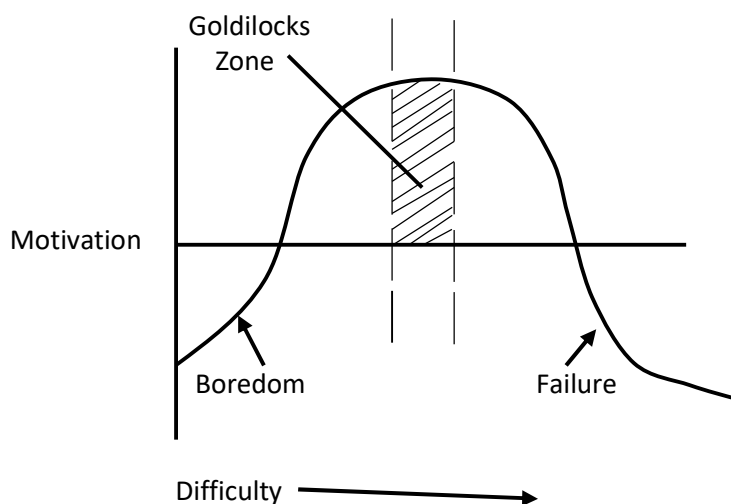
p. 227 People get so caught up in the fact that they *have* limits that they rarely exert the effort required to get close to them.

p. 229 **The Goldilocks Rule: How to Stay Motivated in Life and Work**

p. 230 How do we design habits that pull us in rather than ones that fade away?

p. 231 The Goldilocks Rule states that humans experience peak motivation when working on tasks that are right on the edge of their current abilities.

p. 232 The Goldilocks Rule





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- p. 233 Improvement requires a delicate balance. You need to regularly search for challenges that push you to your edge while continuing to make enough progress to stay motivated.
- p. 233 Without variety, we get bored. And boredom is perhaps the greatest villain on the quest for self-improvement.
- p. 234 ...really successful people *feel* the same lack of motivation as everyone else. The difference is that they still find a way to show up despite the feelings of boredom.
- p. 234 The greatest threat to success is not failure but boredom.
- p. 235 At some point, everyone faces the same challenge on the journey of self-improvement: you have to fall in love with boredom.
- p. 236 ...if you only do the work when it's convenient or exciting, then you'll never be consistent enough to achieve remarkable results.
- p. 236 But stepping up when it's annoying or painful or draining to do so, that's what makes the difference between a professional and an amateur.
- p. 239 **The Downside of Creating Good Habits**
- p. 239 When you can do it "good enough" on autopilot, you stop thinking about how to do it better.
- p. 240 Habits and Deliberate Practice = Mastery
- p. 240 Each habit unlocks the next level of performance. It's an endless cycle.
- p. 244 Reflection and review enables the long-term improvement of all habits because it makes you aware of your mistakes and helps you consider possible paths for improvement.
- p. 245 Improvement is not just about learning habits, it's also about fine-tuning them.
- p. 247 The more sacred an idea is to us – that is, the more deeply it is tied to our identity – the more strongly we will defend it against criticism.
- p. 247 The tighter we cling to an identity, the harder it becomes to grow beyond it.
- p. 249 Habits deliver numerous benefits, but the downside is that they can lock us into our previous patterns of thinking and acting – even when the world is shifting around us.
- p. 249 A lack of self-awareness is poison. Reflection and review is the antidote.
- p. 251 **Conclusion: The Secret to Results That Last**
- p. 252 ...as you continue to layer small changes on top of one another, the scales of life start to move.
- p. 252 ...progressed in the same way: through a commitment to tiny, sustainable, unrelenting improvements.
- p. 252 Success is not a goal to reach of a finish line to cross. It is a system to improve, an endless process to refine.
- p. 253 **Behaviors are effortless here. Behaviors are difficult here.**
 - Obvious ----- Invisible
 - Attractive ----- Unattractive
 - Easy ----- Hard
 - Satisfying ----- Unsatisfying
- p. 253 Small habits don't add up. They compound.

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