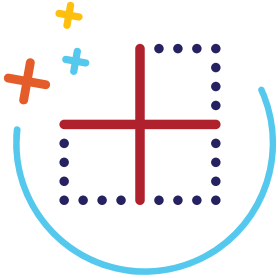


# A 30-Day Guide to Setting Boundaries



Boundaries are guides, rules, or limits that you create to identify what you're okay with and how you would like others to treat you. They can help you figure out who you are and empower you to make decisions about your health, improve your relationships, and ability to cope with overwhelming feelings.

Over the next 30 days, try these ways to build better boundaries. The more you do, day-by-day, the easier it will get. Habits are built by regularly taking small steps forward—so do what you can, but know things don't always have to work out perfectly. If you miss a day or need a break, that's okay. Now, take a deep breath and let's begin.

30 Days of Setting Boundries							
	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
WEEK ONE	List your priorities.	Be mindful of your time.	Know your limits.	Focus on your words.	Prioritize self-care.	Validate your feelings.	Focus on your relationships.
WEEK TWO	Reflect on your values.	Create a schedule.	List ways to say no.	Practice saying no.	Take a tech break.	Create safe space.	Recognize others' boundaries.
WEEK THREE	Guide your boundaries.	Protect your physical space.	Choose consequences.	Practice establishing boundaries.	Show yourself kindness.	Listen to your inner voice.	Reflect and ask questions.
WEEK FOUR	Find your support.	Put your needs first.	Recognize unhealthy boundaries.	Have an alternative.	Take time for you.	Protect your mental space.	Connect with your support.
WEEK FIVE	Reevaluate.	Reflect.					

## DAY 1

### Day 1: List your priorities.

Knowing your priorities can help you decide what deserves your time and energy. It can also help you see when you're putting others' priorities before your own, which can be a sign that you need more boundaries in that part of your life.

Take some time today to think about what matters most to you. Write it down, be specific and intentional. Why are these things important? Try not to think about what others expect of you—just focus on what you want for your life.

 Check them off as you go

## DAY 2

### Day 2: Be mindful of your time.

Now that you've gotten clear about what deserves your time, look at how you're actually spending it. What's filling your scheduling? How does that connect to your priorities? Are you taking on too much? Giving space for rest?

Be mindful of your time today by trying to stay present in each moment. Notice how you feel. Pay attention to where your time is going and think about the quality of time spent. Try writing it down to keep track. At the end of the day, reflect on what's working and what you might change.

## DAY 3

### Day 3: Know your limits.

Before you can set boundaries, you need to know your limits—physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. What makes you feel safe? What makes you feel uncomfortable? What adds to your stress? Brings you joy? Once you know your limits, they get easier to defend and respect.

You probably won't be able to name every limit in this moment. So, think of these questions as a starting point. Spend 15 minutes today answering them and acknowledging what you have a right to feel, how you deserve to be treated, and that your needs and feelings are as important as everyone else's.

## DAY 4

### Day 4: Focus on your words.

Part of setting boundaries is being able to communicate them with others. For some, just the thought of this can be stressful. Deep breath—you can do this. Boundary setting doesn't have to be about blaming others or getting defensive. It's about expressing your thoughts, feelings, and needs.

Today, practice using "I" statements in normal conversations—for example, "I feel... I need...I think..." Work on talking about regular things from the perspective of how they impact you. Then, when you're actually talking boundaries with someone, you'll be more comfortable with how to voice it.

## DAY 5

### Day 5: Prioritize self-care.

Think of self-care as giving yourself permission to put you first. It helps you recognize when you need or feel something and then focus on how to fulfill those needs or cope with those feelings. And in turn, the want to have healthy boundaries in your life and with others will come naturally.

Take at least 15 minutes out of your schedule today for some self-care. This can be quiet time away from screens, hanging out with a friend, or dancing to your favorite album—anything that soothes you, re-energizes you, or calms your stress.

## DAY 6

### Day 6: Validate your feelings.

Everyone needs to feel understood and accepted—including you. And while it's not always easy being on your own side, relying on validation from others, like on social media, can actually make you feel more isolated, anxious, or depressed.

Practice validating your own thoughts and feelings today. Encourage yourself. Acknowledge the good and bad as they happen. Remind yourself that it's normal to feel whatever you're feeling. And explore how feeling seen, heard, and respected can help you calm emotions and discover more about yourself.

## DAY 7

### Day 7: Focus on your relationships.

As you were practicing self-validation yesterday, did you notice any negative feelings when you were interacting with others? This could be guilt, self-doubt, anger, or discomfort. Relationship boundaries can help you define what you're okay with and how you want to be treated by others—whether it's friends, family, partners or anyone else.

Spend at least 15 minutes today looking at your relationships. Are there specific things that have made you feel uncomfortable? What matters most in your relationships? What do you not want to share with others? Write the answers down and think about why you chose these things and how you can protect the important things and change the things you don't like.

## DAY 8

### Day 8: Reflect on your values.

Just like priorities, clearly knowing your personal values is an important step in finding healthy boundaries. Think of it like following your heart—it's about who you are and what matters most to you. Once you know your values, it will be easier to see when they are challenged or overlooked.

So, what are the most important things in the world to you? What do you believe in? Honesty? Empathy? Time with others? Time alone? Your family? Creativity? Personal growth? List your top 10. Then, think about that list. Which values belong in the top three? While no one can tell you what your values are—if you need help figuring it out, try searching common ones online or asking others what they value.

## DAY 9

### Day 9: Create a schedule.

From priorities to values and self-care, it can be hard to balance all these things on a regular basis. And while it may not always go as planned, building out a schedule that protects your time can help, without overwhelming you.

Start with today. What has to be done? Classes? Work? How about routines—like getting ready in the morning? Set aside time for things that matter to you or relax you. Time with others. Or watching your favorite TV show. A schedule like this can help you maintain your boundaries as you set them—but stay flexible. This is about protecting and respecting your time, not putting pressure on yourself to do everything.

## DAY 10

### Day 10: List ways to say no.

"No." is a complete sentence. When you're setting boundaries with others, it can be hard not to over-explain, debate, or defend how you're feeling or why you're saying no—but it's not necessary. And it's okay if it takes time and practice to get comfortable with that.

To help prepare for these moments, spend five minutes today making a list of ways you can say no. Consider the different people you interact with and different scenarios you may be in. Use simple, direct language that assertively communicates that a boundary has been crossed. Remember your “I” statements. You can be firm without being unkind or blaming others.

## DAY 11

### Day 11: Practice saying no.

Every relationship is different. Keeping healthy boundaries with some people in your life may happen naturally and not need firm language. And with others, you'll need to be more direct to let them know that what they're doing is unacceptable to you.

At first, you may feel selfish, awkward, or guilty when setting boundaries more directly. So, let's start slow. Practice using your “no” list today in normal conversations. Work on saying no without giving any explanation. If you don't have any opportunities to say no today, that's okay—just look for chances to practice going forward.

## DAY 12

### Day 12: Take a tech break.

Setting boundaries in the digital age can be hard. From our phones to social media and the internet in general, technology can invade your privacy by giving people constant access to you. It can also shape how you spend your time—because it's hard to focus on your own priorities when you're feeling FOMO from seeing cool things other people are doing with their lives.

Creating healthy boundaries around technology can be good for your mental health—especially if you're struggling with loneliness, anxiety, or depression. For today, try spending 30 minutes away from technology. Do something that relaxes you or makes you happy. And going forward, keep working on those boundaries by noticing your screen time, turning off notifications, and blocking negative accounts.

## DAY 13

### Day 13: Create safe space.

Creating “safe spaces” can mean a lot of different things. They can be physical, emotional, shared, or all of the above. They can be where you feel free from judgment and expectations. They can help you feel supported and respected. Or help you connect and share vulnerabilities with others.

Creating, finding, and holding safe space can be done all throughout your life. For today, try to create one new personal safe space. This can be starting a private journal, blocking off weekly time that's just for you, turning on your phone's “Do Not Disturb” feature at a certain time every night, or joining a supportive group online.

## DAY 14

### Day 14: Recognize others' boundaries.

As you learn more about recognizing boundaries within yourself, it's also important to be aware of and respect them in others. Some boundaries can be discovered by being more mindful of other people. And others can only be found through openly talking about it.

Today, focus on mindfulness. As you spend time with others, pay attention to social cues. Like how much space someone naturally puts between you and them. Note if someone changes the subject. Were you talking about something personal? Or was it just the natural flow of conversation? Are they making eye contact? Do they look comfortable? It's okay if you don't remember to do this at every moment, just go with it when you do.

DAY  
15

## Day 15: Guide your boundaries.

Getting clear about your values—like you did last week—can help you identify needed boundaries in your life. Think of them as a guide you can use to figure out if something is worth your time and energy. If the answer is no, that could be a sign you need to let it go.

Spend 15 minutes today turning your top values into possible boundaries. Look at each value and think about what supports that value and what you would and wouldn't tolerate given that value. Write down your answers and come back to them anytime you're struggling with something.

DAY  
16

## Day 16: Protect your physical space.

Physical boundaries can help you protect your body, personal space, and privacy. Your physical boundaries are just as important as everyone else's—and should be respected and taken seriously when overstepped. Never forget that you deserve to feel safe.

For today, try establishing one new physical boundary. This could be adding a password on a personal device, storing private items—like your journal—in a locked drawer or box, talking to someone about physical boundaries you share, or exploring your comfort levels when you change the amount of physical space between yourself and others.

DAY  
17

## Day 17: Choose consequences.

Life isn't perfect—and sometimes boundaries get crossed. Then what? Having a healthy relationship with yourself and others can mean holding people accountable. And like setting boundaries, enforcing them doesn't have to be as hard as you may think.

Go back to the value-based boundaries you listed. Look at each and write down an action you could take if it were crossed—something you're comfortable with that also respects your needs. Maybe it's a conversation that focuses on your values when a conflict arises. Maybe it's leaving a friend's house when others are drinking. Or distancing yourself from an unhealthy relationship. Then, you can always come back to your list when you need it.

DAY  
18

## Day 18: Practice establishing boundaries.

By now, you know the importance of communicating your boundaries. And you've started to build the foundation for how to do it. Establishing boundaries will always be a work in progress—something you can continuously practice and change. But you can do it.

Choose a few simple boundaries that you can talk to people about today. Build off the "I" statements and your prepared "no's". Remember to be clear, calm, and direct. Start where you're comfortable for now. It could be letting that friend who constantly texts know you need "you" time tonight. Addressing something that's been bothering you in a relationship. Or talking to a parent about areas in your life where you want more privacy.

DAY  
19

## Day 19: Show yourself kindness.

It's time for another self-care day.

What do you need today? Are you tired? Overwhelmed? Bored? Lonely? Get specific about how you're feeling. And choose a self-care activity that aligns. Spend 30-60 minutes giving yourself that attention and protecting that space for you to be fulfilled from it.

DAY  
20

## Day 20: Listen to your inner voice.

Much like self-validation, trusting your gut instincts is another way to recognize where you need boundaries and when they've been crossed. You know the difference between feeling safe and feeling uncomfortable—but trusting those "red flags" when you sense them can take practice.

Pay close attention to your inner voice today. This can be while you're alone, spending time with others, or even while watching a movie. Notice what or who drains your energy, makes you nervous, or takes you out of your comfort zone. Be mindful of your body—are you tense? Identifying and listening to these things can empower you to protect your space, self-respect, and energy more than you may realize .

DAY  
21

## Day 21: Reflect and ask questions.

Last week, you spent time being mindful of others' boundaries. Did you learn anything new? Chances are it's okay if you've never directly talked about boundaries with the people in your life. They've probably been communicating those boundaries in other ways. And if you're ever unsure, ask. Something as simple as, "Is this okay?" can be all you need.

Take time to reflect on your relationships again. This time think about how you can be more inclusive and understanding. This could be considering cultural or spiritual differences in your relationships. Or taking other's mental health or current situations into account. And if you think you're ready, try asking someone close to you about their boundaries and if there are ways you can be more respectful of them.

DAY  
22

## Day 22: Find your support.

When it comes to boundaries, there are a lot of great reasons to have support. Everyone needs help sometimes—whether it's navigating a difficult conversation, venting your emotions to help you calmly approach something later, or just needing to talk after your boundaries have been disrespected.

Spend 5-10 minutes today thinking about who you can turn to as you continue to set, communicate, and enforce boundaries in your life—kind of like a gratitude list for the people, groups, or communities that are there for you. And don't forget outside resources, like your school staff, health care professionals, and help lines—including TeenLink.org.

DAY  
23

## Day 23: Put your needs first.

A lot of us struggle with putting ourselves first. But it isn't about doing what you want all the time or dismissing others' needs, it's about expressing and respecting your own. And while just the thought of it may make you feel guilty, selfish, or stressed out—it's important to remember that you can't be there for others if you're not there for yourself.

So, put your needs first today—however that looks for you. Keep getting comfortable with turning people down—you've already got that "no" list. Look out for the things that are disrupting your routine, bringing on anxiety, causing burnout. Let those go. And instead give your time (guilt-free!) to what you need right now.

DAY  
24

## Day 24: Recognize unhealthy boundaries.

In order to build healthy boundaries in your life, you have to look at the existing ones that aren't working. It's not always easy to spot unhealthy boundaries, but you already have everything you need to do it. Remember your limits and to validate your feelings, listen to that inner voice, and trust yourself when something doesn't feel right.

Spend 15 minutes today thinking about your unhealthy boundaries. Do you feel like you do things just to please people sometimes? Go against your values for someone else's approval? Have a hard time being honest when you're uncomfortable? Let others control how you live or spend time? Write down and reflect on your answers. Remember, your boundaries have likely been influenced by your culture, society, and family—so don't blame yourself for any missteps. This about moving forward, happier and healthier.

DAY  
25

## Day 25: Have an alternative.

Hopefully by now, you're feeling more confident about saying no. And while you never need to explain yourself for saying it, it can be helpful to have ideas ready for how to navigate a conversation afterwards. One way to do this is to offer an alternative.

Spend 10 minutes today writing down some ideas for alternatives that protect your boundaries. Think about areas where you have trouble speaking up or go back to your priorities and values. For example, if you don't like turning down your friends when they invite you somewhere, say no and offer an invitation that fits into your schedule. Or, if you want to hang out but are uncomfortable with what they want to do, bring some other ideas into the conversation that everyone can enjoy.

DAY  
26

## Day 26: Take time for you.

Ready for another self-care day? Quieting that voice that says you need to be productive all the time takes practice.

So, enjoy some downtime, relaxation, and fun today.

DAY  
27

## Day 27: Protect your mental space.

Emotional and intellectual boundaries can help you protect your self-esteem and personal goals, separate your feelings from others', have confidence in your thoughts and opinions, practice spirituality, and take more ownership over your choices.

Try setting one emotional and one intellectual boundary today. An emotional boundary could be deciding not to share personal information in certain situations or working on not feeling responsible for others' emotions. Your intellectual boundary could be talking to someone about respecting each other's perspectives or regaining control in an area of your life that you feel like others' have too much influence.

DAY  
28

## Day 28: Connect with your support.

Setting boundaries is a deeply personal and sometimes difficult thing to do. It can be even harder if you or someone in your life lives with mental illness, depression, anxiety, or a history of trauma. Having a support system in place can help you get through it.

Go back to your support list. Choose one person or resource on it and reach out to them today. Talk

with them about how you're feeling—things that have been challenging and the good things. Ask about them as well. Try to stay present in that moment and remember your support list anytime you're not sure about what to do.

DAY  
29

## Day 29: Reevaluate.

When it comes to your priorities—and even goals—it's normal for change to happen over time. Your life isn't set in stone, so why would what's important to you be?



It's been almost a month since you made your priority list. Check in with yourself today. Have you stayed focused or made progress? Have you discovered new ones? Lost touch with some of the old? Maybe nothing will have changed, and that's okay too. Come back to your priorities regularly and remember to be kind to yourself when doing it.

DAY  
30

## Day 30: Reflect.

You did it. You made it to the final exercise. And it's time to reflect everything you've learned so far.



Today is about continuing your boundary-setting journey. Take as long as need to go back through your writings. Think about what's worked for you over the past 30 days. Will daily schedules help you be more mindful about how you spend your time? Will self-care be your new weekly routine for stress-relief? What still needs work? Have you discovered new limits to add to your list? Want to keep practicing your no's? Think about how your actions can bring you back to your priorities and values. How you can protect your physical and mental space. Have compassion for yourself and know however you're feeling during this process is okay and it matters. If you feel ready, start taking action. You can do it.