

Marist Institute for Public Opinion

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Out with the Old...Habits, That Is

This Marist College Institute for Public Opinion poll reports:

Self-improvement are New Year's Goals

- Improving habits and health are goals for people resolving to make a fresh start in the New Year. Many Americans hope to kick the smoking habit, spend less money, lose weight, exercise more, and look for that better job in 2005.

Question Wording: What is it that you resolve to do or not to do in the New Year?

Americans Who Intend to Make a Resolution This Year			
Stop smoking	15%	Use time better	5%
Spend less money	12%	Be kinder to others	4%
Lose weight	10%	Go back to school	4%
Exercise more	10%	Stop drinking	3%
Get better job	10%	Worry less	2%
Be a better person	8%	Increase family time	1%
Improve health	6%	Get new house	1%
Eat healthier	5%	Other	4%

Top Three Resolutions			
Women		Men	
Lose weight	15%	Stop Smoking	18%
Spend less money	14%	Get a better job	16%
Be a better person	13%	Exercise more	11%

Women Are More Likely to Make a Resolution...

- 35% of adults plan to make a New Year's resolution this year. 39% of women compared with 31% of men report they will try to turn over a new leaf in the New Year. Younger people are also more likely than those 35 or older to see the New Year as an opportunity to make a change.

Question Wording: Are you very likely, somewhat likely, or not likely at all to make a New Year's resolution?

Americans	Very or Somewhat Likely	Not Likely At All
2004	35%	65%
Women	39%	61%
Men	31%	69%
Age 18 to 34	46%	54%
Age 35 or older	26%	74%
2003	34%	66%
2002	39%	61%
2001	44%	56%
2000	40%	60%
1999	37%	63%
1998	38%	62%
1997	37%	63%

...But Men Are More Likely to Keep It

- 57% of Americans who made a New Year's resolution last year kept it. Men who resolved to make a change were more likely to stick to it than were women.

Question Wording: Did you keep it? (Asked of those who made a resolution last year)

Americans Who Made a Resolution Last Year	Yes	No
2004	57%	43%
Women	45%	55%
Men	72%	28%

Nature of the Sample: 1,028 adults 18 years of age or older in the continental U.S.

This survey was conducted on November 3rd and November 4th, 2004. 1,028 adults 18 years of age or older within the continental United States were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. The results of the entire survey are statistically significant at $\pm 3\%$. The margin for error increases for cross-tabulations.