

# Backwards Plan

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

I will be able to articulate the vision I have for my life.

## DIRECTIONS

Create a Backwards Plan for your life. Set a long-term goal, then set 5-10 milestone or mini-goals. You may need to do research to set the right milestones. Read on for a step-by-step guide

**1.** Spend several minutes thinking about what you'd like to accomplish in your life, long term. Your goals should be meaningful and significant but don't need to be career-related achievements. Use the space below to jot down your thoughts for each category. Try not to self-edit at this point (don't leave something off your list because it might seem hard to attain). You might list goals related to jobs, educational degrees, travel, a specific accomplishment like having a book published (or just writing a novel), or a particular skill or life experience.



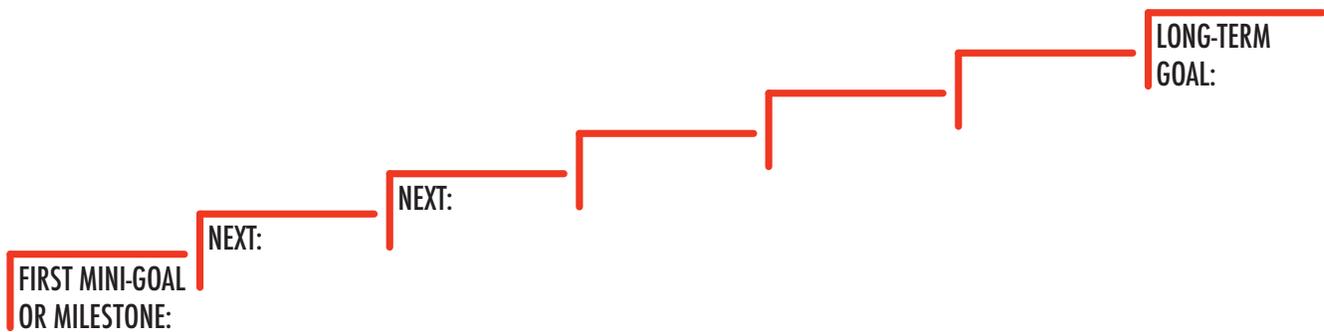
**2.** From your brainstorming above, select and circle a long-term goal you want to focus on for this activity. Rewrite it in sentence form here:

My goal is to \_\_\_\_\_



# Backwards Plan

**3.** Now begin to list the steps you'll need to take in order to reach your long-term goal. Start with the milestone that is likely to come right before you achieve your long-term goal and work backwards. For example, if your goal is to become a professor of psychology at a university, you might list "earn a PhD" as the mini-goal that comes right before that. If your ultimate goal is to join a world-class professional orchestra as a violinist, there may be several possible steps you'd take right before achieving that (maybe playing with a smaller community orchestra or freelancing for a time).



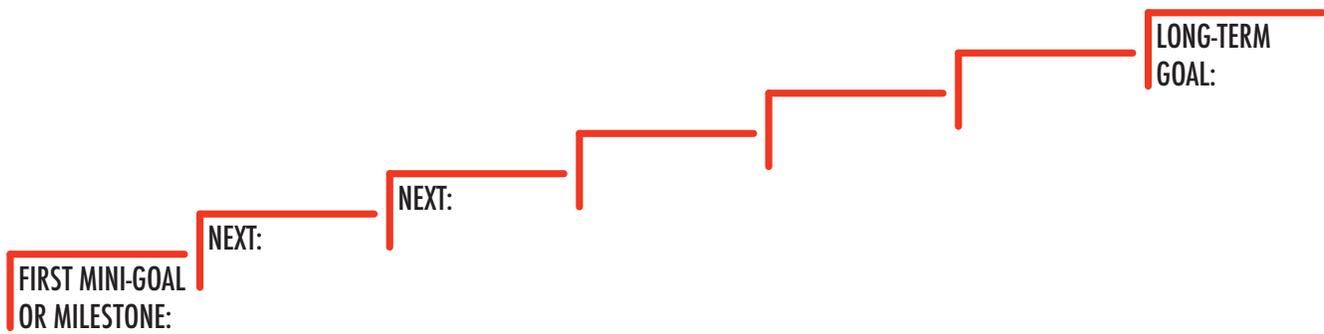
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**4.** At this point, it might help to do a bit of research to learn more about the many possible paths you could take to reach your goal. Read the biography of someone who reached the goal you hope to achieve. What steps did that person take? You could also look up the typical requirements for honors, degrees, jobs, or sports-related achievements. What training is required? What level must be achieved before you're ready to move to the next step? Take notes from your research in this space:

**5.** Finally, put it all together. Revise your steps as needed based on your research. Write a final version of your vision (though it may change over time!), including detailed steps and milestones on the way to achieving your long-term goal.



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