

**I ILLINOIS**

Extension

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER  
& ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

***Someday is Today:  
Live Your Bucket List***



“Goals that are not written down are just wishes.”

-Unknown

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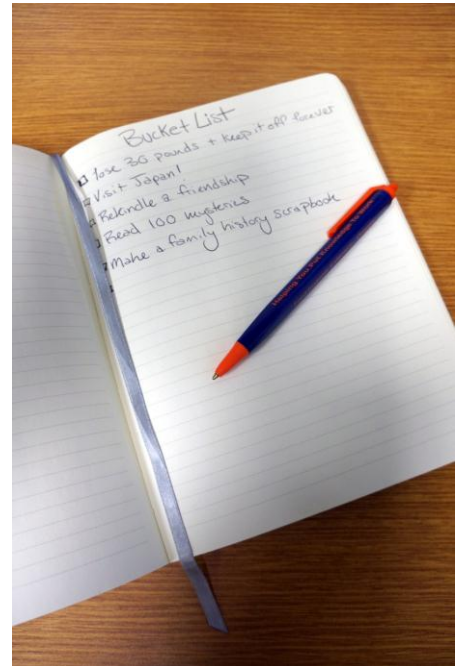
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## A Bucket List:

Have you ever heard the saying *you only live once*? Perhaps you've even said it a time or two! This saying helps us understand the importance of making the most of the one life that each of us has. Making a "bucket list" of the things we've always wanted to do or get done is a great way to accomplish those goals. The term "bucket list" was popularized by a 2007 movie starring Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman where both characters, who were terminally ill, set out on a road trip to complete their life's wish lists before they "kicked the bucket."

Frequently people say, "I've always wanted to do that or go there," but then they never seem to get around to it. Or they think that life will slow down some day and they'll do all the things they've been putting off. It isn't uncommon to procrastinate and wait for the "right" time to come along to fulfill dreams. Unfortunately for some, waiting until the right time may mean that dreams will remain unfulfilled. The point of a bucket list is to make a plan for the rest of your life, to set goals to do the things you've dreamed about and experience your life to the fullest.



This lesson will cover:

- The benefits of setting goals throughout life
- The difference between mini and maxi bucket list goals and the importance of the self-inventory
- Various types of bucket lists
- Strategies for developing our own bucket lists or action plans and ways to reflect on those experiences

## Benefits of a Bucket List:



- To keep your goals and dreams in view and to help you live your life fully
- To avoid procrastination
- To feel a sense of accomplishment as tasks or goals are checked off the list
- To assist in organizing your short and long range schedule or calendar
- To have a sense of purpose and meaning in life
- To stay active in mind and body
- To serve as a reminder of what is really important to you and the goals you wish to achieve in your lifetime
- To use your written list as a motivator to accomplish your goals
- To gain a clearer insight on what you want from your life
- To use as a tool later to reflect on your accomplishments and/or record your experiences
- To enjoy life more and stress less

## Mini to Maxi Goals



“I’m gonna make the rest of my life the best of my life.”

-Unknown

### Mini and Maxi Bucket Lists:

Some people think that a bucket list only holds magnificent or “maxi” aspirations like climbing Mt. Everest, meeting the President or writing a best seller. In fact, for most of us, the “mini” desires we’d like to fulfill might give us the biggest sense of gratification. And, who is to say except the owner of the bucket list what is maxi or mini?! So, whether your goal is to run a marathon, travel Europe, organize your DVD’s or become a pen pal, you and only you can determine the success of your accomplishment.



## *Ask Yourself:*

As you contemplate your bucket list ideas, it might be helpful to do a self-inventory. Complete the open ended questions in order to help you organize your thoughts and to start to put your wishes on paper.

This brings me joy:

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Interests that I have yet to pursue:

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Something I would like to learn to do:

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Something I would like to experience soon:

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My dream is to:

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## Types of Bucket Lists:

Your bucket list can be as big or as small as you'd like or can be made up of several different types of lists. You may want to organize your lists into categories like retirement, travel, family, friends, personal, etc.

Here are some examples:

**POSSIBLE BUCKET LISTS:**

- Personal:**
  - ✓ Walk 30 minutes every day
  - ✓ Write a story and get it published
  - ✓ Turn the TV off for one week
  - ✓ Get on Facebook
  - ✓ Buy a good camera and learn how to take great pictures
- Family:**
  - ✓ Take the family on a trip to Disney
  - ✓ Take a family photo every year at holiday time
  - ✓ Chair the next family reunion
  - ✓ Put all family photos in scrapbooks and distribute to my children
- Friends:**
  - ✓ Rekindle a friendship from my youth
  - ✓ Make five new friends this year
  - ✓ Meet friends for lunch once a month
  - ✓ Go with friends on a cruise
- Retirement:**
  - ✓ Learn to golf
  - ✓ Spend more time with my grandchildren
  - ✓ Volunteer at my church
  - ✓ Attend yoga classes
  - ✓ Read 100 mysteries
  - ✓ See the Grand Canyon

# PREPARE YOUR BUCKET LISTS

Take a moment to fill your buckets!

**Personal:**



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**Travel:**



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**Family:**



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**Retirement:**



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**Friends:**



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**Other:**



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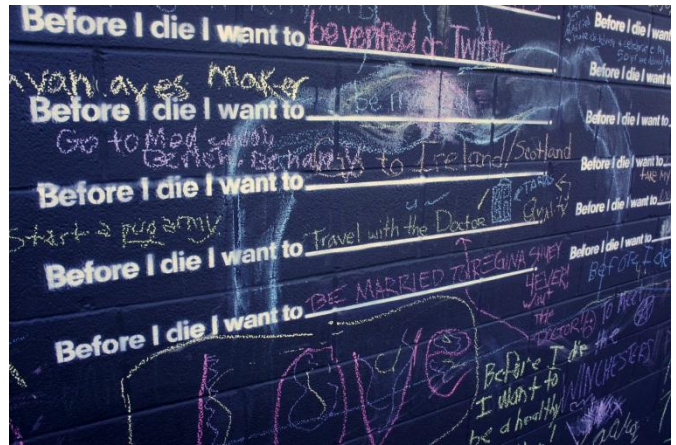
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## Partner and Share

Now partner up with someone and share some highlights of your bucket lists.

Share one that:

- You have had on your list for a while
- Scares you
- Would challenge you
- Would be the first you think that you plan to accomplish
- And any others you would like to share



“Don’t wait for the perfect moment, take the moment and make it perfect.”

–Anonymous

## General Tips

- View your bucket list as a to-do list tool that is referred to frequently.
- Feel a sense of achievement as you complete each task.
- Your bucket list can be as private or as public as you’d like. If you would like the support of others to help motivate you, the list can be shared.
- Your list should be treated as a working document. You may change your mind and remove items, or you may have other things you’d like to add to your list.
- If you face obstacles along the way, don’t let that stop you – you can always adjust or modify your goals.
- Don’t just develop your bucket list and tuck it away – GO FOR IT!

“And in the end, it’s not the years in your life that count. It’s the life in your years.”

–Abraham Lincoln

# SMART Goals

Specific - Measurable - Achievable - Realistic - Timely

## Specific

Describe your goal.

## Measurable

How can you track your progress?

## Achievable

What three steps can you take to reach your goal?

1.

2.

3.

## Realistic

List the skills or resources you need to reach your goal.

## Timely

When will you reach your goal?

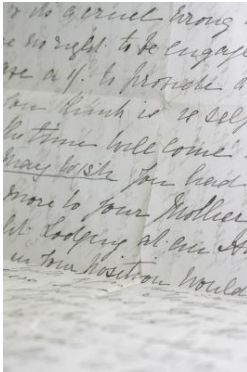


## Reflecting Back on Your Accomplishments

Once you have started checking off items from your bucket lists, take time to reflect on your adventures and goals; document all that you have accomplished. You can do this in a variety of ways. While reflecting back you can relive the fun as well as share your experiences with family and friends.

Ways to document your living bucket list:

**Journaling** – take time to write about the adventures and goals that you accomplished



**Scrapbook** – share your experience through pictures



Create a **Wordle** – [www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net)

Brainstorm the words that depict what you have done or want to do. Use those words to develop a *Wordle*. You can personalize with color, shapes, etc.



**Lifestory writing** – write about your bucket list experiences and share with others



**Video/movie** – have a family member or friend document you talking about or actually completing items off your bucket list



## Bucket List Quotes

- “In the end we only regret the chances we didn’t take.” –Unknown
- “You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough.” –Mae West
- “You have the power to say “this is NOT how my story will end.”” –Unknown
- “Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So...get on your way.” –Dr. Seuss
- “The way you are living will have been your life.” –Unknown
- “The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss, but that it is too low and we reach it.” –Michelangelo
- “Live your life. Take chances. Be crazy. Don’t wait. Because right now is the oldest you’ve ever been and the youngest you’ll ever be again.” –Suzanne Collins
- “I don’t want to get to the end of my life and find that I just lived the length of it. I want to have lived the width of it as well.” –Diane Ackerman
- “No one looks back on their life and remembers the nights they had plenty of sleep.” –Unknown
- “Life begins at the end of your comfort zone.” –Neale Donald Walsch
- “Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.” –Henry David Thoreau



**Adapted from:** West Virginia University Extension: Living your “Bucket List” (2011) – Andrea Bennett

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