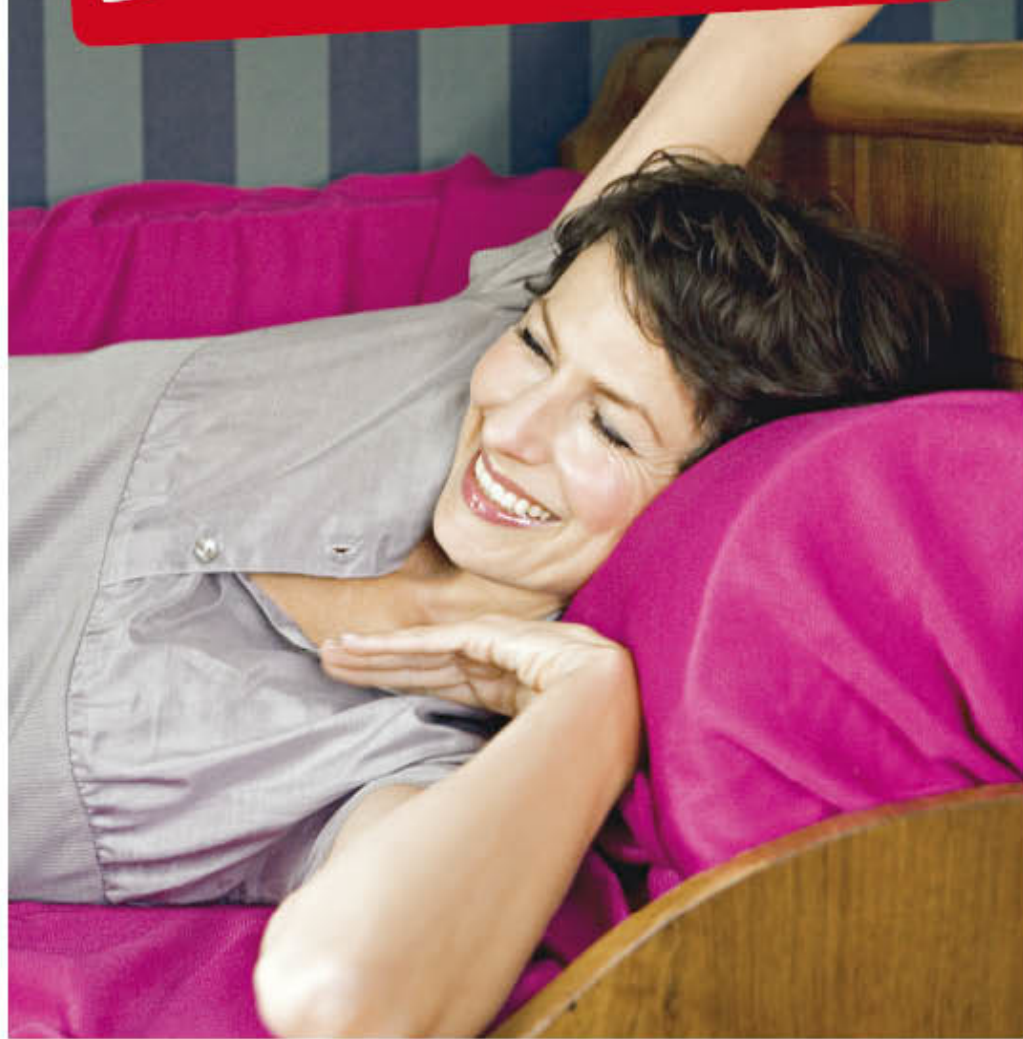


# YOUR 2011 CHECKLIST:

Tick these must-try activities off your list each week & feel amazing all year.

# 52 WEEKS OF health & happiness



**1** Polish up your menu-planning skills. "That way, you'll never have to ask that age-old question, 'What am I going to cook tonight?'" says accredited practising dietitian Jane Barnes. Planning ahead is the easiest way to make healthy choices – and save money on groceries, too!

**2** **LEARN HOW TO TAKE A COMPLIMENT.** That means no more awkward denials or rushed compliments in return. Simply smile and say thank you. Easy, right?

**3** Boost your confidence by experimenting with new beauty techniques. "Beauty doesn't have to cost a fortune," says Natalie Bloom, founder of Bloom Cosmetics. "Try applying make-up with different brushes or gloss you haven't worn before."

**4** **RECOGNISE WHEN YOU NEED TO REST, RELAX AND WORK,** suggests Inna Segal, author of *The Secret Language of Your Body* (Blue Angel Publishing, \$34.95). Find the right balance and aim to keep it.

**5** **DELEGATE,** says Louise D'Allura from Revamp Professional Organisers. "Stop and ask whether this is a task your partner or kids could do instead," she says. That way, everyone helps share the load.

**6** **"MAKE HAPPINESS A DAILY PRIORITY,"** says Sophie Scott, author of *Road Testing Happiness* (HarperCollins, \$27.99). "Remember to show gratitude for the people who you love – and who love you in return."

**7** **READ MORE. "IT OPENS YOUR MIND TO NEW IDEAS," SAYS HR CONSULTANT TINA NIKOLOVSKI. READY?**

**8** **GET BACK TO NATURE.** When's the last time you felt grass beneath your toes, relaxed under a tree or had a picnic near the water?

**9** Invest in wardrobe basics, like jeans, tailored pants, an A-line skirt or blazer, suggests designer Mela Purdie. They make getting dressed easier.

**14** **LEARN TO SAY NO.** "Saying yes to everything can lead to bulging workloads at home and in the office. Becoming over-committed can also increase stress levels," suggests D'Allura.

**15** **HUNGRY?** Always aim for quality over quantity. "If a meal isn't interesting or satisfying then the natural reaction is to reach for something else, which can be nutritionally disastrous," Barnes says. Think before you eat.

**16** If you haven't already, follow Ramsay Street's lead by getting to know your neighbours. This will help create a homely, community vibe in your area.

**10** **MONITOR YOUR SERVING SIZES.** Some 61 per cent of respondents in the 2009 NSW Food Waste Avoidance Benchmark Study admit they waste food because they overestimate how much they really need to eat.

**11** **DISCOVER YOUR INNER MOTIVATORS.** "Learning to self-motivate made a huge difference in my life," admits Slimmer Cathy Holmes. Spur yourself on with non-food-related rewards or write a list of reasons you want to hit your goals to help you stay focused.

**12** **GET GREAT HAIR.** "Try curling your hair one day, straightening it the next, or pulling it back into a sleek ponytail," suggests Joey Scandizzo, Sebastian Professional Design Team director.

**13** **LOVE FOOD?** Savour it, urges dietitian Julie Masci. "By slowing down the eating process, fullness can be achieved much earlier in the meal," she says.

**17** Overcome your fear of failure. If something doesn't go to plan, simply work out where you went wrong, then try again, and again, if necessary. There's no wrong answer.

**18** **FORGET EMAIL OR TEXTING** – write a letter and post it to a special someone in your life.

**19** **TIME FOR A MOBILE PHONE UPGRADE? HAND IN YOUR OLD ONE FIRST. MORE THAN 90% OF YOUR PHONE CAN BE REUSED, SO VISIT WWW.MOBILEMUSTER.COM.AU TO SEE HOW YOU CAN HELP.**

**20** "Power walking is a great way to get outside with friends who can encourage and chat with you at the same time," recommends Dr Mark McKean from the Australian Institute of Fitness Research.

**21** Break down goals into bite-size pieces. "Organising goals into smaller, manageable steps will help you to achieve them," Nikolovski explains. "This is a great technique to ensure you live a really well balanced and fulfilling life."

**22** **MAKE AN ENTIRE MEAL FROM SCRATCH.** Whether you dig your bread, pasta or sausage-maker out of the cupboard, or open up those dusty recipe books, it's time to start cooking up a storm!

**23** **FIND A WORTHY CAUSE, THEN SUPPORT IT. PITCH IN BY HOSTING A FUNDRAISER OR VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME, AND REAP THE REWARDS.**

**24** "Write a to-do list every day - and then halve it," Nikolovski advises. "We always want to achieve more than is possible in any given day. Be realistic."

**25** **CONSTANTLY MAKING EXCUSES TO SKIP YOUR WORKOUT?** "Keep a change of gym clothes and runners in the car or by the front door," McKean says. "The more organised you are, the more likely you are to get active regularly."

**26** Say yes to something you'd normally decline and sign on for an instant adrenaline rush. Think bungee jumping, skydiving, public speaking or even hosting a dinner party.

**27** Challenge yourself to recreate one make-up look from a magazine, like the matte red lip on page 50. If you get stuck, swing past a beauty counter at your local department store for a complimentary make-up lesson.

**28** "Get involved in weight bearing and resistance training," says physiotherapist Melissa Lever. It helps keep you toned and has been proven to decrease the risk of osteoporosis."

**29** Say goodbye to garments in your wardrobe that don't fit properly, suggests Purdie. Keep anything that shows off your figure and give away or recycle anything that's too clingy or baggy.

**30** **ASK MORE QUESTIONS.** Make an effort to discover what makes the people in your life tick. Not only will they appreciate the effort you've made, it will strengthen your relationships.

**31** Chat with your hairdresser about getting a cut that suits your face shape. "This is so important," Scandizzo says. "A haircut is like a pair of shoes: it really can make or break your entire look."

**32** "Ditch the all-or-nothing healthy eating attitude," Masci says. Don't ban food groups or beat yourself up if you make an unhealthy choice - aim to make a better food selection at your next meal.

**33** **Have you had a proper one-on-one catch-up with your best friend lately? Or your mum? Dad? Partner? Socialise regularly with loved ones, even if you have to schedule it in.**

**34** **NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS.** "One of the best predictors of happiness is a strong social network," author Sophie Scott says. Invest time and energy cultivating it.

**35** Do you know who your fourth cousin once-removed on your mum's side is? Find out. Just a little research can make your family tree bloom.

**36** Make contact with your idol or someone who's inspired you. If that's impossible, pen them a note explaining why it is they mean so much to you.

**37** **ASK YOURSELF WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY.** Once you've answered the question, make sure whatever it is plays a huge part in your life.

**38** "Make a production out of eating every meal and, most importantly, sit down while you do it," Barnes says. "This can help to reduce mindless eating, which contributes to your daily food intake and can also lead to weight gain."

**39** Love your work. If you're not head over heels for your current 9-5, think about what you'd love to be doing instead. Life's too short to be unhappy.

**40** Slash your electricity bill. Try extra blankets in winter, energy-saving bulbs and turning off lights you don't need.

**41** **PLAY TOURIST.** Have you seen all your town or city's hot spots? Don't take your local area for granted: spend a weekend seeing the sights on your doorstep, and walk, too!

**42** Discover your creative niche. Whether it's art, photography, writing, sport, acting, singing or dancing, reflect on what it is you truly love, then do it daily, Segal suggests.

**43** **CATEGORISE YOUR HOUSEHOLD PAPERWORK.** "We only refer to 20 per cent of what we file, so set up a basic paperwork system to keep everything organised," D'Allura recommends. Rather than hoarding it, recycle paper that you know you won't ever need to reference again.

**44** Don't just focus on the scales: use a measuring tape, ribbon or clothes to monitor your weight loss. "Hormone changes, sodium intake, bowel movements and the amount of food and drink consumed on a day can have a huge influence on your weigh-in," Masci explains.

**45** **REMEMBER TO MAKE STRETCHING PART OF YOUR WORKOUT.** "Stretching improves flexibility, decreases muscle tightness, helps to prevent injuries and increases overall blood circulation," Lever says.

**46** Acknowledge your achievements, no matter how small, says Slimmer Emma Dillon. "Keep reflecting on the distance you've already travelled, relish your success and keep going."

**47** **PAMPER YOURSELF, ESPECIALLY ON OFF DAYS.** "A lick of mascara and a swipe of lip gloss can be an instant beauty boost," Bloom says. Nail polish is another cheap, sure-fire pick-me-up.

**48** **START A VEGETABLE OR HERB GARDEN. "WE HAVE A BEAUTIFUL VEGIE GARDEN WHICH GIVES US PLENTY OF FRESH HEALTHY OPTIONS FOR COOKING," SAYS GETAWAY PRESENTER AND NEW MUM CATRIONA ROWNTREE.**

**49** Update your iPod with music that keeps you motivated. Make playlists to suit different occasions - to get you pumped up and out the door for a run, in the mood for a little cleaning or even tunes to help you unwind.

**50** Mastered a new skill lately? Get out of your comfort zone by learning a new language, trying a new exercise class or learning to cook.

**51** **LEARN A NEW WORD AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK, THEN MAKE AN EFFORT TO USE IT IN A SENTENCE. VISIT WWW.WORDTHINK.COM FOR IDEAS.**

**52** **Create a budget - and stick to it. Then watch your savings account climb. Visit www.understandingmoney.gov.au for loads of ideas. w**

