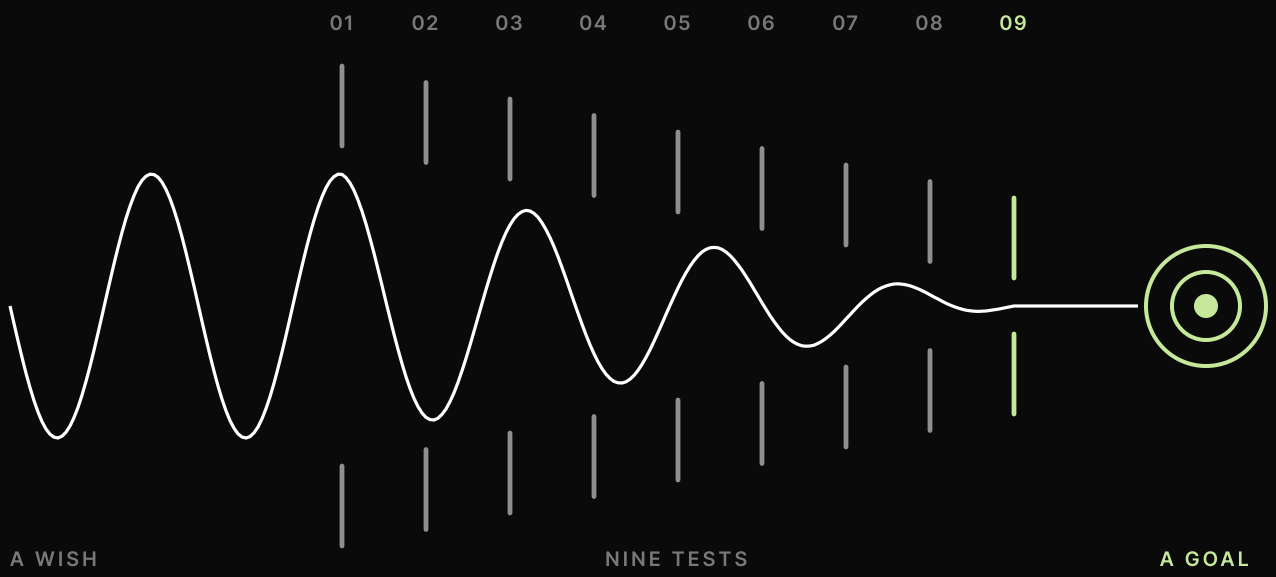
The Goal Builder.

A workbook that turns a wish into a goal that holds up in a normal week: nine tests, a rewrite lab, a height picker and a card you sign.



HOW THIS KIT WORKS

Thirty-five minutes. Nine tests. One goal worth a year of plans.

A year plan is only as good as the sentence it starts from. This kit spends half an hour on that sentence: you score it, rebuild the weak parts, set its height and sign it.

TOOL 1 · PAGE 04

The goal grader

Nine tests worth 0, 1 or 2 points. Shows exactly where a goal will give way.

TOOL 2 · PAGE 05

The rewrite lab

Eight weak goals rebuilt in front of you, and the five moves that did it.

TOOL 3 · PAGE 06

The height picker

Two readings from your own numbers that say safe, stretch or reckless.

TOOL 4 · PAGE 07

The pair

An aim that may hang on other people, joined to a weekly promise that doesn't.

PRINTABLES

P. 09
Grade it + the ladder

P. 10
Rebuild it

P. 11
The goal card to sign

P. 13
13-week promise log

THE ORDER

Read once
10 min · pages 03 to 08

Grade
5 min · page 09

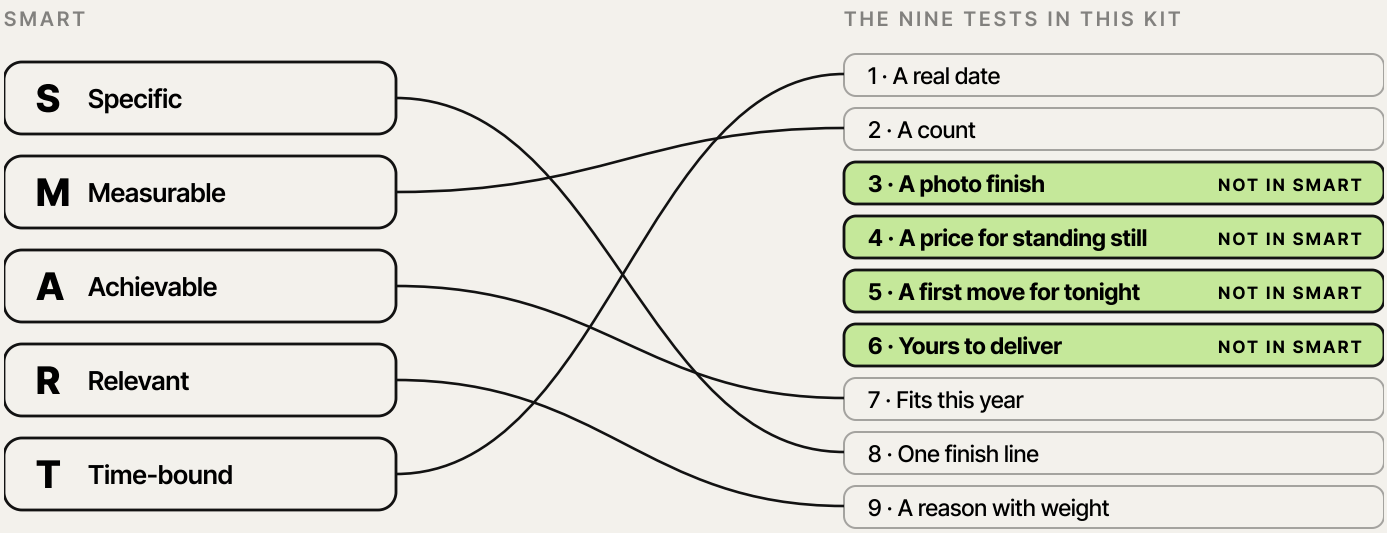
Rebuild
15 min · page 10

Sign
5 min · page 11

Page 12 is for a goal that still won't hold after the rebuild. Page 13 is one row a week, with a re-grade every four weeks. Step 4 of The Pledger Method: it follows vision, anti-vision and identity, and feeds the year plan.

What SMART checks, and what it lets through.

SMART is the most common goal checklist, and a fine start. It checks that the sentence is clear. It doesn't check whether you could start tonight, whether the result is yours to deliver, or whether you'd notice it was done.



PASSES SMART, STILL BREAKS

THE GOAL	WHERE IT BREAKS	THE REPAIR
Get promoted to senior engineer by Dec 31.	**6 · Yours to deliver.** A review panel makes the call, not you.	Keep it as the aim. Pair it with a promise you own: one shipped project a month, written up for the review file.
Speak conversational Italian by June 30.	**3 · Photo finish.** Nobody can prove "conversational".	Hold a 20-minute call in Italian with a tutor on June 28, no English allowed.
Write a 60,000-word novel by Aug 31.	**7 · Fits this year.** It needs 9 hours a week. There are 4.	A 30,000-word first half by Aug 31. The second half gets its own card.
Grow my newsletter to 5,000 readers by Sep 30.	**5 · First move.** No idea what to do tonight, so nothing happens.	Same goal, plus a 15-minute move for tonight: list 10 places where these readers already spend time.

FIVE MINUTES ONLY? Score the four lime tests first. SMART already nudged you on the other five; these four are the new ground.

TOOL 1

The goal grader.

01

Score your goal on nine tests, 0, 1 or 2 points each. Be strict: torn between two scores, take the lower one. The total says what to do next. The zeros say where.

TEST	2 POINTS	1 POINT	0 POINTS
1 · A real date	A day you could circle: April 30.	A month or a season: "in spring".	"This year", "soon" or nothing.
2 · A count	A number anyone could check: 3 case studies, $4,800.	A number that needs a judgment call: "about 10".	No number at all.
3 · A photo finish NOT IN SMART	One photo would prove it's done: the receipt, the race clock, the live page.	Proof exists, but it needs explaining.	You'd just "feel" done.
4 · A price for standing still NOT IN SMART	You can name what stays the same if you don't, with a number: "208 more night shifts".	A vague cost: "I'd be annoyed with myself".	Nothing would change.
5 · A first move for tonight NOT IN SMART	Under 20 minutes, with a named object: a file, a form, a pair of shoes.	You know the area, not the move.	It starts with "research" or "figure out".
6 · Yours to deliver NOT IN SMART	Your own actions can finish it.	Needs someone's yes, but the attempts are yours.	Mostly luck, timing or one person's decision.
7 · Fits this year	You've counted the hours a week it needs, busy weeks included, and they exist.	It probably fits. You haven't counted.	It needs hours you don't have.
8 · One finish line	One result.	One result with a passenger: "and also...".	Two or more goals joined by "and".
9 · A reason with weight	You can say what it changes in an ordinary week once it's done.	A general reason: "to be healthier".	It's someone else's idea of what you should want.

0 TO 9 · REBUILD
Start on page 05. Fix the zeros first, in test order.

10 TO 14 · REPAIR
Fix every 0, then any 1 you can fix by changing a few words.

15 TO 18 · READY
Set the height, then sign. Any 1 left goes on the weak-spot list.

TOOL 2

The rewrite lab.

02

Eight real wishes, rebuilt with five moves. Find the row closest to yours and copy the moves, not the wording.

PIN IT
Adds a day you could circle. Fixes test 1.

COUNT IT
Turns "more" into a number. Fixes test 2.

PICTURE IT
Names the proof you'd photograph. Fixes test 3.

OWN IT
Swaps or pairs a result you can't deliver. Fixes test 6.

SPLIT IT
Keeps one finish line; the rest waits. Fixes test 8.

AREA	BEFORE	MOVES	AFTER
Work	Get better at my job.	PICTURE COUNT PIN	**Ship the billing dashboard I own to all 40 client accounts by March 15.**
Money	Stop being bad with money.	COUNT PIN	**$4,800 in a separate emergency account by Dec 1, from $400 moved every payday.**
Body	Get in shape.	PICTURE COUNT PIN	**10 strict push-ups in a row by Feb 28. Today's best: 3.**
Skills	Learn to code.	PICTURE PIN	**A working budget app in Python, live on GitHub by May 31, used by me for 4 weeks.**
Creative	Make more music.	COUNT PICTURE PIN	**A 5-track EP released on Bandcamp by July 1.**
Family	Get my brother talking to me again.	OWN COUNT PIN	**Send my brother one no-pressure message a month, 10 by Dec 31.** Whether he replies is his call.
Home	Sort out the apartment, get fit and start a side hustle.	SPLIT PICTURE PIN	**Spare room emptied by March 31, so a desk fits.** The other two wait for their own card.
Side income	Make money online.	COUNT PICTURE PIN	**First $500 in sales of printed city maps on Etsy by June 30.**

YOUR ROW · TRY IT HERE FIRST

AFTER: 25 WORDS MAX. THE HOW GOES IN THE PROMISE, PAGE 07.

Before _____

Moves ☐ Pin ☐ Count ☐ Picture ☐ Own ☐ Split

After _____

TOOL 3

The height picker.

03

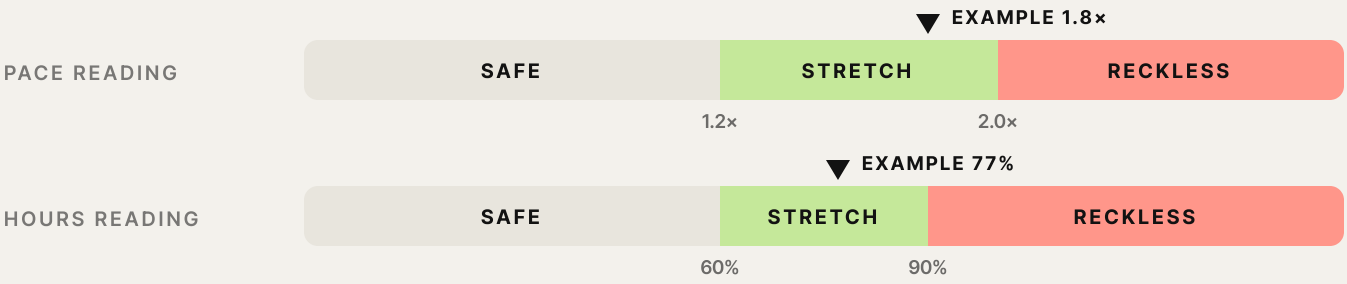
Any goal can be set at three heights. Pick yours with two readings from your own numbers, not from how bold you feel on the day you write it.

Safe
You'd reach it on an ordinary run of weeks. Right for goals that protect something: a cash buffer, a routine through a hard year.

Stretch
Needs a clearly faster pace than your recent best and most of your free hours. The default for anything you want to grow.

Reckless
Needs double your recent pace, or more hours than you have. It reads as brave on paper and falls apart around week six.

1 · NEEDED PACE	2 · PACE READING	3 · HOURS READING
What's left ÷ weeks left	Needed pace ÷ your best recent 4-week pace	Hours a week it needs ÷ hours a week you reliably have



Example: 24 paintings for a show on June 6, 26 weeks away. Needed pace: 0.92 a week. Best recent 4 weeks: 2 paintings, so 0.5 a week. Pace reading: **1.8×**. Each painting takes about 5 hours, so 4.6 hours a week out of 6 free: **77%**. Both readings say stretch.

Either reading in the coral?	RECKLESS Cut the scope or move the date, then take both readings again.
Either reading in the lime?	STRETCH Write it as the goal, and add a floor under it.
Both in the grey?	SAFE Keep it if the goal protects something. If not, raise the number until one reading turns lime.

THE FLOOR
The safe version of the same goal, written under it. Reaching the floor still counts as a pass. The painter's floor: 16.

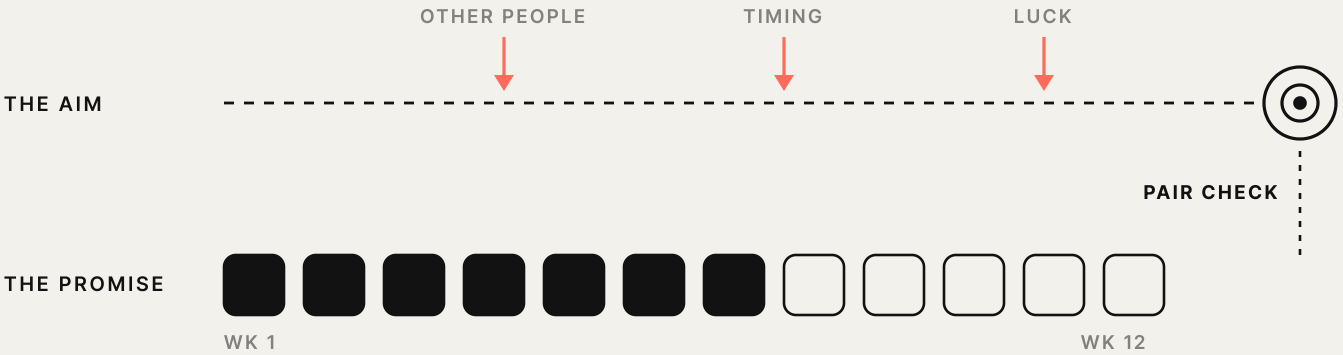
NO RECENT PACE?
For a brand-new skill, use the hours reading alone, and cap the goal at stretch until you have 4 weeks of real numbers.

TOOL 4

The pair.

04

Some results end in someone else's decision: a hiring manager, a buyer, a race on a windy day. Keep that result as the aim. Then pair it with a promise: a weekly count of actions nobody else can stop.



THE AIM	THE PROMISE, WEEKLY	PAIR CHECK	VERDICT
3 new design clients signed by March 31	15 tailored pitches	12 weeks × 15 = 180 pitches. Last year: 1 client per 40 pitches, so about 4.5.	HOLDS
1,000 newsletter readers by Sep 1 (now 240)	1 issue + 3 posts that link to it	Needs 760 in 30 weeks: 25 a week. Each post brings about 6, so 18. Short by 7.	RAISE TO 4
10K under 55:00 at the April 12 race	3 runs, one at race pace	14 weeks × 3 = 42 runs, 14 at pace. Last spring, 12 pace runs took 3 minutes off.	HOLDS
Pass the B2 Spanish exam on Nov 14	5 × 30 min practice, a timed mock every 2nd Sunday	Below 60% on mock 3 means switching to the February sitting, decided that day.	HOLDS

It's a count.
"15 pitches" can be done or not done. "Network more" can't.

It survives a bad week.
Size it for a tired, ordinary week. A good week can go over.

It gets the weekly grade.
Score the promise every week. Look at the aim once a month.

TRY IT · SHADE HOW MUCH OF EACH LINE IS YOURS

1 SQUARE = 10%

My aim _____ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

My promise _____ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

The promise row should be fully shaded. If it isn't, cut the part that waits on someone else until it is.

ALL FOUR TOOLS, FILLED IN

Theo's goal, from wish to card.

Theo, 34, works night shifts at a parcel depot and has taught himself UX design on weekends for a year. One finished case study so far. Free time: Mon and Wed 2 to 4 pm, Sat 10 am to 1 pm, so 7 hours a week.

THE WISH
Get into UX design.

FIRST DRAFT · 7 / 18
Become a UX designer this year.

REBUILT · 16 / 18
Signed junior UX offer by Sep 30.

	1 DATE	2 COUNT	3 PHOTO	4 PRICE	5 MOVE	6 YOURS	7 FITS	8 ONE LINE	9 REASON
Draft	▢▢	▢▢	■▢	■▢	▢▢	■▢	■▢	■■	■▢
Rebuilt	■■	■■	■■	■■	■■	■▢	■▢	■■	■■

THE SO-THAT LADDER

4 so that I'm a better dad *(too general)*

3 so that I'm home in the evenings before my daughter starts school next fall

2 so that I'm off night shifts

1 so that I'm paid for what I already do on weekends

Goal a junior UX job

Rung 3 became test 9. Its price, test 4: 208 more night shifts, and school starts either way.

THE HEIGHT PICKER · CASE STUDIES BY SPRING

PLAN	PACE	HOURS	ZONE
4 by March 31	2.1×	123%	RECKLESS
3 by April 30	**1.3×**	**74%**	STRETCH
2 by April 30 (floor)	0.87×	50%	SAFE

About 45 hours per case study. Best recent 4 weeks: 4 hours a week.

THE AIM
A signed offer for a junior UX or product design role by Sep 30.

THE PROMISE
7 hours a week in his three slots until 3 case studies are live (floor: 2), then 10 tailored applications a week from May 1.

Pair check: 22 weeks × 10 = 220 applications. At his past rate of 1 interview per 15, about 14 interviews. Holds.

First move, 15 min: pick the app for case study 2 and screenshot its sign-up flow.

Photo finish: the portfolio page with 3 case-study links, then the signed offer.

WEAK SPOT (SCORED 1)	THE COUNTER
6 · Yours to deliver	An offer is someone else's call. The weekly grade goes on the promise, never on the inbox.
7 · Fits this year	Peak season, Nov 20 to Dec 31, adds shifts. The promise drops to 3 hours for those 6 weeks; the pace math already includes it.

Grade it.

Write up to three drafts, rough is fine. Circle a score for each test, add up the columns, and take the highest total to page 10.

A _____

B _____

C _____

TEST	DRAFT A	DRAFT B	DRAFT C
1 · A real date a day you could circle	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
2 · A count anyone could check it	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
3 · A photo finish one photo proves it	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
4 · A price for standing still what stays the same, with a number	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
5 · A first move for tonight under 20 minutes, a named object	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
6 · Yours to deliver your actions can finish it	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
7 · Fits this year hours counted, busy weeks too	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
8 · One finish line no "and"	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
9 · A reason with weight changes an ordinary week	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Total	____ / 18	____ / 18	____ / 18

THE SO-THAT LADDER · FOR YOUR TOP DRAFT

CIRCLE THE RUNG YOU'LL USE

Put the goal on the bottom rung. Climb by finishing "so that..." each time. Stop when the answer gets too general to act on, then step back down one: that rung is your reason (test 9) and usually shows your price (test 4).

4 so that _____

3 so that _____

2 so that _____

1 so that _____

Goal _____

WORKSHEET B · PRINT ME

Rebuild it.

TOOLS 2, 3 + 4

1 · THE REWRITE · MOVES I NEED

☐ Pin it ☐ Count it ☐ Picture it ☐ Own it ☐ Split it

THE STRONG VERSION · 25 WORDS MAX

2 · THE HEIGHT

NEEDED PACE	BEST RECENT 4-WEEK PACE	PACE READING ×
HOURS A WEEK IT NEEDS	HOURS A WEEK I HAVE	HOURS READING %

CIRCLE **SAFE** **STRETCH** **RECKLESS** MY FLOOR _____

3 · THE PAIR

THE AIM, AND ITS DATE	THE PROMISE, EVERY WEEK

PAIR CHECK · WEEKS × PROMISE = ? ENOUGH FOR THE AIM? **HOLDS** **RAISE**

4 · WEAK SPOTS AND COUNTERS · EVERY TEST STILL AT 0 OR 1

TEST	THE WEAK SPOT	THE COUNTER: "IF ..., THEN ..."

Counters that usually work. 5: book the first move into a slot, object named. 6: aim at the number of asks, not the yes. 7: shrink the promise ahead of busy weeks you can already see. 9: climb two more rungs.

NEW SCORE ____ / 18

The goal card.

MY GOAL CARD

SCORE AT SIGNING ____ / 18

THE AIM

BY

THE PROMISE, EVERY WEEK

THE FLOOR (STILL A PASS)

THE PHOTO FINISH

THE PRICE OF STANDING STILL

MY RUNG FROM THE LADDER

FIRST MOVE, UNDER 20 minutes

☐ DONE ON ____

SIGNED

DATE

POCKET CARD

AIM + DATE

EVERY WEEK

WK 4 ☐ WK 8 ☐ WK 12 ☐ INITIALS ____

WHERE THEY GO

The big card goes where the work happens: above the desk, inside the notebook, on the gym bag. The pocket card goes in your wallet or phone case.

WEEKS 4, 8 AND 12

Re-grade the goal on page 09. If it still scores 15 or more, tick the box on the pocket card. If not, rebuild the weak test before you tick it.

Sign at 15 or more.
Below that, the card waits. Back to page 10.

Date it today.
A card dated "next Monday" is still a draft.

Never edit a signed card.
If the goal changes, grade it again and sign a new one.

Still wobbly after the rebuild? Start here.

WHAT YOU NOTICE	WHAT'S USUALLY BEHIND IT	THE FIX
The goal scores 16 and I still haven't started.	The first move is a small project in disguise.	Rewrite it until it names an object and fits in 20 minutes: "open the brief and type the title", not "start the brief".
Every rewrite comes out longer.	The how keeps leaking into the sentence.	Cap it at 25 words. Every "by doing..." moves into the promise.
I can't find a number for my goal.	It's a feeling goal: calmer, more confident.	Name the moment the feeling would show, and count that: "speak first in 8 of 10 team meetings".
The stretch felt fine in week 1 and heavy by week 5.	The hours reading used your best week.	Redo it with the free hours of a tired, ordinary week. Move the date before you touch the floor.
I picked safe and I'm bored already.	A protective height on a goal you want to grow.	Raise the number until one reading turns lime. The old target becomes the floor.
I keep swapping to a shinier goal.	The ladder stopped at rung one, so the reason is thin.	Climb two more rungs. If nothing up there matters to you, cross the goal out in writing and grade the next draft.
I kept the promise and the aim still missed.	The pair check ran on guessed rates.	After 4 weeks, redo the check with your real rates. Raise the promise or move the date on the same day.
Two drafts tie on score.	Both are well built, so the grader can't pick.	Keep the one with the bigger price for standing still. The other gets its own card next quarter.
Everything hinges on one person's yes.	Test 6 scored 0.	Widen the pool: 30 asks, not one. The asks become the promise; the yes stays the aim.

PRINT ME · ONE ROW A WEEK

The promise log.

MY PROMISE, EVERY WEEK

Each week: how much of the promise you kept, and one square of aim progress per 10%. On weeks 4, 8 and 12, re-grade the goal on page 09 and write the score in the row.

WEEK	KEPT · OF	AIM PROGRESS	ONE LINE
01	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	
02	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	
03	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	
04	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	RE-GRADE ___ / 18
05	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	
06	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	
07	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	
08	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	RE-GRADE ___ / 18
09	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	
10	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	
11	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	
12	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	RE-GRADE ___ / 18
13	____ of ____	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	

COLOR THESE IN AS YOU EARN THEM



All nine tests scored



Rebuilt to 15 or more



Card signed



First move done



4 full-promise weeks in a row



The whole log filled

Score your first draft tonight.

Write it on line A of page 09, rough as it is. Score all nine tests and circle the lowest one. Tomorrow, rebuild only that test on page 10. Ten minutes tonight, fifteen tomorrow.

Pledger keeps your goal card, your weekly promise and every check-in in one place.

usepledger.com

Next in The Pledger Method: comment **YEAR** on any @usepledger post for The Year Plan.