

# BUCKET LIST

*Explore the wonders:*

*For your own well-being*



DARE TO DREAM

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# What are the mental health benefits of creating a bucket list, and who is most likely to make one?

There are many benefits to having a list of dreams and aspirations. A bucket list forces you to look at the life you are living and the life you would like to say you've had. If these two lifestyles are nothing like each other, this can provide motivation and inspiration to begin living a life you desire. Your goals and values will become apparent as you look closely at your bucket list, and these values can inform your everyday routine. Another significant benefit to creating a bucket list is in the actual act of writing down items on your list: it is exciting! Even the mere thought of climbing Mount Everest Base Camp, scuba diving in Australia, starting your own business, or graduating from college can increase your joy in the present moment. This happiness in the here-and-now may contribute to planning how to execute each item of your bucket list and allow you to think logically about how to make it happen. Perhaps just the act of adding a goal to your bucket list will motivate you to start saving money or prioritize how you spend your time.

Bucket lists help motivate, inspire, and teach us. They teach us about ourselves and what is important to us, not what society says should be important to us. The act of creating a bucket list takes us out of our comfort zones and throws us into a realm of possibilities and questions. Can I really swim with sharks? Is it possible for me to visit all of the countries in the world? These questions about seemingly unimaginable feats takes us out of our comfort zone and help us shift from thinking of these questions as lofty dreams to attainable future accomplishments. Bucket lists also can be a place to showcase past achievements. It is a wonderful feeling to be able to cross something off of a bucket list because it has been experienced and attained. Who is most likely to have a bucket list? One study that researched the common items on a bucket list found that people who identify with a faith, religion, or as spiritual were 95% more likely to have a bucket list compared to those who found faith to be unimportant in their lives.

# What should I put on my bucket list?

One study identified six primary themes typically seen in bucket lists: the desire to travel, the desire to accomplish a personal goal, the desire to achieve specific life milestones, the desire to spend quality time with friends and family, the desire to achieve financial stability, and the desire to do a daring activity. I've listed various examples of each category to help initiate the process of creating a bucket list:

- Travel – Visit all 50 of the United States, Fly first class, Go on a safari in Africa, Travel solo
- Personal goals – Be self-employed, Learn a new language, Begin meditating
- Achieve specific life milestones – Graduate from college, Buy my own car, Get married
- Spend quality time with friends and family – Spend the holidays with my family, Join a sports team with friends, Take a family vacation, Start a monthly book club with friends
- Achieve financial stability – Start a budget, Pay off debt or student loan, Save money for emergency fund, Donate to charity
- Daring activities – Skydive, Climb a mountain, Swim with sharks, Fly in a seaplane or helicopter

**Bucket lists may be 10 or 100 items long and consist of a range of different categories. The examples listed above may help you discover which category is most or least important to you. It's also important to hand-write your bucket list opposed to typing it or not solidifying it at all. The act of writing your goal on paper makes the goal more likely to transpire.**

*So, take out your favorite pen and start writing your bucket list today!*