



“I lost 70 pounds!”

Erin Wright bet herself \$400 that she could lose weight. And it spurred her to slim down once and for all.



BEFORE
227 lb

Age: 56
Height: 5' 7"
My story: *As a longtime dieter, losing some weight was always easy for me, but I could never maintain my loss. I'd inevitably gain it back—and often add on a few more pounds.*

Erin in her hometown of Wichita, KS, in 2012.

START FIND A CHALLENGE

A friend told me about *healthywage.com*, a site that pays you to lose. Motivated by the money, I signed up and wagered \$400 for two challenges that required me to lose a total of 70 pounds in one year. If I didn't succeed, I'd lose the cash. But if I did, I'd win it back—plus an extra \$800.



STEP 1 BE PREPARED

To avoid food traps, I started planning ahead. If I was going to a party, I'd bring a healthy dish like a quinoa and berry salad. Knowing I wouldn't be caught off-guard allowed me to socialize without worrying about gaining.

NEWFOUND CONFIDENCE!

I sing in a choir, and used to be self-conscious onstage. As the weight came off, I felt proud to stand in the front row.

STEP 2 GET CREATIVE

I work full-time as an aviation safety assistant, and finding time to exercise outside of the office is tough. So, I put sneakers under my desk and started walking 2 miles with a coworker during lunch.

STEP 3 ENLIST SUPPORT

When I was heavier, I reached for food when I was sad. Now, one way I cope is to replace calories with conversation. If I'm upset, I dial a friend and vent. I end the call feeling better, and avoid the temptation to overeat.

NOW
157 lb

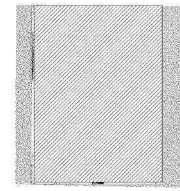
I hit both goals by 2013, and the first thing I did was buy a cute pair of jeans with the money I won. But while the cash prize was great, feeling good about myself is my biggest reward.



My stick-with-it SECRET

Make a progress poster

To stay committed throughout the year, I made a countdown chart that was a list of every number from 70 to 1 (indicating how many pounds I wanted to lose) and hung it up near my desk at work. Every time the scale went down a notch, I crossed off a number. It was helpful to have a visual reminder of my success, especially on days when my weight didn't budge or when I hit a plateau.



CENTER: SHUTTERSTOCK