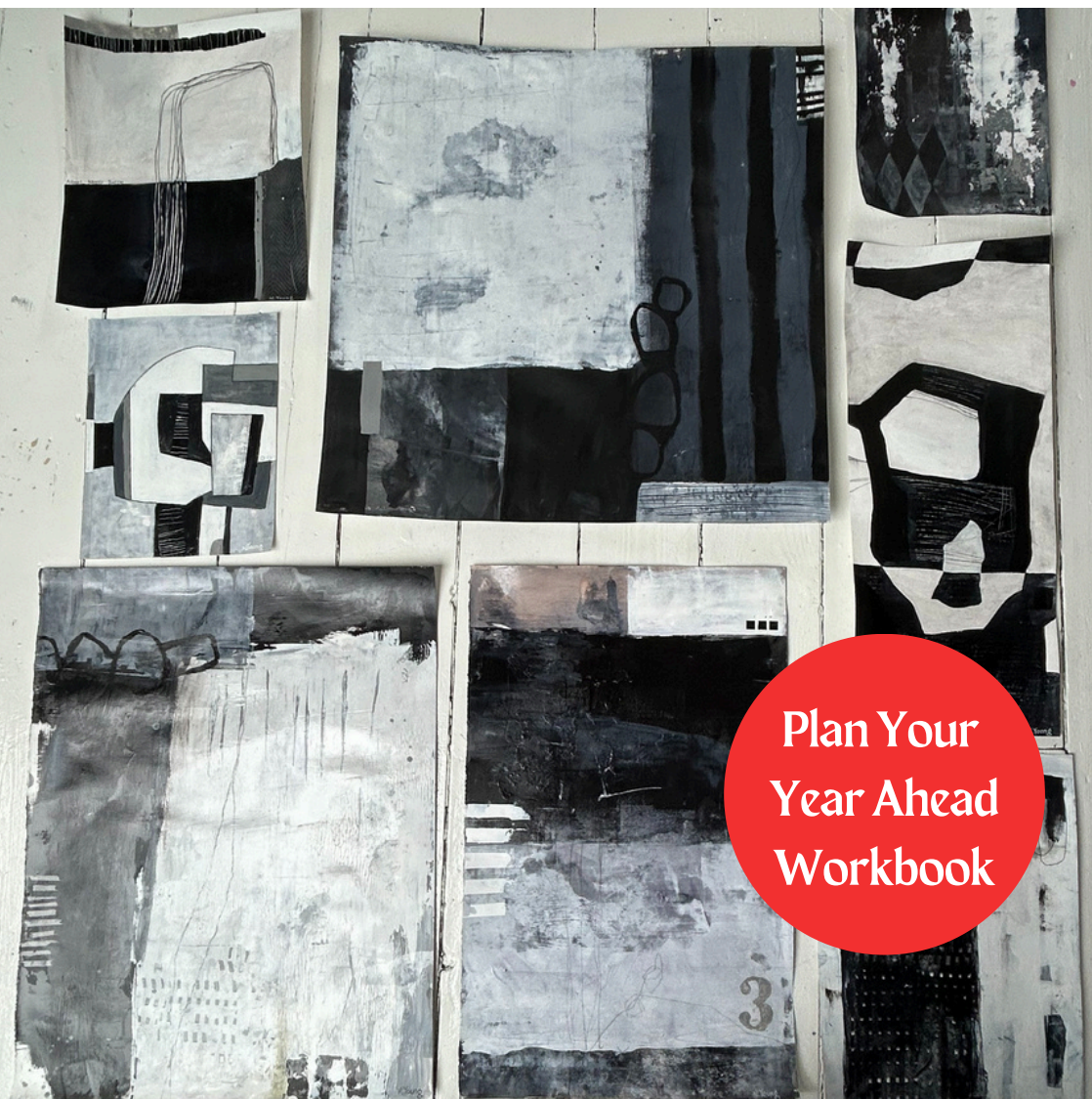


The Year Ahead

New Year, New You

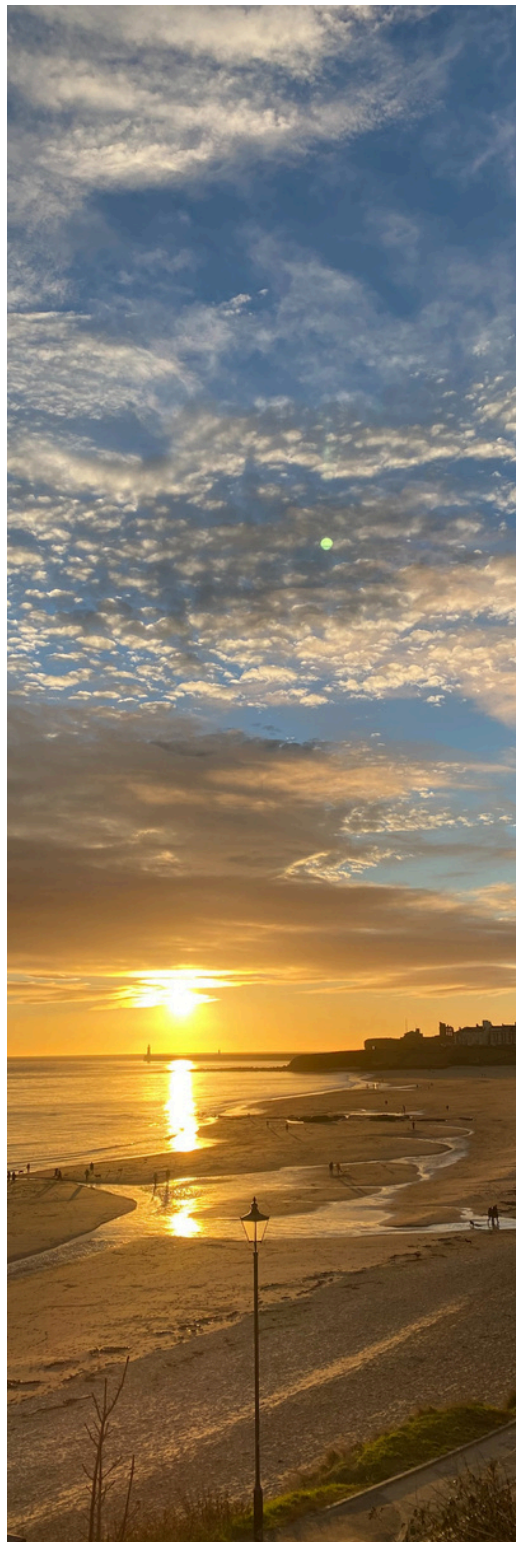


Plan Your
Year Ahead
Workbook

Part 2: Setting Goals for 2026

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome back!

I hope you found it useful completing your review of 2025. If you skipped some sections that's fine. The important point is that you took some time to look at your achievements last year and to start to tap into things that you might want to do in 2026.



Remember there are no right and wrong answers. This exercise is just for you.

In this booklet you are going to start setting some goals for the next 12 months. If this is new to you, don't worry this guide will walk you through a series of questions designed to help you work through and clarify what you want to achieve. Most focus on your art and art practice but there is space for you to capture other goals that may be important to you in your life in general.

The terms 'goal' or 'target' can seem very business like so if you prefer to think of them as intentions or desires that's fine. The important thing is that you are honest with yourself about what you want to focus on and what success looks like for you personally. The act of writing down your goals or intentions helps you to commit. It is a gift you can give yourself!

Remember the process of capturing these goals/intentions is the first step in achieving them. Once complete this booklet will help provide you with a sense of direction for 2026 and allow you to design your year to get the outcomes YOU want!

Section 1

Visioning

Let's start with a bit of unstructured visioning. If you could design the next 12 months to be your ideal year what would that look like? Let your imagination go - dream big! Don't worry about the how, this is about being clear about what you want.

If this feels like a strange or difficult exercise don't worry, most of us rarely give ourselves the time to think about this so it will be challenging and requires honesty and bravery.

If you don't feel able to write this in a narrative ask yourself the question - what do I truly want, and why? Then create a list of wants. Capture a sentence or two about the 'why' as this will be an important reminder to feel you going and give you the energy to achieve.

My ideal 2026....

Section 1

“Off the Top of Your Head”

Now let's do a very quick brain dump. Jot down any goals or intentions that you want to achieve this year.

Don't think too much about this, at this stage, just capture the ideas that immediately pop into your head.

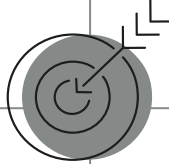
There were probably a few that came out in your vision for 2026 that you can add. Try to make these positive - use 'I will..' rather than 'I won't...'

What do you want more or less of? Are there any habits you want to nurture this year? Are there things you didn't get to last year that you want to do this year?



home

mind and body



work



creativity

Select a word that you want for 2026 that will inspire you.

Goal Setting for Artists

N. Young

Setting goals can be difficult for artists. Many avoid this process altogether, mistakenly assuming that it is at odds with creativity. But having a clear direction for your art practice is different from overly structuring your art making. Yes, we all want to improve our art but “getting better” is difficult to achieve if you don’t put some definition or targets around this. Setting goals or intentions is about you taking control of your life. It helps you make conscious choices – being proactive in your life.

One of the main benefits in setting yourself goals or targets is that they can provide you with clear focus. Like a compass a goal can set you off in a direction and help you avoid distractions. The simple act of spending some time thinking about and writing your goals down can be a therapeutic process. It focuses your mind and helps you to decide what is really important to you personally. And research shows that setting specific goals can improve your performance.

Having clear goals also gives you a greater sense of achievement when you succeed. Not everyone is super competitive, but even if you are not, achieving goals gives you a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction which can help sustain your energy and drive you to achieve more. *Personally, I’m a list maker so I love being able to tick things off once they have been done and having this can be motivating.*

Also don’t forget that often the real value in setting goals is not the final achievement, but rather the changes you make while trying to achieve them.

Two Types of Goals

For artists there can be 2 different types of goals. Don’t worry too much about this as they will likely come naturally as you decide on what you want to achieve. But understanding this may help inspire you as you complete this workbook

1. Process goals, and
2. Results or outcome based goals



Goal Setting for Artists

Process Goals

Process Goals tend to be simpler and completely within our scope of control. They focus on our creative journey rather than the final outcome.

Having process goals can help us to build positive habits.

Some Examples of Process Goals

- Establish a regular sketchbook habit. Take 20mins each day to create in some way.
- Try acrylic paints for the first time. Buy myself a starter kit in the January sales.
- Gather inspiration - make time to visit to a gallery/look at an art book once a month
- Post on social media once a week

Results or Outcome Based Goals

Results or Outcome Based Goals are probably the most rewarding and exciting but they are also often more difficult to achieve as they generally involve an element of risk beyond your control. Most of these goals require a little bit of luck as they have outside influence but that shouldn't put you off setting yourself tangible goals.

Some Examples of Results Based Goals

- Have a painting accepted and exhibited in an open call exhibition
- Increase Instagram followers to XYZ
- Sell 5 more paintings than last year



My 2026 Goals

Now let's revisit our 4 big pillars and capture your goals or targets, basically things you want to achieve in 2026. And remember you can have process and results based goals. To help get you started we have included a few questions but feel free to ignore these if you already have a clear sense of what you want to achieve.

Don't forget to add any goals that you identified when you filled out your 2025 review.

Home

- *Are there any changes you need/want to make to improve your relationships? E.g. make time to see my friends more often can be captured as a measurable goal - 'schedule a monthly girls night out'*
- *Are there any home improvements you want to make? E.g. complete the kitchen extension by March 2026 or sort out my wardrobes and donate clothes to charity by June 2026.*
- *Is there anywhere you'd like to go on holiday this year? E.g. You may want to capture goals around when you agree on a destination, how much you need to save and when you intend to make the booking.*



2026 Wellbeing

Mind and Body

- *Do you want to make any changes to improve your health and fitness? E.g. Lose 7lbs by May 2026. Complete the 10k steps each day challenge in March 2026*
- *What do you need to do to improve your mental health? E.g. free up 20 mins each day for a quick yoga session.*
- *Do you have a selfcare routine? Are there any changes you would like to introduce?*
- *Are there any areas in which you want to improve your skills or enrich your life? E.g. complete the 30 day sketchbook challenge in February. Read an art book each month.*

Physical and Mental Health



Personal growth



2026 Work Goals

Work can capture both your day job and the business side of your art.

Work General



- *How are your art sales? Do you have targets for sales next year?*
- *How do you sell your art? Do you have an art website or social media channels? Do you have gallery relationships? Are you looking to establish or improve these in 2026, if so, do you know what you need to do and by when?*
- *Set yourself some tangible targets e.g. increase sales by 20%. Launch a website in August 2026. Grow my social following from xx to yy by June 2026. Establish a regular posting schedule on Instagram, posting once a week. Start creating reels - min. one each month.*

2026 Revenue Target



How Will You Increase Your Sales?



How Will You Increase Your Audience?



2026 Creativity Goals

It may seem odd to set yourself creativity targets but there are goals and structures you can put in place to help ensure that you are getting regular inspiration and that you are setting your art practice up for maximum success

- *Do you have space to create your work? How is that space working for you at the moment? Do you need to make any changes? E.g. Better storage for your studio. Schedule time each week/ month to clean and tidy your workspace.*
- *Do you have a regular sketchbook habit? If not do you want to start one?*
- *Are there any changes you want to make to give you more time for your art?*
- *Are there new tools, mediums or techniques you want to explore?*

Your Art Practice



- *How do you keep yourself inspired? Are there changes you want to make to improve your inspiration sources? E.g. Visit a gallery once a month. Sign up to your local library and get a new art book each month. Take a day each month to visit somewhere new.*
- *Are there any big projects you have in mind for 2026? If so capture them here.*
- *How do you want your work to evolve? What excites you about this change?*

Sources of Inspiration

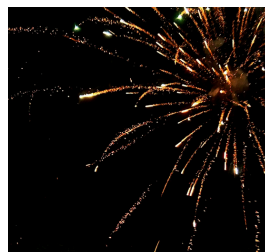


Section 3

Write yourself a letter in the panel below describing all the things you will achieve this year. Then pop it in an envelope, seal it and put it somewhere safe so you can open it at the end of the year and check back on how well you have done. Just remember make sure you use positive language like 'I will....'

It may sound silly but this is a contract that you are making with yourself. Only you know what you truly want and only you can make this happen. To steal a phrase from a haircare advert - 'Because you're worth it!'

Finally, how will you celebrate your successes this year? *What little reward will you give to yourself? This is important as it reinforces your commitment to YOU!*



Hello 2026!

Congratulations you have completed your 2026 goals. Give yourself a pat on the back.

Next step is to create some plans to help you accomplish these!