

PROCRASTINATE LATER

Everyone has procrastinated at one time or another — it's natural to put off doing a task for any number of reasons. Read about 6 common reasons for procrastination below and solutions for overcoming. Highlight any that apply to you and reflect on the strategies to implement to keep moving forward with your goals.

“I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET STARTED.”

When you estimate the time to complete a task, add in the time it will take you to figure out how to get started. Maybe you need to add in half hour of brainstorming time, or maybe you should schedule a focused chat with a friend or family member who can offer some advice. Either way, if you think about deciding how to begin as part of the task process, you may be more likely to see your preparation as productive time.

NOTES

“I DON'T HAVE TIME TO FINISH IT ALL RIGHT NOW.”

Sometimes it's tempting to think that you'll perform a task better if you can do it all at once. Unfortunately, life often gets in the way, and you may not always get the block of time you need to complete something. Get used to the idea of chunking your tasks into smaller parts. Once you can break a task into smaller parts, it may be easier to get used to the idea of completing just one particular piece. That way, you'll still feel like you're completing a whole task, but you'll be steadily towards a larger goal.

NOTES

“I’M PROBABLY GOING TO DO POORLY ANYWAY.”

Critical self-talk can be a self-fulfilling prophecy if it leads to procrastination and leaves you with insufficient time to complete a task. Do your best to change the narrative you believe about yourself. Instead of “I’m terrible at writing papers and I’ll probably fail this one anyway” try something like “introductions are really hard for me. I’m going to write the parts of my paper that are easiest for me first.

Then, I’ll try my introduction. This will be an opportunity for me to learn and practice, and that’s what school is about anyway.

NOTES

“I HAVE A PRIOR COMMITMENT.”

First, assess whether your commitment is absolutely crucial period take a look at your To Do List and see what other priorities fall ahead of your plans period to make progress toward a long-term goal, you may need to eliminate some other commitments. If you absolutely must keep your commitment, make a plan for how you can do work before or after it. Again, breaking your task up into smaller parts that you can complete around your commitment can help you keep a balanced life.

NOTES

“I’M TOO TIRED RIGHT NOW” or “I JUST DON’T WANT TO DO IT RIGHT NOW.”

With work, family, school, and other commitments, it’s easy to feel too tired to complete important tasks. You may tell yourself, quote I’ll do a better job when I’m rested.” Sometimes that might be true, but sometimes it might not, instead of immediately dismissing your task, set a small goal or time period and try to push through your tiredness for a little bit. Try the same strategy if you simply don’t feel like doing a task. There’s nothing wrong with not being excited to do something you are not looking forward to, but it’s important to make time for it anyway. If, after 20 or 30 minutes, you still don’t feel able to complete the task, then rest period at least then, you’ll be able to feel good that you made a little bit of progress!

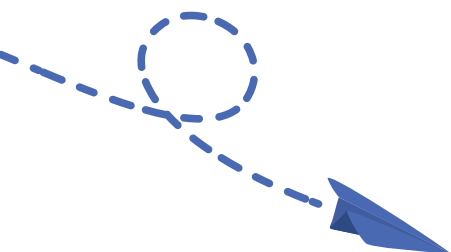
NOTES

“I WORK BETTER UNDER PRESSURE.”

Many of us have used this excuse at one time or another period while it may sometimes be true, there’s always a serious risk involved in taking this approach. What if your study or writing plans don’t go as you intend? What if a sudden emergency diverts you from doing work? First, always ask yourself whether this excuses a cover for something different, like a lack of motivation or a fear of failure. If it’s really pressure that helps you work, then try a different tactic — well before a task is do, divide it into smaller tasks. Then, sit down with a timer and tell yourself that you must complete that task within that time you’ve allotted. You’ll be adding psychological pressure, but you’ll also be giving yourself a cushion in case something unexpected happens.

NOTES

APPLY IT Now that you’ve reviewed some of the most common reasons for procrastination, try the following exercises.



- ✓ Make sure you’ve generated **a comprehensive to-do list**.
- ✓ **Identify the three tasks** you’re most likely to put off doing.
- ✓ Do your best to **identify why you’re likely to procrastinate** on those particular tasks.
- ✓ If any of the reasons for procrastination resembled one of the reasons above, **apply the recommendation to that task**.
- ✓ When you’ve accomplished your task, **reflect on the anti-procrastination strategy you used**. What worked well for you? What didn’t? Can you think of any ways to adjust the strategy to your particular style?



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