



10 TIPS FOR BEATING PROCRASTINATION





Procrastination can take hold of anyone, and once it does, it can be extremely difficult to rid oneself of it. Think of a highly productive person, you're likely thinking of someone who can focus effortlessly on the job and never succumbs to procrastination.

The truth is, ridiculously productive people face the same procrastination challenges as the rest of us. The difference is, they beat procrastination by using a calculated approach. First, they understand why they procrastinate, and then they apply strategies that beat procrastination before it takes hold. Anyone can follow this two-step, research-driven process to overcome procrastination.

1 DETERMINE WHY

Procrastination is telling you something when you aren't feeling motivated to work. It could be something minor, such as you need to take a break or eat. It could be something more, such as you're carrying the team on your back or you're dissatisfied with your job. Whatever it is, instead of punishing yourself for procrastinating, take a moment to reflect and figure out why you're procrastinating. This could end up being the most productive step you take in conquering your task.

2 FLATTEN HURDLES

Before you get started, take a moment to consider restrictions that may divert your attention – then, structure a plan to assure they don't. For example, if you enjoy listening to music while you work or study, create a work-friendly playlist ahead of time. This way you avoid being distracted from your work by repeatedly selecting new songs. Planning ahead helps you maintain focus and avoid procrastinating.

3 DIVE IN HEAD FIRST

It can be really difficult to get started, even if it's something you like to do. Once you get going – typing that first paragraph or sketching out your next painting, your mood improves dramatically. When your attention is zeroed in on how hard it is to get started, you discourage yourself from doing so. When you dive right in no matter what, your mood quickly improves, which helps you to stay on task.

4 BREAK IT UP

Procrastination often happens because we feel overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task at hand. Your project may require several hours of intense concentration, but if you break up the project into smaller pieces that you can finish quickly and easily, you'll decrease that feeling of inundation. Start with something you can develop in 15 minutes, such as an intro paragraph or deliverable list. Soon, these smaller tasks have seriously decreased the size of your project and you'll no longer find it intimidating.

5 WORK IN THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT

Your surroundings can profoundly affect the way you work. Try to keep yourself from distractions like television, mobile devices, friends, and loud places. This may not be what works for you, but find what does and exercise it by working in the environment that's right for you.



6 CELEBRATE SMALL VICTORIES

Checking “to-do’s” off your list gives you a sense of accomplishment. Experiencing this sense leaves you feeling motivated and prevents you from procrastinating. Crossing a several small things off a list is all it takes to build up the mental strength to tackle a large project or task. Remember, it’s not about doing small tasks to avoid big tasks; it’s about including small tasks in your daily checklist to increase your confidence and ambition.

7 SET REALISTIC GOALS

Set realistic goals to keep things light and keep you in a positive mood to work. Setting unrealistic goals for your day can leave you feeling discouraged which fuels procrastination.

8 PERFECTIONISM DOESN’T APPLY

We tend to hesitate to get started in the beginning because we feel our ideas may not be perfect and what we produce might not be the end result you’re planning for. There’s no harm in beginning your task, laying out your ideas and going back to edit them. Give yourself and your ideas time to evolve.

The key to beating procrastination is to understand that procrastination is rooted in emotions. The strategies above will help you to turn the procrastination doom loop on its head and to achieve greater productivity than ever before.

9 FOCUS ON THE END GAME

It’s hard to do anything we don’t enjoy doing, but we do it any because it gets results. Apply this mentality to challenging tasks. While it may make you anxious to get started, don’t zero in on that, instead focus on how great it’s going to feel when it’s all said and done and how much worse you’ll feel if you rush through your task as the last minute and don’t give it your best effort.

10 DON’T BEAT YOURSELF UP

There’s no point in beating yourself up when you slip up and procrastinate. You might think punishing yourself will help you to avoid procrastination in the future, but it actually has the opposite effect--it sends you right back into the procrastination doom loop.

