

Design Your Own Anti-Procrastination Plan

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Below are specific strategies for dealing with procrastination. Choose several suggestions from among the four lists and put them into practice. If these activities work, stick with them; if not, try different ones. Persist. Keep a record of your activities on the other side of this sheet.

1. Schedule your tasks for your project

- Write down a list of the tasks required to complete your project. Set priorities among the tasks. Mark each one off as you complete it... and reward yourself.
- Start with the most unpleasant task and get it over with. Then work down the list until you get to the easier tasks.
- Do something daily on your project, even if it's only for 5 minutes. Write down two or three things you can accomplish quickly then do one of them.... and reward yourself.
- Schedule work on one of your avoided tasks so that it is contingent upon something you already normally do and enjoy. For example, "I'll work on my term paper in the library for half an hour before going to play racquetball."

2. Take action!

- When the time comes for you to work and you're tempted to procrastinate, make yourself sit down for 5 minutes and think about what you are about to do. Envision the emotional and physical consequences of procrastinating — **and** of following through with your work. After you think this over, go ahead and do what you think is best... with no apologies or second thoughts!
- Imagine how you would behave right now if you were **not** a procrastinator. Get a clear picture in your mind, and then act out that role —or **pretend**— for the next hour that you're not a procrastinator. When you're done, evaluate your "acting." Did you do a good job? How did it feel?
- When you feel an impulse to work on your project, follow up on it; do it as soon as you think of it and keep at it until you don't feel like it anymore.
- Create specific rewards for accomplishment. Make them realistic and follow through. For example, you might decide that you can paint your fingernails or play basketball on days you work on your English paper.

3. Make use of others

- Write (and sign) a contract with a friend or teacher to get a specific task done.
- Make an appointment with a teacher, tutor, or someone who can help you with your project. Ask for help and advice about proceeding.
- Make a lunch or dinner date with a friend. Tell your friend that you want their support, that you want to share your feelings about your project, and that you want them to encourage you.
- If you have something frightening to do, like talking to a professor, ask a friend to listen to you rehearse what you have to say first. Reassure yourself that you'll get through the meeting without something terrible happening.

4. Keep a journal

- Every day, write down what you've accomplished and give yourself credit for it. At the same time, use your journal entries to genuinely forgive yourself for backsliding and to plan your next anti-procrastination activity.
- In your journal, identify rationalizations, confront yourself, and redirect yourself to your task.
- Recognize negative attitudes and write out positive, encouraging attitudes.
- If you get frustrated, write about the situation in your journal.
- If you make a mistake, see if you can take anything beneficial from the experience.

The Procrastination Quotient

	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I usually find reasons for not acting immediately on a difficult assignment.				
I know what I have to do but frequently find that I have done something else instead.				
I carry my books and work assignments with me to various places but do not open them.				
I work best at the last minute, when the pressure is really on.				
There are too many interruptions that interfere with accomplishing my top priorities.				
I avoid forthright answers when pressed for an unpleasant decision.				
I take half measures which will avoid or delay unpleasant or difficult action.				
I have been too tired, nervous, or upset to do the difficult task that faces me.				
I like to get my room in a good order before starting a difficult study task.				
I find myself waiting for inspirations before becoming involved on most important study or work tasks.				

total responses

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