



Overcoming Procrastination

Clarify your goals

Carefully think about and write down your goals. Post them somewhere -a door, mirror, or notebook- that you'll notice frequently. Determine what you need to do to reach your goals.

Manage your time effectively

Learn and implement good time management skills. Divide your goal into manageable parts, then write out the necessary steps to accomplish your goal. Finally, make a detailed schedule that includes a time designated each day for working toward your goal.

Choose your environment

Recognize that the best study environment is likely not your dorm room. As much as you may want to study there, your room is full of distractions: television, video games, a comfy bed, your roommate, snacks, etc. Find a place you enjoy working. There are several very peaceful reading rooms on the UT campus; check out the Architecture and Life Sciences libraries. You might also like one of the study floors at PCL, or the lobby of UGL.

Examine your attitude

Do you think the world is just too complicated? That you're constantly hindered by everyone else's incompetence? These are self-defeating, avoidance-producing attitudes and beliefs. Recognize them as such, and try to replace them with productive, self-empowering beliefs and attitudes. Remember: what happens to you is largely your choice. For a day, pretend that you are a well-organized, non-procrastinating student. Imagine how you would think and how you would behave. Then behave and think that way... even if you can only pull it off for a little while. Look for positive things about mistakes you might make. What is curious, useful, or interesting about them? What have you learned by making them? Remember: anything worth doing is worth doing badly. Recognize and acknowledge your forms of avoidance: socializing, reading, daydreaming, and sleeping are all common.

Alter Your Behavior

Look to your friends for help. Being accountable to another person can make a tremendous difference in getting into a good routine. Reward yourself with things you enjoy—playing basketball, seeing movies, playing video games—AFTER you've accomplished a task.

Do something each and every day. Start small at first: tell yourself you'll work on a task for 10 minutes and stick to it. Then set another goal for yourself. Once you start to accomplish your goals, you'll feel affirmed and ready to tackle the next step. Do your tasks in reverse order of pleasantness. That is, start with the thing you hate the most, and finish with something you might actually enjoy.

Accept yourself

Give yourself time to change. Remember: it takes 21 days of repetition to form a habit. Expect and, most importantly, forgive backsliding. Give yourself credit for all types of accomplishments. Even 10 minutes of work counts!

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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