

PROCRASTINATION:

WAYS TO DO SOMETHING NOW



AESC
Academic Enrichment
& Support Center

Often procrastination is putting off until tomorrow what you needed to do yesterday. It is a strategy to cope with situations that produce fear and anxiety. Procrastination is something that can be dealt with successfully. This list identifies reasons it may be hard to get started and ideas for how to begin!

1. Lack of Interest in Subject

- Read actively, converse mentally with the author, question their viewpoint, anticipate their conclusions, attempt to disprove their ideas, relate what you're reading to your experience.
- Learn to use an effective study method. Surveying and raising questions about the material develops interest in what is to be read.
- Be alert to ways in which the course relates to your life and current events.

2. Lack of Goals for Each Study Session

- Plan ahead exactly what you expect to accomplish in a study session. Plan an enjoyable activity as a reward for a job well done.

3. Poor Reading and Study Skills

- Go to the Academic Enrichment and Support Center (HC324) for help in developing these skills.
- Learn an effective approach to reading and studying texts.

4. Trouble Getting Started

- Have a definite place to study and bring the necessary supplies such as a laptop, pencils, paper, etc.
- Have a definite starting time. The sooner you begin, the sooner you will be free to do other things.
- A brief review is helpful in getting started.

5. Daydreaming (an escape from work)

- Have only one course's material on your desk at one time.
- Keep a scratch pad on your desk. Jot down thoughts that distract you and come back to them later.
- Silence your electronic devices or close down your social media accounts for a length of time. Use an app that creates a blank screen on your laptop screen so you won't have instant messaging interruptions. Don't check e-mail until after that study session and limit amount of checking texts.

6. Worry About Personal Problems

- Go to the Student Life Office (BC252), Financial Aid (RC326), Health and Counseling Services (Townhouse H).

7. Missing Deadlines

- Keep a calendar of assignment deadlines and appointments.
- Make a schedule of mini due dates with definite times for studying and completing assignments.

8. Isolation

- Meet with a classmate and get started. Visit the TA. Go to the library with someone.

9. Make an Un-Schedule

- Fill in a week's schedule with only essentials—classes, work, exercise. Then write down any time when you do study.

10. Give Yourself Credit For a Step

- If you solved 5 problems, but not 10, if you read 30 pages instead of 50, recognize that you are making progress, doing something.

11. Not a Mona Lisa Every Time

- Grades are not a measure of self-worth. Your assignment is not equated with worthiness as a person.

12. Transition

- Find a transition activity that will move you in a positive direction towards studying. For example, if you have a paper to write, break the task down by starting to copy a favorite passage or poem from a book. Once you have the momentum for writing, you will find it easier to change subjects and begin your paper.

13. Contract

- Develop a personal contract that meets your needs. For example, if you observe that it takes you 30 minutes of procrastinating before you begin to study, contract with yourself to reduce that time to 20 minutes by defining a motivating reward or punishment.

Adapted from: University of Minnesota Counseling and Consulting Services