

Learning Assistance Study Tips

Overcoming Procrastination

PROCRASTINATION is a habit, not a flaw. It takes persistence to change, but you can do it. Here's how:

Clarify Your Personal Goals

- Articulate and write down your personal goals. Post them on your door, mirror, and notebook—so you'll see them frequently.
- Be sure the task you think you "should" do is one that is really important to you, that leads you to your goal.

Manage Your Time Effectively

- If you don't know how to manage your time, learn. Consult an LSC counselor, attend a time management workshop, or work with an independent study program in the Reading/Writing/Study Skills Lab.
- Break your goal up into little parts. Write out and list the steps you must take to accomplish your goal.
- Establish a regular time each day to work toward your goal. Get out of a disorganized lifestyle and make working toward your goal part of your routine.
- Organize your environment, complete with the tools you'll need, so it's conducive to working. Or...move yourself to an environment which is conducive to working.
- If you aren't sure how to reach your goal, learn. For example, if you aren't clear about an assignment, plan to consult with your professor. Build this appointment into your schedule.
- Start early. Build procrastination time into your schedule.
- Start small and easily. Build gradually.

Change Your Attitude

- Do you feel that the world is too difficult? That you are inadequate to meet its challenges? That you cannot function without a lot of approval? These are immobilizing, self-defeating, avoidance-producing attitudes and beliefs. Recognize them with self-enhancing beliefs and attitudes.
- Value your mistakes; don't judge them. What is curious, useful, interesting about them? What is worthwhile?
- Know your escapes and avoidance's; self-indulgence? Socializing? Reading? Doing it yourself? Over-doing it? Running away? Day dreaming? Call yourself on them.

Change Your Behavior

- Use your friends. Set up a contract with someone to get something done. Make an appointment to study with a friend who has no difficulty studying. Arrange to meet with a friend for support, some one who will listen and who will share your highs and lows.
- Make something you normally do and enjoy contingent upon doing the avoided task: "I'll work on my term paper in the library half an hour before going to play racquetball."
- Keep your tasks visible in front of you: set up reminders, signs, slogans, notes, and lists.
- Use your impulsiveness. When you get going, keep going. Do something when you think of it, don't think about it. Do instant, tiny things.
- Do something daily. Agree to start a project and stay with it for 5 minutes. Consider another 5 minutes at the end of the first.
- Establish priorities among tasks according to the degree of unpleasantness. Start with the most unpleasant task and work down until you get to the easier ones.
- Be sure the rest of your life is in good shape.

There are other effective study techniques you can use.

See the Skills Development Instructor in the Learning Assistance Center, or enroll in *Learn 71: Study Techniques* class.

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