

How to tackle procrastination effectively

Sometimes, focussing on the task in hand is just not something that is on the cards. But you can keep yourself on task with using just a few of these tips.

- **Identify and Eliminate Unnecessary Distractions.**

Distractions can significantly hinder productivity and contribute to procrastination. Common distractions include social media, email, and noise. Creating a dedicated workspace can help minimize distractions and promote focus. Additionally, website blockers and time limits can help manage online distractions.

- **If the task is a little daunting, try breaking larger tasks into smaller, more manageable tasks.**

An effective way to tackle procrastination involves breaking tasks into smaller, achievable goals. This approach makes tasks seem less daunting and allows for more straightforward progress tracking. The Pomodoro Technique, for example, involves working in short, focused intervals (usually 25 minutes) with breaks in between. Another helpful strategy is the “two-minute rule,” which encourages completing tasks that take less than two minutes immediately.

- **Stopping negative self-talks and overcoming the fear of failure.**

Perfectionists struggle to complete tasks unless they are deemed perfect by their standards. Behaviour expert and author Rene Rodriguez, has revealed ways in which you can help kick your procrastination to the curb and start tackling tasks head on.

'Most often perfectionism manifests in the lack of action, because if it can't be perfect, why do it at all? I've got these unrealistic expectations about the way something should look,' Rene said. That's one of the ones I struggle with. What's interesting is that it leads to high-quality work when I get it done. 'It leads me to meticulously go over things, but if I am not careful, I'll allow that that pursuit of excellence to turn into perfectionism. 'But when it comes to putting off things, the pursuit of excellence turns into procrastination, then it's perfectionism and that will result in fear of failure.' Rene explains that this is where the 80 per cent rule comes in. If your work is at 80 per cent standard, complete it and leave it there. 'The concept is that there is no such thing as 100 per cent perfect,' Rene explained.

- **Move the task to the present.**

People start a task sooner when they believe it is part of their present.

So, the key to stopping procrastination is moving a task from feeling like part of the future to feeling like part of the present.

In [one study](#), the researchers used some neat tricks to make people think a task was part of the present or part of the future. In one, they gave some participants an assignment on the 24th of April, giving them five days to complete it. Other participants were given the same five days to complete it but were not given it until the 28th of April — so that the deadline fell in May.

- People in the first group had the feeling the task was part of their present and so they were more likely to begin it.
- Those in the second group felt it was part of May so were less likely to begin. Remember, both groups had the same time — five days — so it was just the perception that caused some people to procrastinate.

- **Success stops procrastination and improves productivity.**

So far, so easy.

Here things get a little tricky. That's because when you expect a project to be difficult or hard to complete, then you are more likely to procrastinate. But, there's only one reliable way to increase expectations of success and that is by experiencing success. But, while procrastinating and not starting, you can't experience success.

It's a Catch-22.

But, if you are able to break down the task into more digestible tasks, then completing the task will be much easier to achieve. Then, the success of completing that task can propel you to finishing more and more.