
Procrastination

With the Writing Development Centre

Putting things off. Leaving things until the last minute. We all do it. Procrastination is rarely overcome by willpower alone and telling yourself to 'just get on with it'.

Reflect on what's going on and try these approaches to help you move forward:

Find certainty: are you putting it off because you don't really know what the task involves or how best to carry it out? Get concrete answers and action points by asking your tutor, a coursemate, a friend or the WDC.

Don't push it: Make your first action as small and as achievable as possible to make the task seem less daunting. Write a single sentence or read a single paragraph. Work for just ten minutes to begin with. Working in short bursts can make it much easier to get started and keep going.

Make a mess: Give yourself permission to write a deliberately rough and messy first draft. Trying to get things perfect first time can pile on the pressure and give you writer's block

Break it down: Make your goals as specific as possible by breaking the entire task into separate, manageable chunks. So instead of 'plan essay', your first goal could be 'decide what to include in the introduction.'

Get in the mood: Develop a regular routine rather than waiting until you feel like writing or for "'inspiration' to strike. Do some warm-up writing to put yourself in the right frame of mind – take a look at our '**one-hour writing challenge**' guide.

Bribe yourself: Use rewards as incentives for getting some work done. This reward might be time off to do something fun or buying yourself something nice!

One thing at a time: don't start out try to write the last, polished draft. Writing is a multi-layered process—planning, drafting, editing—separating them out is easier on you.

Want to review your study strategies?

[Book a one to one appointment](#) with us for personalised study advice tailored to you, your subject and level of study.