ACCESS
Study Skills Tip of the Week

Techniques to Manage Procrastination

• Set Priorities
Not: I don’t know where to begin so I can’t begin at all.
Or: I have to do EVERYTHING, nothing less will do.
Instead: the most important step is to pick one project or piece of a project, to focus on at a time.

• Break the Task Down Into Little Pieces
Not: There’s so much to do and it’s so complicated. I’m overwhelmed by my English term paper.
Instead: I don’t have to do the whole project at once. There are separate, small steps I can take one at a time to begin. First, I’ll focus on finding the topic. When that’s done, I’ll focus on doing research, etc.

• Set Up Small, Specific Goals
Not: I have to write my thesis within two months.
Instead: If I write 2 pages per day, Monday-Friday, I can finish a first draft in a month. I’ll have a revised final draft within two months.

• Reward Yourself Right Away When You Accomplish Even a Small Goal
Not: I can’t take any time out until I’m completely finished.
Instead: I spent an hour working; now I’ll call a friend before I get back to work.

• Use A Time Schedule
Not: I must devote the whole week to this project.
Instead: I can use these times this week to work on my project: Monday 7-8; Tuesday 7-9; Saturday 10-12.

• Learn How to Estimate Time
Not: I’ll go to the library to do research and it probably won’t take more than a few hours.
Instead: Research always takes longer than I expect, I’ll set aside Monday and Tuesday nights.

• Optimize Your Chances for Success
Not: I’ll do my writing this weekend at home then I don’t have to go out.
Instead: I’ll write during the week in a library. (Choose whatever conditions are optimal for you to get work done).
• **Delegate, If Possible**  
  **Not:** I am the only person in the world who can do this.  
  **Instead:** I don’t have to do all this myself. I can ask someone else to do part of the job and still feel a sense of accomplishment.

• **Just Get Started**  
  **Not:** I can’t write this speech until inspiration hits.  
  **Instead:** I’ll write what first comes to mind, like brainstorming. I’ll improve on it later.

• **Look At What You Have Accomplished**  
  **Not:** I have hardly made a dent in all there is to do.  
  **Instead:** I have reviewed my lecture notes and read three chapters. That won’t guarantee me an “A”, but it’s more than I did yesterday.

• **Be Realistic!**  
  **Not:** I should be able to work full-time, take four classes, be president of the Esperanto Club, spend more time with friends and exercise every day with no problem.  
  **Instead:** I will learn to say “No.” I have my limits and my priorities. I can take on fewer responsibilities and still like myself.

For more information see:  
ACCESS A+ Program  
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