

Learning Resource Center Online Study Skills Handout

7 Ways to Eliminate Procrastination for Online Learners

Studying online can be a challenge, keeping up with courses, and navigating Blackboard to find each week's reading and homework assignments. For this reason, students need to get ahead of the required course work before they fall behind, making it impossible to recover. Even though online classes allow you to study whenever and where ever you want to, you cannot procrastinate. The key is to avoid waiting until last minute to do your assignments. If you are easily distracted by your surroundings, it might be best to keep your phone off and avoid texting or responding to texts.

PROCRASTINATION is the art of putting off for tomorrow, things you can do today.

The Following are Seven Strategies You Can Use to Eliminate Procrastination.

1. **Monday: Make it meaningful:** If you have been putting off studying or doing a written assignment, take a minute to list all the benefits of completing the task today. We operate by familiar patterns and tend to waste time habitually. When you notice you are wasting your time, make a conscious effort to change your bad habits. It would be helpful to set a goal for yourself.
2. **Tuesday: Take it apart:** Break big assignments into small, manageable parts. Be determined to complete one task at a time. Make each task one you can accomplish in 15 minutes or less. Make the results measurable so you can see your progress. If a long reading assignment intimidates you, break it into smaller manageable parts. Give yourself a visual experience of getting your work done.
3. **Wednesday: Write an intention statement:** Use an intention statement in conjunction with the small task you created. Write your statement on a post-it sticker, and post it in your study area where you can see it. For example, if you have a term paper to write and cannot seem to get it started, write your intention statement that says, "I intend to write a list of at least five possible topics for my term paper by 9 P.M."
4. **Thursday: Tell everyone:** Announce your intention publicly. Tell a friend. Tell your spouse, roommate, parents, or children. Telling those close to you of your intention is an excellent technique to ensure its completion. Make others your support group.
5. **Friday: Find a way to say no:** Just say, "NO!" when you notice yourself continually pushing a task into the low-priority category. Re-examine the purpose for doing it at all. If you realize that you really don't intend to do something, quit telling yourself that you will. That's procrastinating. Tell the truth and drop it. Then, you're not procrastinating and you don't have to carry around the baggage of an undone task.
6. **Saturday: Settle it now:** Do it now. The minute you notice yourself procrastinating, plunge into the task. Then, be sure to fully appreciate the feeling of having the task behind you.
7. **Sunday: Search for a reward:** Find an effective reward, something you would genuinely withhold from yourself if you did not earn it. When you legitimately reap your reward, notice how it feels. You may find that going to the movies or buying clothing is more enjoyable when you feel like you've earned it.

In Addition to The Above Procrastination Strategies, Online Students Should Consider doing the following:

- **Get Organized:** You can't do your assignments if you don't know what you need to do.
- **Create A Timeline/Schedule, And Set A Deadline:** If you have an assignment due, aim to have it completed one or two days in advance. So, if something unexpected happens, you still have extra time to complete it.
- **Take A Break:** Taking mental breathers from staring at the computer for hours can revitalize you, and help you to focus better.
- **Get the Hard Stuff Done First:** It's hard to do something that you don't want to do. But once you do it, it's over! It is best to complete your most challenging assignments first. That way everything else seems easier and takes a shorter amount of time. If you keep pushing that English essay back, you're never going to get it done. It's best to buckle down and just do it.

Remember, online learning cuts out the hustle and bustle of travel to and from class, which is an advantage to all online learners. But just as there are advantages, there are disadvantages, one such is the tendency to fall behind when there are no visual reminders that are prominent in the classroom setting. So, use your time wisely.

See Videos Below on Procrastination: <https://youtu.be/I2xCPxdivIE> https://youtu.be/xQ_ODqOY0Q4



Ellis, David B (1985). Becoming a Master Student (p. 51)