

11 Ways to Overcome Procrastination

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阿男导读:

是不是经常懒癌上身，堆到最后精神崩溃？大家都有病！什么病？拖！延！症！这篇文章从各个角度层层剥茧，给出治疗拖延症的11个小妙招：

1. 避免小题大做。别叫嚣着“鸭梨山大”或者苦着脸说“超级难的咧”事实表明，可能是你想太多。
2. 想想“为啥这么做”。以成果为导向，视觉化图景，才能有效激励行动。
3. 将任务在行程表里具体化。日历是不是都落了一层灰？吹吹赶紧用起来嘞！
4. 避免假大空，制定可实现目标。早4点起床跑步？晚9点睡觉？做梦！！
5. 碎片化大目标，变成可执行的小目标。王健林说了，先制定一个小目标...
6. 别找借口不执行。你以为谁看不穿？没时间？还是没管理好时间？
7. 找小伙伴监督。及时给予正向反馈，助你总结厘清。
8. 优化执行环境，减少干扰。阿男要开始上课了？还不赶紧排除万难来玩！
9. 给自己正向激励。有一点点进步？完成了小目标？吃！允许你今晚胖10斤！
10. 避免对过去的拖延行为愧疚。过去就过去了，胡思乱想真的只会浪费时间。11.别做完美主义者。事实是，我们永远都有进步空间！
来吧，阿男带你治愈带你飞！

[1] Everyone has put off a task at some point in their life. But have you ever wondered why you — or others — procrastinate? While some view it (in themselves or other people) as laziness, there might be something else at play.

[2] In psychology, it has long been believed that people who procrastinate have a faulty sense of time — that they think they will have more time to get something done than they actually do. While that may be true for some, more recent research suggests procrastination is linked to difficulty managing distress. Specifically, it seems that task aversion is to blame — that is, when people view a task in an unpleasant manner (“It will be tough, boring, painful...”), they are more likely to put it off.

[3] While procrastinators may be trying to avoid distress, this approach can ironically cause more distress in the long run. Procrastination can lead to increased stress, health issues, and poorer performance. Procrastinators tend to have more sleep issues and experience greater stressful regret than non-procrastinators. What’s more, procrastination can also hinder your self-esteem with the guilt, shame, or self-critical thoughts that can result from putting off tasks.

[4] If you struggle with putting things off, try any of these tips to get you on track:

1. Get rid of catastrophizing.

[5] One of the biggest reasons people procrastinate is because they catastrophize, or make a huge deal out of something. It may be related to how tough, how boring, or how painful it will be to complete the task; the underlying theme is that doing the task will be “unbearable.”

[6] In reality, challenges, boredom, and hard work will not kill you — or even make you sick. Procrastination, on the other hand, is associated with stress — think of the stress you feel when you avoid making a phone call you know you need to make. So keep things in perspective: “Sure, this is not my favorite task, but I can get through it.”

2. Focus on your “why.”

[7] Procrastinators focus more on short-term gains (avoiding the distress associated with the task) as opposed to long-term results (the stress of not doing it, as well as the consequences of you avoiding this task). Instead, try focusing on why you are doing it: What are the benefits of completing the task?

[8] If you have been putting off cleaning out a closet, imagine walking into the closet when it is de-cluttered and how good that will feel. And consider how much money you will make by selling the items on eBay, or how those in need will feel when they receive these items as donations.

[9] If it is an exercise program you have been avoiding, focus on how exercising will help you have more positive energy, give you a boost of self-esteem, and serve as a great role model for your children.

3. Get out your calendar.

[10] Projects that will get done “when I have time” (as in “I will do it when I have time”) tend not to get done very often, if ever. You need to schedule when you are going to work on a project, and block out that time, just as you would an important meeting.

[11] And when it is time to do your work, set a timer so you can be focused for the entire allotted time.

4. Be realistic.

[12] As you establish your schedule, set yourself up for success. Projects often take much longer than expected, so bake in some extra time. And look for ways to make it easier on yourself: If, for example, you are not a morning person, don’t expect yourself to get up an hour early to start the exercise program you have put off for months. It might be better to schedule that activity during lunch or before dinner.

5. Chunk it.

[13] When a task seems overbearing, procrastination often follows. So how can you break that task into smaller, more manageable parts? For example, if you want to write a book, you may choose to make an outline, identify each chapter, figure out the sections in the chapters, and then commit to writing one segment at a time.

Chunking it down like this will help you feel less overwhelmed and more empowered.

6. Excuses be gone.

[14] Do any of these sound familiar? “I need to be in the mood.” “I will wait until I have time.” “I work better under pressure.” “I need X to happen before I can start.”

[15] Stop it!

[16] Be honest with yourself: These are excuses. Sure, it might be nice to “be in the mood,” but waiting for that to happen can mean you never start your project.

7. Get a partner.

[17] Establish specific deadlines for completing a task. Then find someone who will help you be accountable. It could be a promise to your boss or client that you will complete the job by a certain date. Or it may be a coach who helps you stay on track. Or simply find an accountability partner. In this relationship, you connect with someone (on the phone, for example) at certain time intervals (such as once per week) and commit to what you will do before your next meeting. Not wanting to go back on your word, this can be a great way to squash procrastination. (Note: In an effort to save your relationship with your significant other, I recommend this person not be your partner. You don’t want a lack of follow-through to cause tension between you.)

8. Optimize your environment.

[18] Your environment can help or hinder your productivity. Beware especially of technology, such as your email or messenger that keeps ping-ponging to let you know someone has reached out. Social media, internet “research” that leads you far off track, or phone calls can lead to procrastination.

[19] So try this: During your scheduled block of time for working on a particular task, close your email and IM, turn off your phone (or at least set it on “Do Not Disturb” and put it out of sight), and don’t let yourself get on the web until you have completed the task, or hold off any necessary internet searches until the end.

9. Reward good behavior.

[20] Establish a reward if — and only if — you do what you set out to do. Do not let yourself binge that new Netflix show, check your social media, or get lunch until you complete what you've scheduled. So instead of using these tasks and distractions to procrastinate, make them contingent on you actually finishing what you schedule yourself to do.

10. Forgive yourself.

[21] Stop beating yourself up about the past. Thoughts such as “I should have started earlier” or “I always procrastinate; I am such a loser” will only make matters worse. Research shows that forgiving yourself for past procrastination will help you stop pushing off working on a task.

[22] You can try to use past procrastination to your advantage as well. How? Determine what went into your avoidance — fear, stress, not having a good understanding of how to progress, lack of accountability. Then address those obstacles in the present and future. If, for example, it was fear that contributed to your procrastination, what steps can you take to feel more empowered and less fearful next time around?

11. Drop the perfectionism.

[23] Perfectionism is an all-or-nothing mentality: Something is either perfect or it is a failure. People with perfectionistic tendencies tend to wait until things are perfect in order to proceed — so, if it's not perfect, you cannot be finished. Or if it is not the perfect time, you believe you can't start. This all-or-nothing mentality can hold you back from starting or completing tasks.

[24] Instead, focus on being better than perfect. This means to still strive for excellence, creating excellence, or setting yourself up with excellent conditions, but at the same time, you focus on getting the job done.