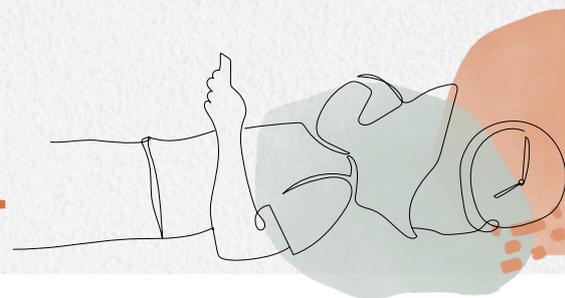


Procrastination



Do you find you often put off starting a task that you know you need to get done?

Do you leave things until the last minute? Is it a rush to get them done on time? Do you find yourself being easily distracted?

Do you choose to do an activity you find more fun over those that require more work and have less obvious and immediate rewards?

Most students can recall times when they have put their studies off. At least 20% of people are chronic procrastinators and as a student this is much more common. Most of the time when we decide to put off a task we experience a short-term relief from discomfort. However, putting off a task usually leads to even more stress and discomfort in the long-term because there is less time to get the task done, or there are consequences for putting off the task in the first place. Here are a few tips to help you get control of your procrastination.

- **Don't wait for the perfect time** to do something because it doesn't exist. There is no magical time to start reviewing your lecture notes or writing an assignment. In fact, usually getting started on a task is the hardest part. You might find that once you get started it's relatively easy to keep working on the task and even get it done!
- **The saying 'no strain no gain' is rubbish.** It could be that the reason we feel like we work better under stress or working hard against a deadline is that we seriously haven't tried it any other way.
- **It's a time of great accomplishment in other areas of your life.** Putting off study does allow you to spend more time on cleaning, relationships etc but it also prolongs your anguish over your studies.
- **Minimise the distractions in your environment.** Use your common sense. Move away from TVs, turn your phone off, and if there is loud music coming from the room next to you then try heading to the library to study.
- **Break down the larger goals into smaller more achievable goals.** Instead of looking at the year, look at the month, week or day if you need to. Set yourself smaller goals that contribute to the bigger goals.
- **Write a to-do list and feel the sense of accomplishment as you tick things off** – no matter how small a task may be, you are still heading towards your goal.
- **Reward your hard work** and use the promise of the reward to motivate you in completing your goal. Think about setting different rewards for different levels of achievement.
- **Ask for help.** Study with a friend or in a study group, seek advice from your supervisor or lecturer, or contact University Counselling. It's harder to procrastinate if you have let someone know your goals and keeps you motivated to achieve them.
- **Talk to someone.** Contact us at Student Wellbeing.

Online resources

Pomodoro Technique

Try a time management strategy called the Pomodoro technique.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNBmG24djoY

Goblin Tools

A web or phone-based app to which uses AI to break tasks into small steps and estimate task time.
<https://goblin.tools>

Centre for Clinical Interventions

A free evidence-based workbook to understand and overcome procrastination.
www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Procrastination

Centre for Clinical Interventions - Perfectionism workbook

Perfectionism is one of the most common underlying causes of procrastination. These free self-help resources can help you understand and manage perfectionism.
www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Perfectionism

Apps

Finish

Finish allows you to set tasks for the short, medium and long term.

SelfControl

Allows you to put a lock on your computer and mobile devices to restrict use of websites and apps that distract you.



Access support and more information

www.newcastle.edu.au/counselling or call (02) 4921 6622