

# Techniques for Overcoming Procrastination

## What is procrastination?

No matter how organised or committed you might be to a task or project, it's likely that you've experienced procrastination at some stage in your life. Some researchers define procrastination as a "form of self-regulation failure characterized by the irrational delay of tasks despite potentially negative consequences. [1] Procrastination is very common but can get in the way of achieving tasks and goals. Here are some techniques to help you manage procrastination:

1

Break tasks down into more manageable steps. Procrastination can happen when tasks feel too big or overwhelming.

2

Start with the most important or the easiest task first can help get motivation started.

3

Create a schedule and a to-do-list which can help keep you on track.

4

Make sure that the list of tasks that you are doing is not too big! If you have a lot to do, break down the list so you might just aim to complete one to three tasks each day for example.



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5	Create goals and set deadlines for these. Make sure that you are setting SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) which helps goals feels reasonable.
6	Reduce distractions to help your focus. This might include not looking at your phone or not reading emails which can help your complete tasks more efficiently.
7	Time management techniques such as working for 25 minutes then taking a break for five minutes can help with motivation and getting things finished.
8	Practice self-compassion. It helps to be kind and compassionate to yourself and to recognise that completing tasks can be hard. Treat yourself like you would do a friend.
9	Challenge unhelpful thoughts and generate positive self-talk. Negative thoughts about yourself when you are experiencing procrastination often make the situation worse. Try being your own cheerleader instead.
10	Plan rewards for yourself when you complete the task or goal.
11	Think about where and when you work best and plan to work on goals or tasks then.

## Accessing support for your mental health

For personalised support with a psychologist or therapist, you can contact us on [07 3254 0333](tel:0732540333) to request an appointment through your Employee Assistance Program. For more information visit [www.axisclinic.com.au](http://www.axisclinic.com.au)

### Sources:

1. Prem R, Scheel TE, Weigelt O, Hoffmann K, Korunka C. Procrastination in daily working life: A diary study on within-person processes that link work characteristics to workplace procrastination. *Front Psychol.* 2018;9:1087. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01087