

## How To Stop Procrastinating And Get Things Done In 2 Minutes Or Less

A couple of years ago, I wrote down a goal to write and publish a book to help students build their self-confidence, stop procrastinating and maximize their examination grades. I estimated that writing this book would take approximately 3 months with a final word count between 30,000 to 50,000 words.

On several occasions, I remember sitting down with my laptop ready to start writing, but never actually getting started. I was paralyzed with anxiety and fear that my work wouldn't be good enough. So instead of writing, I wasted precious time 'researching' new content for the book.

This went on for several months until I was sick and tired of procrastinating on publishing my book. Luckily, I accidentally stumbled upon a powerful strategy that helped me destroy my procrastination and finish my book.

How to stop procrastinating using the "2-minute rule"

I quickly realized that my obsession with being perfect and on the final result of a published book was causing my anxiety and procrastination.

So one day, as I was staring at my laptop I asked myself a simple but powerful question:

"What can I do right now?"

And so, I simply wrote one sentence. No big deal right? Wrong!

Straight away I experienced relief from my anxiety and a short boost of self-confidence.

I wrote the next sentence.

And the next. And so on.

By the end of that full day, I had completed a 5,000-word rough draft.

Within 30 days I had completed the entire draft of the book.

The best part about this was that I only focused on doing something small every day and the final result was simply a by-product.

By shifting our focus from the intimidating end result to simply getting started today, we can overcome the mental roadblocks that cause procrastination.

"The Secret Of Getting Ahead Is Getting Started" – Mark Twain

How to use the "2-minute rule"

This is where the '2-minute rule' can be an effective strategy to stop procrastinating and take action towards your goals.

This technique highlighted within David Allen's bestselling book, 'Getting Things Done' (audiobook), simply suggests that if a task takes less than 2-minutes then just do it now. (1)

This could be as simple as taking out the trash after cooking, replying an email to a colleague straight away or even doing your laundry as soon as you get home from work.

This way you save yourself time that would have been wasted on reviewing the same task on your to-do list over and over again for weeks.

Plus, you reduce anxiety and boost your self-confidence by getting more things done.

If a goal takes more than two minutes, break it down into steps that take 2 minutes or less to complete i.e putting on your running shoes, writing one sentence in your draft.

You can easily use this technique for everyday tasks, but we can drive this to the next level to help you stick to good habits over the long run.

For example, let's say you want to eat healthier and lose 10 kg over the next couple of months. Rather than focusing on the end result of your goal, you could simply ask yourself this question:

'What can I do in just 2 minutes to get started on my goal?'

You could then do any of the following:

- ✓ Eat an apple
- ✓ Do 10 push-ups and sit-ups
- ✓ Go for a short walk
- ✓ And so on

The general idea here is that by simply getting started you will be more inclined to take more action and build the new habit.

The same principle applies to any other goal.

Want to publish a report or a book? simply write one sentence a day.

Want to read 20 books this year? read one page of a book a day.

Want to eat healthy and lose 10 pounds of weight? eat one apple a day.

Want to go to the gym 3 times a week? put on your running shoes and leave your house.

By breaking down your massive goal into small '2-minute' chunks, you can build momentum and trick your mind to taking more action than you initially set out to do in 2 minutes.

Your turn

Here's a simple challenge for you, simply grab a piece of paper and divide the page into two columns.

On one column just write down all the important goals or tasks that you've been procrastinating on.  
On another column break down these goals into a productive action you can take in the next 2 minutes.

Go ahead and simply just take that first step. Don't worry about completing the 'big' goal yet, just focus on getting started.

Hopefully, this useful technique will help you stop procrastinating and get more things done.

Credit: <https://www.theladders.com>