

How to Stop Procrastinating

Center for Academic Success and Achievement (CASA)



Do you feel like you're not getting anywhere with your work? Like you're incredibly behind, or discouraged, or just moving really slowly? Do you want to get to a better place? Here are eight tips to stop procrastination and replace it with healthier habits:

1. Take some time to think through the root causes of your procrastination.

Do you deal with specific distractions, such as social media or friends? Do you struggle with motivation, or with just getting started? Is part of the problem lack of organization? Or, overcommitment and just having too many things on your plate?

You can't solve your procrastination unless you understand why it's happening and the role that you or your environment is playing.

2. Write a list.

Putting your tasks on paper (or on your phone) may feel overwhelming, but it actually makes them less stressful by getting them out of your head and giving you a roadmap.

3. Make a plan to get your tasks done.

Assign specific deadlines to yourself based on a realistic view of your other major commitments and your knowledge of the pace at which you are typically able to work.

4. Set small, achievable goals.

Give yourself easy wins so you can start feeling like you're making progress. You can even add items to your to-do list that you've already done, just to cross them off.

5. Trick yourself into getting started.

Tell yourself that you only need to work on the project for five or ten minutes. Set a timer if you need to. If you can work for that long, you can probably work for longer!

6. Use others for accountability.

Procrastination thrives in isolation. Honesty with others is an antidote. Share your struggles and goals with others and give them permission to check on your progress.

7. Watch your self-talk.

Sometimes we give ourselves too much credit, or not enough. Don't fool yourself into thinking everything is fine when it's not. But, at the same time, don't get down on yourself for being behind when you're actually doing the hard work of catching up.

8. Visit the Counseling Center and get their support in working through causes of and solutions to your procrastination. Just email them at counseling@warnerpacific.edu.