

Why Do We Procrastinate and What Can We Do About It?

Many people believe that procrastinating is a harmless habit, or even helpful. But every hour that you spend putting off work or frittering away on social media is an hour less that you will have for fulfilling your goals.

The good news is that there are [business essay writers](#) strategies you can use to help overcome procrastination.

Fear of Failure

One reason why people procrastinate is that they fear failure. They believe that if they do the task, they will likely perform badly, which would make them feel even worse. This self-defeating feedback loop can become a vicious cycle that keeps people stuck in procrastination mode.

This can be related to effort discounting, where people underestimate how much effort a certain task will require. It can also be due to heuristics, such as mental shortcuts or assumptions that work well for some situations but not others. Finally, it can be because of a disconnect between people's short-term mood and their future goals. This is called temporal disjunction.

Overwhelming Tasks

Many people procrastinate because they feel overwhelmed. When they see a long list of tasks, they can't figure out where to start. Try to break down large tasks into smaller ones so that they're less intimidating.

Another problem is that when a person starts working on a task, they may do well, but then they start feeling anxious again. This can lead to a cycle of procrastination that's hard to break. Try to identify the underlying fear or emotion that's preventing you from taking action. Once you know what it is, address it. This will help you get back on track. You might even consider using a productivity tool and some [free essay writing websites](#) to help you stay on track.

Aversive Tasks

When a task feels overwhelming or just plain boring, you may procrastinate. This could be something as simple as filing unfamiliar paperwork or changing an ink cartridge, or more loaded tasks like writing an email that you're dreading responding to.

Researchers have found that when people put off tasks that require effort, they discount the value of future outcomes. This is called effort discounting and it can lead to self-sabotage in the form of putting off tasks until you "feel ready".

Procrastination can also be associated with feelings of disconnection from your future self. This can be especially problematic when it comes to health habits, such as diet or exercise.

Discounting the Value of Future Outcomes

People may procrastinate because they discount the value of outcomes that won't be experienced until the future. This can be due to a low expectancy of achieving outcomes, difficulty associating tasks with their outcomes, or lack of achievement motivation.

Another reason people procrastinate is that they prioritize their current mood over the long-term outcome of a task. For example, they might choose to watch TV rather than write a blog post because the former makes them feel good in the moment while the latter does not.

To overcome this, it's important to make sure you engage in tasks for productive reasons (i.e., the ones that are logically and emotionally compelling).

Prioritizing Short-Term Mood

Putting off a task can make you feel better in the moment, but it will likely hurt your long-term mood. For example, a student may delay doing their homework to watch a TV show or play video games, despite knowing this will negatively affect their grades.

Or, you might spend hours scrolling through social media when you should be working, despite the knowledge that this will lead to an even worse mood tomorrow. When your short-term mood is prioritized over future outcomes, you can become a procrastinator.

Disconnecting from Future Self

Researchers such as Eve-Marie Blouin-Hudon have found that procrastinators often feel disconnected from their future self. They view this future self as almost a stranger, which makes them less likely to want to deal with the task at hand.

People who think about their future self a lot tend to have higher levels of empathy for this person, which can help them be more motivated to work on their tasks. However, it is important to take caution with the way that you visualise your future self.

Avoiding procrastinating is essential for living the life you want. By gaining insights into the reasons why we procrastinate, you can work on eliminating this bad habit once and for all.