

# Overcoming Procrastination

## First things first

### Get organized.

Write down the deadlines for your assignments/projects and dates for quizzes/tests in a calendar or planner – digital or paper, whatever method works best for you. Block out the hours when you are at work, have a family commitment, or a social obligation.

Write in specific times when you need to start homework or begin reviewing material for tests. Think about how much time you need for each task and block out that time. Write in a deadline to complete your tasks a day or two before the actual deadline. Check this planner daily!

### Establish a study schedule.

Come up with a strategy that works for you that includes blocks of time for work and short blocks for breaks. For example, 30 minutes of serious concentration with no distractions, then a 10 minute break to get a snack and do some stretches. Then 30 more minutes of work, a 10 minute break, etc.

### Work in an environment that lends itself to studying.

If at home, set up an area that has everything you need within reach. Minimize distractions. If you like to go somewhere public to study, like a coffee shop or somewhere to meet up with friends, really assess whether you can accomplish what you need to in those settings.

### Set mini goals and reward yourself for reaching them.

Each day have a small, attainable goal you can reach. Make it specific. Instead of saying “I will study for my Sociology test tonight” say “I will review the first three chapters of my Sociology book tonight.” Reward yourself in some small way when you’ve reached your goal (for example, watch a favorite show when you’re done, take a nap, call a friend, etc.)



## Dive in

### **Prioritize your work.**

Look at the work you need to do. What task is most important to complete first? What can wait a little while? What will be easy? What will be hard?

### **Choose a strategy.**

Do you want to tackle the hardest thing first and feel good about getting it done right away? Or do you want finish the easiest things first and feel good about making progress quickly? Pick an approach and start.

### **Get really engaged in your classes.**

The more you actively participate in class, the better you will understand the material and the easier it will be to tackle assignments and avoid procrastinating. If you are doing just enough to get by, you won't feel motivated to complete the work.

### **Ask someone to help keep you accountable.**

See if a friend or family member would be willing to ask you periodically if you are keeping on top of your assignments. Knowing you will have to "report in" with someone can help you stay on track.

### **Just start.**

Don't wait for everything to align and be perfect for you to begin. Sometimes just diving in will get the momentum started.



## Final tips

### **Remember why you are doing this.**

What are your reasons for being in this program? What are you ultimately trying to achieve? How will you feel when you are done? Come up with a visual reminder of your goal. For example, make your screensaver an image that illustrates what you're working towards or have a picture on your desk that inspires you to keep going.

### **Realize that breaking old habits and starting new ones takes time.**

Don't get discouraged! With practice, you will procrastinate less and less. Each day is a new chance to do better. Replace "I should have started this sooner" with "I will plan ahead better tomorrow."



## Still procrastinating?

If you've really tried to start better habits and still find yourself procrastinating, consider if a bigger issue is going on that you need to address. For example:

- Do you think your work has to be perfect? Is that pressure making you hesitant to even start?
- Are you afraid of failing at an assignment or test? Does part of you think "if I don't start it, I can't fail at it"?
- Are you genuinely not interested in what you're learning? Are you wondering if your program is the right one for you?

If any of these issues are at play, do some soul searching and see if you can better understand what may be contributing to your tendency to procrastinate. Ivy Tech can help! Free, confidential **counseling** is available by emailing [Indy-StudentTherapist@ivytech.edu](mailto:Indy-StudentTherapist@ivytech.edu) or calling (317) 916-7627. To learn more about **career interest assessments** and different career paths, contact the Career Coaching and Employer Connections department at [Indianapolis-ccec@ivytech.edu](mailto:Indianapolis-ccec@ivytech.edu) or (317) 921-4881. For **assistance with any issue** you may have being successful here at Ivy Tech, the Success Coaches at the Center for Academic Success Coaching are here to help. Contact us today by emailing [Indy-SuccessCoaching@ivytech.edu](mailto:Indy-SuccessCoaching@ivytech.edu) or calling (317) 916-7910.

