



STUDY AT HOME: GETTING STARTED

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In the current Covid-19 situation getting started and staying focused on study and work is proving much more challenging for many people.

This is understandable as we try to adapt to all the changes in our lives while also taking care of ourselves and loved ones.

So first and foremost **please be gentle and compassionate with yourself** as we try to find our way through the current situation.

One of the challenges with study and self-directed learning is knowing where to start and then getting started – it can often result in feelings of confusion, frustration and disorganisation.

It is worth noting that procrastination is a common challenge thought to be experienced by approximately 75-90% of students. Like any habit it does take time, practice, persistence and patience to change. Below is a 3 step strategy that you may find helpful.

3 STEPS TO GETTING STARTED:

1) Set-up your Study Space

Have you identified a place for you to study or work?

- Use a Chair and Table (not your bed) if possible.
- Do you have enough light (natural or artificial) and is the temperature comfortable?
- For more tips on creating a Low Distraction study environment please visit UCC's DSS and Keep Learning websites.

2) Identify and Manage Distractions

At the moment we have many more distractions than usual with both internal (thoughts, emotions) and external distractions (news, social media, family, housemates).

Identify your distractions and consider what might help to schedule into your day

- If distracted by **news and social media** can you silence alerts and assign time for checking during the day when you take breaks?
Some apps may help reduce interruptions e.g. Forest Stay Focused, Pomodoro, Self-Control for MAC or Self Restraint for PC.
- If your **environment is noisy** consider ear plugs or noise cancelling headphones if available. Some people find listening to white noise or background music helpful (YouTube or Spotify).

- If you're **distracted by thoughts and emotions** is there a self-care activity you can plan for your breaks?

Some examples:

- Mindfulness meditation, Mindful Colouring, Yoga by Adrien YouTube, Tea and chat with a friend, Short walk in nature, Music you enjoy.

3) Make a Plan

1. What do you need to do? Make a List (blank page available on DSS website)
2. Identify the **Top 3 priorities**.
3. Choose 1 task to start (easiest first!!)
4. Divide into 3-6 steps
5. Keep it realistic and **make sure you can complete the first step in 30 minutes or less**.
- 6.

Tips and Tricks

- Tell yourself you are **just going to start with 15 minutes** and set a timer.
- Pomodoro app also known a 'tomato technique' recommends dividing time into 30 minute tasks followed by a break.
- Schedule an activity you like for later e.g. watch series/movie with friends online, food you enjoy, hobby, chat with friends.

Please remember to connect with your UCC supports for assistance if you have any concerns.

References and further information:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/ie/blog/how-be-yourself/201808/5-ways-finally-stop-procrastinating>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/tips-for-overcoming-procrastination-2795714>

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/featured/11-practical-ways-to-stop-procrastination.html>

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/types-procrastination-and-how-you-can-fix-them.html>

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