Task Breakdown

DATE

PRACTICE · PROCRASTINATION, PLANNING AND GETTING STARTED

Turning one overwhelming task into small, doable steps

DEADLINE, IF THERE IS ONE

The task I've been putting off

WHY IT MATTERS TO ME

HOW BIG IT FEELS RIGHT NOW

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

manageable — *overwhelming*

What makes it hard to start?

- ○ not sure where to begin
- ○ it feels too big
- ○ it's boring
- ○ worried I'll get it wrong
- ○ tired or low energy
- ○ easily distracted
- ○ waiting to feel ready

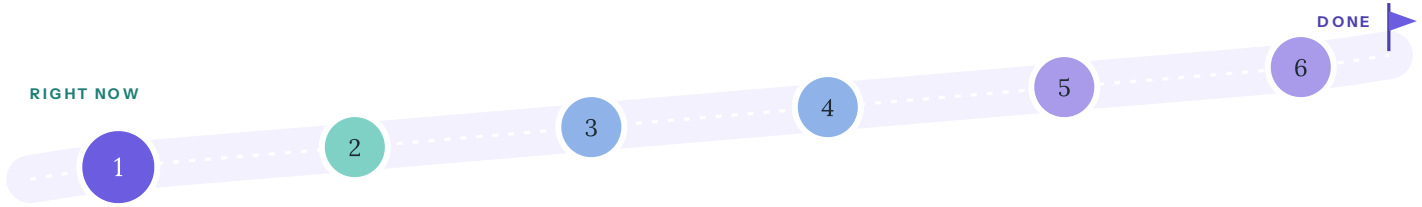
Ways to make starting easier

- ☐ **Shrink it** to a two-minute version.
- ☐ **Set a timer** for ten minutes, then reassess.
- ☐ **Clear one obstacle** first: open the file, find the form.
- ☐ **Work alongside someone,** in person or online.
- ☐ **Pair it** with something pleasant, like music or a drink.
- ☐ **Decide when and where** you'll start.

MY OWN IDEA

01 My stepping stones

one step at a time, the first one tiny



TINY FIRST STEP
smaller than you think

≈ ____ min
when ____
☐ done

STEP 2

≈ ____ min
when ____
☐ done

STEP 3

≈ ____ min
when ____
☐ done

STEP 4

≈ ____ min
when ____
☐ done

STEP 5

≈ ____ min
when ____
☐ done

STEP 6

≈ ____ min
when ____
☐ done

My start plan

deciding ahead makes starting more likely

When ____

and where ____

I will ____

If I get stuck

a kind, practical next move

When it's done

how I'll notice it, or mark it

It isn't laziness. Research suggests procrastination is often less about time management and more about avoiding the uncomfortable feelings a task brings up. Being kind to yourself after putting something off may make it easier to start again.

SOURCES Gollwitzer, P. M., & Sheeran, P. (2006). Implementation intentions and goal achievement: A meta-analysis of effects and processes. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 38*, 69–119. · Sirois, F., & Pychyl, T. (2013). Procrastination and the priority of short-term mood regulation: Consequences for future self *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 7*(2), 115–127.

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