

9 Techniques for Overcoming Procrastination

1. **“KNOCKOUT” TECHNIQUE** The harder and more distasteful a task is, better it is to have it out of the way quickly ... so do it *immediately*.
2. **SMALL SEQUENTIAL STEPS** When you find yourself procrastinating on a task, try breaking it down into smaller, manageable parts, and setting the goal of doing a small step by a specific deadline. Once you have finished one step, do the next one.
3. **FIVE MINUTE PLAN** Take the task you have been procrastinating about, and work a minimum of five minutes on it. Once you have finished five minutes, then you can do another task for five minutes and then another.
4. **“WORK FIRST” APPROACH** Identify the most difficult part of the task, and do it first.
5. **“REMEMBER FORGETTING” TECHNIQUE** Whenever you remember a task you keep forgetting to do, do it, or at least some of it, *immediately*.
6. **“SWISS CHEESE” METHOD** Do *anything at all* that is connected to the task that you want to accomplish. Gradually eat large chunks or holes in the task until it becomes easier to do.
7. **SELF-REWARD** Reward yourself with something pleasant when you have finished any difficult or onerous task.
8. **COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS** Make a list of all the good things that will happen if you stop procrastinating on an important task, and review the list regularly.
9. **STIMULUS CONTROL** Make as many change in your environment as necessary to remove distractions, ensure privacy, become neater, and have important materials on hand.

Bernard, M.E. & Wolfe, J.L (1993). *The RET Resource Book for Practitioners*. New York: Institute for Rational-Emotive Therapy.