

# How to Increase Your Productivity

Asap SCIENCE YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/AsapSCIENCE>

The Science of Productivity Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHfjvYzr-3g>

A few weeks ago I came upon some YouTube channel videos by Asap SCIENCE. I found them *really* interesting, especially their Productivity video noted in the link above. I tried out the steps to see for myself if they were helpful in practice and found that they were. Although it was difficult because I was so accustomed to working until I'd finished instead of being strict with my time, the time regime was something I **had to get used to** and stick to. However, I can now personally vouch for this method; it works! I felt much less tired after completing my homework and accomplished much more than I normally do.

In essence, I have summarised what the video includes and some research statistics in the hope that it will help you to help you too become more productive. The video link is above – I recommend a look.

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Some studies have been done on the concept of ego-depletion and have provided some evidence that suggests our willpower is a **limited resource** that can be used up entirely. The more you fight it, the more gas you burn. An empty tank of energy leads to empty motivation. To summarise, **don't** will yourself to do something. Just start.

UNFORTUNATELY, the hardest thing about doing working is *getting started*. This is the **biggest barrier** to productivity because the brain begins to visualise the hardest parts to come and instead starts to procrastinate by focusing on small mindless tasks (e.g. checking social networks and sites, texting a friend, watching another episode of your favourite show etc.).

Luckily, there is construct of the mind known as the **zeigarnick** effect which compels us to finish tasks that we've already started. If we don't finish the task we experience discomfort and intrusive thoughts about it.

In fact, in a study, investigators gave some participants hard-brain-buster puzzles but not enough time to complete them. When asked to stop, 90% of them went on and completed the puzzle anyway.

So, actually start, and you might be halfway there.

Another trick is to not practise more, but do more *deliberate* practice. This means more time-focused working on the hardest tasks in pockets of time.

Instead of diluting your efforts over the course of the day (doing periods of intense work followed by long breaks), the more **efficient** and **productive** way of doing your work is by habit and disciplined scheduling.

Studies show that short breaks between longer working sessions result in a 16% improvement in awareness and focus. This way of working is more effective because it synchronises more closely with our natural energy cycles and allows us to **maintain a better focus** and **higher energy levels** throughout the day.

Did you know that the most elite violinists practise for a *90 minute* work period and have *15-20 minute* break sessions between work periods? This is the time-period that I myself followed. Planned relaxation is the most effective, as if you allot yourself a lot of time to do a task you're more likely to postpone it (e.g. when a teacher sets a two-week homework, you're more likely to do it in the second week than in the first).

So, here are the main steps to increasing your productivity. Good luck!

**1- Work for a 90 minute work period and have 15-20 minute break sessions.**

**2- Give yourself a DEADLINE and write it down.** Do an accountability chart (for example):

6:00-7:00 English

7:00-7:30 Maths

7:30-7:45 BREAK

The chart helps to realistically evaluate your work and helps to avoid small mindless tasks.

**3- STOP MULTITASKING.** It might feel like you're accomplishing more but in reality, the more you multitask the less productive you are. Making a list of what you need to do at night should help to avoid multitasking.

**4- Split large tasks into smaller, bite sized ones.** Then **start**. This way the brain sees the work as less daunting which will make the starting process much easier.

**5- With a clear goal,** the above steps can be guaranteed to help you increase your productivity.

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