

Writer's Block Detox

Task 2: finding time to write

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Time	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
Noon							
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
Midnight							

One of the most common reasons people give for not writing is that they don't have time, but is that really true?

Ultimately you just have to find ways of making time for the important things. Not having time is normally an excuse, a symptom of a deeper issue, and being aware of this is a good first step toward choosing to do things differently. The next step is to seek out pockets of dead time and start to rescue them.

The good news is that investing even a small amount of time pays off quickly. If you take 15 minutes 6 days a week and write just 200 words, you can reach 6,000 in a month. That's over 70,000 words in a year, which could easily be a novel draft. 250 words a day will allow you to take weekends off.

If you don't start putting time aside to work, what will you have written this time next year? Based on last year, I'm guessing it might not be as much s you'd like.

One of the reasons I encourage you to write every day is that actually sitting down and doing it is one of the fastest ways to feel positive about your writing, so as well as being able to write a novel in a year without a huge amount of effort, writing 200 words a day will make you feel good, so you're more likely to want to find time and do it.

Let's get to it. Fill in the timetable on the next page as fully and honestly as possible. Do it for last week or fill it in as you go through this week, it doesn't matter. Highlight wasted times or times when you're doing things you don't care about or don't want to be doing (endless web surfing and TV shows you don't even like are good starters).

Look at the patterns and find slots that you will realistically be able to write in (i.e. not after a 14 hour work day). If possible, try to identify a regular slot that will make it easier to build a habit.

The timeslots each day I'm going to set aside for writing over the next 4 weeks (or for the next week if your schedule is unstable) are:

Now make these into actual appointments and do anything you can do to make it more likely that you'll stick to your sessions. Put the times into your calendar, set alarms on your phone, tell the family you're not available, put them up on the wall in marker pen, set up your paper and pen ready to go. Your writing time is sacred.