

Writing productively

- 1 Decide the optimal place(s) for writing.
- 2 Optimise the ergonomics.
- 3 Distinguish between A and B time (that is, between times with, respectively, low and high probability of distraction). Use A time to write (and nothing else); use B time to support writing (for example, by downloading documents).
- 4 Make writing a habit: write regularly (preferably daily). Start at the same time each day or, failing that, at a precise, predetermined, time.
- 5 Switch off your email and internet connections.
- 6 Before you start, set yourself a target for the session (typically, a number of words). As soon as you reach your target, stop.
- 7 Get into a positive cycle (I): set achievable targets.
- 8 Get into a positive cycle (II): when you achieve a target, reward yourself.
- 9 Create a support circle.

This resource is published as the second in the Writing Protocols series.

Resources for productive writing

Joan Bolker, *Writing your dissertation in fifteen minutes a day* (Owl Books, 1998)

Robert Boice, *Professors as writers* (New Forums Press, 1990)

W. Brad Johnson & Carol A. Mullen, *Write to the top!* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)

Paul J. Silvia, *How to write a lot* (APA, 2007)

John Soares, 'Writing ergonomics' on *Productive writers*:
productivewriters.com/2011/09/12/writing-ergonomics-posture-alignment-writer

Simon Whaley, *The positively productive writer* (Compass Books, 2012)

Eviatar Zerubavel, *The clockwork muse* (Harvard University Press, 1999)

Apps for locking yourself out of sites that distract you (for example, Facebook or Twitter) include Cold Turkey (getcoldturkey.com) and Macfreedom (macfreedom.com).

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