



# Beating Writer's Block

It's no secret that writer's block can be debilitating; one case of writer's block and you're likely to have a panic attack, or worse...a bad grade! But don't worry, the Writing Center has your back; follow these tips and suggestions on beating writer's block.

## 1. Think in terms of smaller, more manageable tasks.

- If the length of the paper is keeping you from succeeding, then break it down into smaller parts and work on them individually; this can be anything from one sentence at a time to one paragraph at a time. Sometimes, just knowing that you are making progress is enough to get past a block.

## 2. Don't be hard on yourself.

- Turn off your perfectionist-self. You can't expect to be able to write a perfect paper in one sitting, especially as you begin taking higher level classes. Think about the process in terms of drafts; be realistic and you just might make it through a block.

## 3. Discuss the assignment with others or dictate your ideas.

- Find a friend to talk to about the paper; make sure it's someone who will give feedback on whether your topic seems manageable.
- While you are discussing the topic, jot down any ideas you come across in conversation. If you can't find a friend to talk over the assignment with, then you can try recording yourself talking about the assignment. Then, just repeat the previous process.

## 4. Try freewriting.

- Take some time to sit down with a pen/pencil and paper. Put a timer on for 5 minutes, and just write whatever comes to mind (ignore spelling errors and the like). No matter what you write, this process can help. You'll either write down some really good ideas, or you'll write down all the clutter that was causing a block to begin with. As you get better at freewriting, you may consider increasing your writing intervals.

## **5. Stop writing and find something else to do.**

- Finding a place to stop and redirecting your attention to something else can relax your brain. Forcing yourself to write the assignment can translate into poor writing and/or overworking your mind. Finding something you enjoy doing (social media, running, playing video games, cleaning, etc.) can give your brain a chance to ‘recharge,’ and when you come back to your assignment, you’ll be ready to finish the job.

## **6. Try a different process.**

- Some writers like to outline before they begin, others like to edit as they write. Some writers hate both of these things; if you’re having trouble with your writing, then try something new! Worst case scenario: you’re back where you started. But, more likely than not, you’ll make some progress.

## **7. Stop procrastinating!**

- As much as you probably hate hearing this, you may need to start your assignments sooner. Some people perform well under stress, but many people perform better given preparation. Starting on your assignments as soon as they are given is a sure way to avoid writer’s block and get better grades (plus side: it gives you time for teacher reviews).

## **8. Practice writing.**

- This is preventative, not prescriptive; try writing for 15 minutes a day. It doesn’t matter what you write – it could be fiction, creative fiction, a dream log, etc. This will strengthen your skills as a writer, and you’ll be better prepared for writing assignments when they show up.

## **9. Come to the Writing Center!**

- If you ever have problems with your writing, or you just want a second opinion, the Writing Center is always here to help. We can answer questions you have about your assignment, and we can help point you in the write direction (see what we did there).