

WRITER'S BLOCK CHEAT SHEET

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- **NO MOTIVATION?** Increase dopamine by completing 2-3 chores or 5-10 minutes of moderately challenging gaming. Social media fast. Fire breathing. Set a timer. Schedule a session with one of our tutors to create external structure. Set the scene: music, drinks, snacks.
- **TOO ANXIOUS?** Fidget. Work in a library or cafe around other writers to co-regulate to their calm. Fly under your inner critic's radar: leave typos everywhere to trick it into thinking you're only brainstorming. Quiet your monkey mind: make a plan for worst-case scenario, then put your full attention on the assignment.
- **NO IDEA WHERE TO START?** Go with the flow. Skip the intro and write the easiest part, then the next easiest part. Use our site's academic essay template to "fill in the blank." Open a "junk" doc and jot down notes; copy and paste any accidental good content into the formal doc. Journal.
- **TEMPTED TO PROCRASTINATE?** Work alongside a friend (physical or virtual) to stay on track. Use a program like "Write or Die" or "Written Kitten" as a carrot/stick motivator for word count. Give yourself permission not to finish but at least to start. Perfect is the enemy of complete.
- **STUCK?** If you're extroverted, talk your idea out loud to a friend. If introverted, talk to yourself, a pet, or a stuffed animal. Shower or go for a walk. Let your conscious mind focus on something else so your subconscious mind can sort it out for you and surprise you. Modify your topic.
- **CAN'T FOCUS?** Put your phone in airplane mode. Drink coffee, green tea, or yerba mate. Five minutes of daydreaming or scanning the horizon can reset your focus capacity. Meditate on your breath. Hum or sigh to turn off fight/flight response and access higher thinking faculties.
- **OVERWHELMED?** Break your task into smaller chunks. Take 10 deep breaths—4 seconds in and 6 seconds out. If you are catastrophizing, remember that everything is fixable. Really. Even if it's not the ideal outcome. Binaural music. Move your body to move the emotions through.
- **NOT ENOUGH TIME?** Turn in at least a few good paragraphs with a note to your professor respectfully explaining the situation and asking if you can have a chance to revise and resubmit. One low grade can be fixed, but plagiarism is a guaranteed F and very difficult to recover from.
- **TOO TIRED?** Try a non-sleep deep rest (NSDR) meditation video and hydrate. Jumping jacks or burpees. Cold shower. If you are experiencing mental burnout, consider taking a slightly lower grade. Sometimes it's more important to score higher on health than school; know your limits.



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