

BAND-AID SOLUTIONS

Band-aid solutions are just that - quick, temporary fixes that may or may not work for you in your particular circumstances.

COOKING/EATING

- Use your fridge and/or microwave as a message board to yourself.
- Post a list of your study goals for the day.
- Stick your tuition receipt on the fridge.
- Write a note telling yourself to get back to work NOW.
- Use a kitchen, stove, or microwave timer to limit how long you take for breaks or meals.



HOUSEWORK

- Put signs and notes to yourself about getting to work where they will be very visible when you're doing housework to procrastinate. These will help prevent the inevitable rationalization that goes along with doing tasks that seem productive when there is more important work to do (see the "Mother of All Band-Aid Solutions" below).
- Ask to have your apartment cleaned for your birthday.
- Find a very tidy roommate.
- Organize a cleaning party with friends for late in the evening or a time when you normally wouldn't be working.

READING

You have to be really careful with reading because, like housework, it can seem like you're doing something important or productive. Try to save fun reading as a reward once your work is done. In the meantime:

- Don't read for pleasure in your study location.
- Don't bring pleasure books with you to class or the library.
- Make a bookmark that says "You're procrastinating" and keep it in your line of site while reading to procrastinate.
- Ask a roommate to hide pleasure books until your work is done.

HOBBIES

- Move any hobby-related materials away from your study area or, better yet, out of your room completely. Out of sight, out of mind.
- If you're so addicted to your stamp collection that you can't tear yourself away from it, give it to a roommate or friend to hide till your work is done. Take it home or mail it to your parents if you won't be going home for a while.

CELL PHONE

- Subscribe to an answering service.
- Turn it off.
- Tell family and friends you will only answer the phone at a specific time so they'll call when you want them to. If you don't want to be limited in that way, another option is to create a signal for when you want them to call you - call them and let it ring twice, for example. Or ask them to text you instead.
- Use a timer to limit the length of your calls.
- Don't talk on the phone at your desk.

SOCIALIZING

- Set your watch or timer on your microwave to limit the time spent talking to friends during breaks from studying.
- Get a "Do Not Disturb" sign for your door and ask your roommates to respect it.
- Talk to friends and roommates about your struggles with procrastination and get their support to help you limit the time spent socializing.
- Find a study location where there aren't a lot of people around to socialize with (see External Study Environment in [Managing Distractions](#))

TV AND VIDEO GAMES

- Don't get cable.
- If it's included with your rent, don't connect it.
- Move the TV out of your line of sight when sitting at your desk, and preferably out of your room altogether.
- Put your text book in front of the TV, partially blocking the screen.
- Put a sign or note to yourself on the screen, partially blocking it.
- Hold your course books on your lap as you're playing video games or watching TV.
- During commercials turn the TV off and try to get some work done.
- Set a timer to remind you when it's time to get back to work.
- Set up specific TV viewing hours with your roommates - forge an agreement that it will stay off except for the agreed-upon times.
- Take the TV or video games home and leave them there.

MOTHER OF ALL BAND-AID SOLUTIONS

When it comes to procrastinating, one of the most common traps people fall into is to do some other activity that make them feel as though they're being productive. When you have important work waiting, you can easily rationalize that the fridge just had to be cleaned. But the bottom line is that, even if the fridge desperately needed cleaning, doing any other task when the important work is waiting is procrastinating.

A highly effective band-aid solution, elegant in its simplicity, is to stop yourself from becoming engaged in some other task by sitting at your desk (or the computer or the drawing table) and doing absolutely nothing. Don't talk, read, straighten things, exercise facial muscles or play with your hair - just sit still and do nothing until you find the motivation to begin working on the task. By making your procrastination painfully evident, you'll be much more likely to get down to work than if you camouflage it by doing something else.