

7 Ways to Kick the Binge Writing Habit



1. Plan writing projects strategically: Analyze the writing task for newness, difficulty level, audience, resources, and other factors that will help you do quality work, both responsibly and efficiently. Make checklists to gauge progress in critical areas (audience, sources, and personal goals). **Source**: Howard, R.M. (2010). *Writing Matters: A Handbook for Writing and Research*
2. Develop a daily writing habit: Outline a writing project, then write daily or regularly, even if it's a freewrite or brain dump of 15-30 minutes; revise later. If you write on task/outline daily, you can dramatically boost output and improve quality via a phenomenon known as incubation. **Source**: Boice, R. (1990). *Professors as Writers*
3. Pace yourself on long projects: Draft for no more than a couple of hours. Quit writing while you're still engaged in your topic. Vary your writing tasks/demands. Write at the peak of brain power, then, spend the rest of the writing day researching, reading, revising, building and checking your reference list (i.e., doing less cognitively demanding work). **Source**: Silvia, P. (2007). *How to Write a Lot*
4. Read for the conversation: Read between the lines to put the author's argument in accurate context with what others are saying, or background events. Then add your take on it. **Source**: Graff, G. & Birkenstein, C. (2010). *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*
5. Adopt an Ethical Summary Protocol (ESP): When writing from source work, turn your process into a protocol, so that you read, write, and reference more systematically. If you do, you will remember more, write faster, and can quit worrying about plagiarism or detection services like Turnitin.com. **Source**: Greer, J.L., & Austin, J.S. (2011). *Mentoring Authorship* (conference presentation). Atlanta, GA: Teaching Professor
6. Take "citable notes"; Create an Annotated Bib: Document your reading with a system of short note-taking and an annotated bibliography (which includes your writing, hence, is different from a software reference manager). **Source**: Single, P.B. (2010). *Demystifying the Dissertation*
7. Manage Moments of Anxiety: They are normal and they pass. Clarity will come. To speed its arrival, continually summarize and organize your research question and rationale and talk it through with others. **Source**: Booth, W.C., Colomb, G.G., Williams, J.M. (2008). *The Craft of Research*