Advice to avoid procrastination

STUDENT HEALTH CENTRE, LUND UNIVERSITY
Why do we procrastinate?

• Procrastination is when we postpone things even though we know it will have negative consequences in the long term.

• Everyone procrastinates more or less, but for some people it becomes an obstacle to studying.

• Procrastination is not a trait we are born with, but a learned behaviour whereby we react to unpleasant feelings (stress, weariness, anxiety, etc.) by avoiding them. This usually happens automatically in the very moment we sit down with our books. Some people have a personality which makes them more susceptible to procrastinating behaviour.

• We start to procrastinate because at some point in the past, it worked – in upper secondary school, we could perhaps get away with cramming the night before a test.

• Procrastination means that we prioritise short-term advantages over long-term benefits.

• The risk of falling into procrastinating behaviour is greater as a new student, when we have not yet managed to get into a routine. There is no longer anyone checking whether we have done what we are supposed to do; we have to become our own managers.
Tips to stop procrastinating

• Learn to recognise the excuses you use in the moment you start procrastinating ("I am too tired", "I can’t study when I’m not in the right mood", "I work better under pressure" etc.).

• Learn to withstand the unpleasant feelings – it is possible to study even when you are not motivated.

• Structure your everyday life. Plan when you will study and when you will have free time. You can use a weekly planner for this.

• Plan short study periods and clear breaks.

• Make a reasonable study plan. If you plan too much work, the unpleasantness will be greater, increasing the risk of falling back into procrastination.

• Set clear intermediary goals and reasonable deadlines.

• Study with a friend. If you have agreed to meet a friend at the library, it is much more likely that you will actually go there.

• Reward yourself.

• If you need help with planning your studies or improving your study strategies, you can get guidance from the Academic Support Centre at the University. The Academic Support Centre can provide you with methods for more effective learning and good writing habits. Read more on www.lunduniversity.lu.se/academic-support. If procrastination is a recurrent concern, you are welcome to contact the Student Health Centre for advice.
Contact information:

Address:
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Student Health Centre
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www.lunduniversity.lu.se/student-health