

## Worry About It Later: Strategies to Finish What You Start

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### (Mind) Tricks

#### *"It's Not Really [X]"*

Tell yourself you're not working on the "real" project, that this is just for practice, or that it's in a genre that you love and know well but it's not really your primary genre. Lower the stakes for yourself.

#### *"I'll Make It Better Later"*

Get through by getting through. Allow the draft to be as messy and ugly as it needs to be.

#### *"I'll Fool Them All!"*

Just tell yourself that, even if you won't get all of it right, you'll get enough of it right to fool people into thinking you did it.

#### *"I'll only write 100 words."*

Tell yourself you're only going to write 100 words. You'll usually end up writing more than that, and even if you don't you could conceivably finish a project by writing 100 words a day.

#### *Trust The Process*

Remember that people do actually finish their projects. If you sit and do the work, day after day, month after done, you'll eventually get to the end. You really will.

#### *Dare To Suck*

Write "date to suck" on top of your document in bold, or on a post-it note somewhere by your desk where you can see it. Remind yourself that you can't take any real risks if you don't dare to suck.

### (Actual) Tips

#### *Log*

Log your daily production.

#### *"The Whole Piece In A Few Pages"*

It's not an outline--or it's not quite an outline, but it's *like* an outline. Write down a short version of the long thing you're working on.



*The Whole Piece in Two Post-Its:*

### *Use Scrivener's Note and Comment Functions*

Scrivener is a word processor specifically designed for writers. It has a lot of great features, one of them being that it has a note function that appears in the sidebar. This is especially useful for when you want to make changes to a sentence or a scene but aren't ready to labor over editing.

### *Work in Layers*

#### *Handwrite!*

Write your first draft by hand

#### *Outline*

#### *"Passes"*

You don't have to get everything right all at once. When writing, and when revising, focus on one specific goal you have and concentrate on that.

#### *Write the End*

Take a moment to write a provisional end. It doesn't have to be good, and it doesn't have to be an end that will stick around--it's just there to give you something to write toward.

#### *Pomodoro!*

Get a timer, write for 20 minutes, give yourself a 5 minute break, then do it again.

#### *Finding Windows*

All writers have ideal writing times. For many of us, it's either evening or morning. Of course, all writers also have less than ideal lives, so one additional thing we need is to figure out how to write in the interstices--set short goals, short writing assignments.