

22 Power Routines That Will Boost Your Productivity

Setting a daily routine creates structure, helps us reach our goals and reduces procrastination.



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The real power in routines is the way they can help us build momentum, break bad habits, **prioritize** our lives and make us more efficient. If that doesn't make you more productive, then I don't know what will. How do you decide what routines you can and will incorporate into your life? Try out a few of these suggestions to determine which ones you will make a permanent part of your calendar. Here are 25 powerful routines that will supercharge your productivity.

1. Wake up when it's right for you.

Personally, I have to wake up early. But I also know successful people who get up later. If you're a night owl, then trying to wake up early means you're going against your body's natural rhythm.

Instead of forcing yourself to wake up at 5 AM, pay attention to your specific [circadian rhythm](#). It sounds simple, but your body will let you know when it's time to sleep, wake, eat, and even exercise. It also clues you in when your most productive hours are. Knowing this, you'll be able to consistently get enough sleep and plan your days around your energy levels.

2. Stay away from your phone when you first wake-up.

We all make make this mistake. You open your eyes first thing in the morning and instinctively grab our phones. According to [brain performance expert Jim Kwik](#), you shouldn't look at your phone for the first hour of the day.

The main reason is that your brain is highly suggestible during this time. As a result, this trains our minds to become distracted because of the release of dopamine we get from our electronic devices. Your productivity also takes a hit for the rest of the day because we want to keep experiencing those good feelings. So, instead of getting to work, we stay glued to our phones.

There's another downside to viewing your phone first thing in the AM. You're kicking off your day with either negative news or stress from handling work-related messages. That's not the best way to begin your day. The better option is to start the day on a more positive note.

Do you use your phone as an alarm? Then either purchase an old school alarm clock or older-type kitchen timer. Learn this fast rule: discipline yourself only to turn off your phone's alarm when it goes off and nothing else.

3. Eat breakfast.

No surprise here. You need fuel to give you the energy to power through the day. Of course, you shouldn't devour a doughnut and wash it down with a sugary drink. Think healthier options like eggs, berries, avocados, green smoothies and a boring cup of coffee. On top of the energy you'll receive, these types of foods are good for your brain by improving your concentration and memory.

4. Get your body moving.

Remember, physical activity doesn't just improve your overall health is so important. Any manner of exercise will help you destress and clear your head. If you exercise when you first wake-up, even before eating breakfast, you can overcome your grogginess.

5. Meditation and stillness.

As I've gotten older, I've struggled with anxiety. If you've ever dealt with this, then you know it can sometimes be almost impossible to be present. It can also make falling asleep a chore or start your day with dread.

Meditating hasn't wholly erased my anxiety. But it has made an enormous difference. It has helped calm me down and return my focus to what's going on right now. Best of all? You can meditate whenever and wherever you like, whether if that's right before bed, first thing when you wake, or when taking a break at work.

6. Make your bed.

I think my mom would love this entry, even though I don't believe that I was a messy kid growing up. Anyway, making your bed is a great way to begin your day productively.

“If you make your bed every morning, you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride, and it will encourage you to do another task, and another, and another. And by the end of the day, that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed.”

So much better than scrolling through your social media feeds, right?

7. Recite affirmations.

“When you actively design and write out your affirmations to be in alignment with what you want to accomplish and who you need to be to accomplish it—and commit to repeating them daily (ideally out loud)—they immediately make an impression on your subconscious mind. Your affirmations go to work to transform the way you think and feel so you can overcome your limiting beliefs and behaviors and replace them with those you need to succeed.”

Simple affirmations like “Today will be the best day” can make all the difference in the world. They help you focus on what you want to achieve. These affirmations release ['positive thought' neurons.](#)”

8. Read.

Except for taking care of your health, reading is the best thing you can do for yourself. It helps you develop new ideas and perspectives. It helps reduce stress, expands your knowledge, and improves brain function such as memory, focus, and concentration.

I know what you're thinking: "When do I have time to read?" Well, if you didn't look at the phone first thing when you wake-up, you could read for ten minutes or so. You could also read before hitting the hay at night. Always have a book with you, and another downloaded to your phone or tablet (always have both options available). You can then read during your commute or when sitting in a waiting room.

9. Schedule your time.

Even the "greatest of slackers," Jeff "The Dude" Lebowski, had an idea of how he was going to spend his time. For sure, Lebowski knew how he would spend his time — even if it were sipping on a White Russian, listening to some Creedence, or bowling with Walter and Donny. At the same time, no one else knew exactly what he did. While that worked for El Duderino, that's not exactly the type of lifestyle most of us want to live.

If you don't schedule your time, then you're going to wander aimlessly. Sure. You know that certain things need to get done. But, which ones are your priorities? When exactly are you going to cross them off your to-do-list? Are there deadlines that you must adhere to? Creating a schedule helps you answer these questions and plan accordingly.

10. Pare down your decisions.

We all have a limited amount of brainpower. If you spend too much energy making low-level decisions, then you'll experience decision fatigue. You won't be as productive when you're mentally drained.

Despite your personal feelings towards him today, this was why Mark Zuckerberg wore the same outfit every day. Barack Obama was also known for wearing only gray or blue suits and didn't fret over what he ate for breakfast so that he could focus on more important decisions.

I suggest that every night, you layout your wardrobe and prep your meals for tomorrow. Or, you could do this for the entire week on a Sunday. The idea here is to reserve your energy and willpower for what truly matters.

11. Dress for success.

Speaking of your attire, make sure that you [dress for success](#). Studies have shown that when you'll feel more self-confident, but let's forget how *you* feel. Others feel more confident about you. Furthermore, dressing to impress makes a great first impression and portrays a form of authority.

Do you have to dress formally every day? Not always. But you'll want to wear something other than sweatpants and a t-shirt.

11. Put pen to paper.

There's a routine called [Morning Pages](#) practiced by people ranging from journalist Oliver Burkeman and entrepreneur Tim Ferriss. Author Julia Cameron developed the concept in her 1992 book *The Artist's Way*. The idea is that when you first wake, write 750 words to clear your head. It can also help you clarify how you want to spend your day. And [science](#) has also found that handwriting can spark creativity and help us learn.

12. Eat that damn frog -- or at least the tadpoles.

I'm sure that you've heard this advice before. But, if not, eating a frog isn't literal. It represents your most essential or dreaded task for the day. With that in mind, you should work on this when you're most alert and energetic, which is usually a couple of hours after waking. As an added perk, it will then give you a feeling of accomplishment that you can use to plow through the rest of your work for the day.

However, eating a frog can be daunting. So, instead, tackle some tadpoles to build up momentum. For example, you could clean out your inbox, write a proposal, or organize your workspace.

13. Focus on yourself.

With so much going on in your life, it's easy to neglect your own self-care and priorities. Over time, you'll get burned out. No matter how amazing of a person you are, everyone needs time to rest, play, and learn. If you don't put yourself in your schedule, then it will get filled with other time requests.

14. Practice gratitude.

One of the simplest ways to shift your mindset into a more positive direction is to practice gratitude daily. It's been found that those who spend five minutes writing down what they're grateful for have [increased their sense of well-being by 10 percent](#). And, as you know, when you're a better mood, you're more productive.

15. Socialize with your teammates.

Secure [social connections](#) have the power to increase happiness, engagement, and a healthier lifestyle. While I wouldn't recommend that you roam around your workplace talking to others, definitely carve out time in your day to socialize.

If you work remotely, try working in a coworking space or catching up with a friend or colleague for lunch. And, worst-case scenario, schedule a conference call with your team.

16. Set hard time limits on certain activities.

I'm late to the party here. But, I recently finished reading Stephen King's *Doctor Sleep*. I got so enthralled with it towards the end then I ended up spending an hour each day reading it because I couldn't put it down. While you should definitely read, I don't know if you should always spend a lengthy amount of time on just one activity.

Set time limits on most activities. For me, I should have read for only 30 minutes, for example, and used the other half-hour on something else like meditating or journaling.

17. Organize your workspace.

I can't stand clutter. I find it distracting. And, whenever I need something, I can't locate it quickly. That's why I tidy up my workspace every day before I "clock out."

That doesn't mean that you need to have a workspace so nice and neat the Mr. Clean would be proud. It's just that tidying up and organizing your area prevents your mind from drifting to those pile of papers stacked on your desk.

18. Leave work at work.

I'll be honest. I think about work a lot, even when I'm relaxing for the day or taking a vacation. But, I also don't bring work home with me. When it's family time, or I'm hanging out with friends, I focus on that. I don't respond to work-related messages. And, if I'm stressed out about my business, I never take that out on others.

19. Check in with a coach or mentor.

A great way to kickstart your day is to connect with someone whom you respect and don't want to disappoint. If you share your goals with them, you'll be more likely to follow through with them since you don't want to let them down. They may even help you clarify your goals and priorities.

20. Reflect on the day's achievements.

Ben Franklin asked himself every morning, "What good shall I do this day?" And he ended the day by asking, "What good have I done today?" This line of thinking encourages you to have a productive and meaningful day. It also gives you the chance to recognize and celebrate your accomplishments.

21. Disengage.

As part of his sleep ritual, Joel Gascoigne, the founder and CEO at Buffer does something that helps him disengage entirely from work. For Joel, that's going on a 20-minute walk every night right before bed.

"This is a wind-down period, and allows me to evaluate the day's work, think about the greater challenges, gradually stop thinking about work and reach a state of tiredness," he wrote on [Buffer's Open Blog](#). The key is not to engage afterward. That means no more electronics for the night or reading a book related to your work.

22. Get plenty of sleep.

Don't fool yourself here. Some people may boast that they only get four or five hours of sleep per night. That may seem like they're super productive. Eventually, however, that lack of sleep will catch up to them. Not only will they be exhausted and burned out, but they'll also start making mistakes as well.

In short, [a lack of sleep will destroy your productivity](#). With that in mind, make sure that you maintain a consistent sleep-wake cycle, reduce your exposure to blue light, optimize your bedroom and create a soothing bedtime ritual.