Pomodoro Technique Summary Notes

The process underlying the Pomodoro technique consists of five stages:

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| **What** | **When** | **Why** |
| Planning | At the start of the day | To decide on the day’s activities |
| Tracking | Throughout the day | To gather raw data on the effort expended and other metrics of interest |
| Recording | At the end of the day | To compile an archive of daily observations |
| Processing | At the end of the day | To transform raw data into information |
| Visualising | At the end of the day | To present the information in a format that facilitates understanding and clarifies paths to improvement |

# What is a pomodoro?

The traditional pomodoro is 30 minutes long: 25 minutes of work plus a 5-minute break. You can experiment with timings, but generally people come back to this!

1. A Pomodoro consists of 25 minutes, plus a 5-minute break.
   1. A pomodoro is an atomic unit of time and cannot be divided. **An interrupted pomodoro is an invalid pomodoro.**
   2. If the pomodoro begins, it must ring!
2. After every four pomodoros is a 15–30-minute break.
3. If tired, make sets shorter (e.g. 2-3 pomodoros) and breaks longer.
   1. If having to consistently do this, take some time off!

# Getting started

Begin your day by choosing tasks from the Activity Inventory Sheet – not exceeding the number of total available pomodoros for a single day – by **writing the tasks in priority order on the To Do Today sheet**. For tasks where exploration is key, employ **time-boxing** as a strategy. **Break down tasks lasting more than 5-7 pomodoros and combine those lasting less than one.**

Set your pomodoro and start working – if the task is completed during a pomodoro, continue reviewing until it ends. Take a 3-5 minute break when the pomodoro rings. After four pomodoros take a longer break (15-30 minutes).

Continue working pomodoro after pomodoro until the task is done, then mark it off on the to-do list.

# Cut down on interruptions

To minimise interruptions, distinguish between internal and external disruptions. For **internal interruptions**, marking them with an apostrophe and list them in the urgent and unplanned section on the To Do Today sheet, but otherwise stay focused on the current pomodoro. Process these items at the end of the pomodoro/day by moving them to the inventory sheet, addressing them during breaks, or deleting them.

**External interruptions** can be managed using the *Inform, Negotiate, Call Back* Strategy. Mark these with a dash and follow the strategy to reschedule them based on urgency.

# Objective 5: Set up a timetable.

Timetables are key for motivation, and clearly delineating separation between work and free time (non-goal-oriented activities) – **make the limits hard and respect them!** Follow the To Do list diligently, within the given timeframe. If the activities remain unfinished, try to understand what went wrong!

**Relaxation and leisure are key.** Without it, creativity, interest, and curiosity are lost. Avoid the trap of timetable protracts (working late because you haven’t achieved as much as you wanted), fatigue increasing, productivity drops 🡪 timetable protracts. If necessary, consider temporary overtime, but limit it to five days, followed by a recovery period.