

# ATOMIC HABITS

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You don't need to break all bad habits in your life at once to have a big impact. Rather, break small habits which, when repeated over and over, will lead to big results.

## How to Break Bad Habits

### 1. Make your cues invisible

We all have cues that trigger certain habits. The buzz of your phone, for example, is a cue to check your messages. If you find yourself wasting a lot of time on social media or on your phone then move your phone away while you are working or put it on silent.

### 2. Make your bad habits unappealing

Focus on the benefits of avoiding your bad habits to make them seem unattractive.

"Habits are attractive when we associate them with positive feelings and unattractive when we associate them with negative feelings. Create a motivation ritual by doing something you enjoy immediately before a difficult habit."

### 3. Make the bad habit as difficult as possible

#### Focus on increasing friction

For example, if you don't want to waste time on your phone then don't keep it nearby while you are working or simply turn it off. Doing so will introduce enough friction to ensure you only use it when you need to.

#### Use the two-minute rule

You can use the two-minute rule to make refraining from something seem manageable. For example, if you are trying to diet and have a craving for chocolate, do something you enjoy for two minutes. The chances are your craving will be over after two minutes if you don't act on it immediately.

#### Use a commitment device

This is a choice you make in the present that locks in better behavior in the future. For example, if you want to save money then you enroll in an automatic savings plan.

"Using technology to automate your habits is the most reliable and effective way to guarantee the right behavior."

#### **4. Make your habit unsatisfying**

The most important rule for behavioral change is to make bad habits unsatisfying. This can be difficult since bad habits often have immediate satisfaction such as the enjoyment from eating chocolate even if they are unsatisfying in the long run.

##### **Attach some immediate satisfaction to avoiding a bad habit**

For example, each day that you don't do your bad habit, put a dollar (or however much you decide on) into a savings account. You will now get some short term satisfaction each time you put money into your account. This will keep you on track until you reach your long term goals.

##### **Use a habit contract**

A habit contract is a good framework to keep your habits on track since it imposes negative consequences if you fail to do so.