



Teddy Mitrosilis

@TMitrosilis

Multitasking kills our productivity.

But we waste 40% of our day doing it.

Here are 7 simple ways to stop task switching (and start focusing):

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According to studies, the average person spends 40% of their day multitasking.

This destroys productivity (despite what you may think).

I've been task switching a lot lately, and I wanted to learn how to stop it.

Here are 7 strategies that have helped:

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1. Get good sleep

The science is staggering.

Lack of sleep:

- impairs judgment
- hurts concentration
- makes it hard to focus
- hinders our logical reasoning
- limits our capacity for complex thought

And that's just the start of it.

There's more.

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Sleep scientists have found lack of sleep:

- reduces alertness
- increases confusion
- makes learning difficult

So yeah, not good.

Task switching, by definition, is a lack of focus.

If we want to improve our ability to focus, the first thing we can do is sleep.

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2. Make a plan

Adults make 35,000 decisions per day.

And yet, many refuse to plan.

Planning provides a roadmap and gives our brain permission to focus.

"Winging it" is task switching by nature.

So, plan the day.

It doesn't need to be rigid.

Any plan is better than none.

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3. Schedule your anchors

James Clear has a concept called anchor tasks.

This is the one priority that defines your day.

I call these my OBGs (One Big Goal).

Whatever you call it, schedule them.

Here's my simple process:

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Each Sunday, I open my calendar.

I schedule time for my OBG each day.

During that block of time, I put my phone on Do Not Disturb and get started.

I'd gotten lazy with schedule (it unsurprisingly didn't work well!).

Recommitting to it has worked wonders.

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4. Put your phone away

This sounds obvious, and it is.

Yet how many of us do it?

When my phone is in sight, the urge to task switch is strong.

When it's out of sight, my brain settles into a focused state.

Best case, put your phone in another room.

Worst case, use DND mode.

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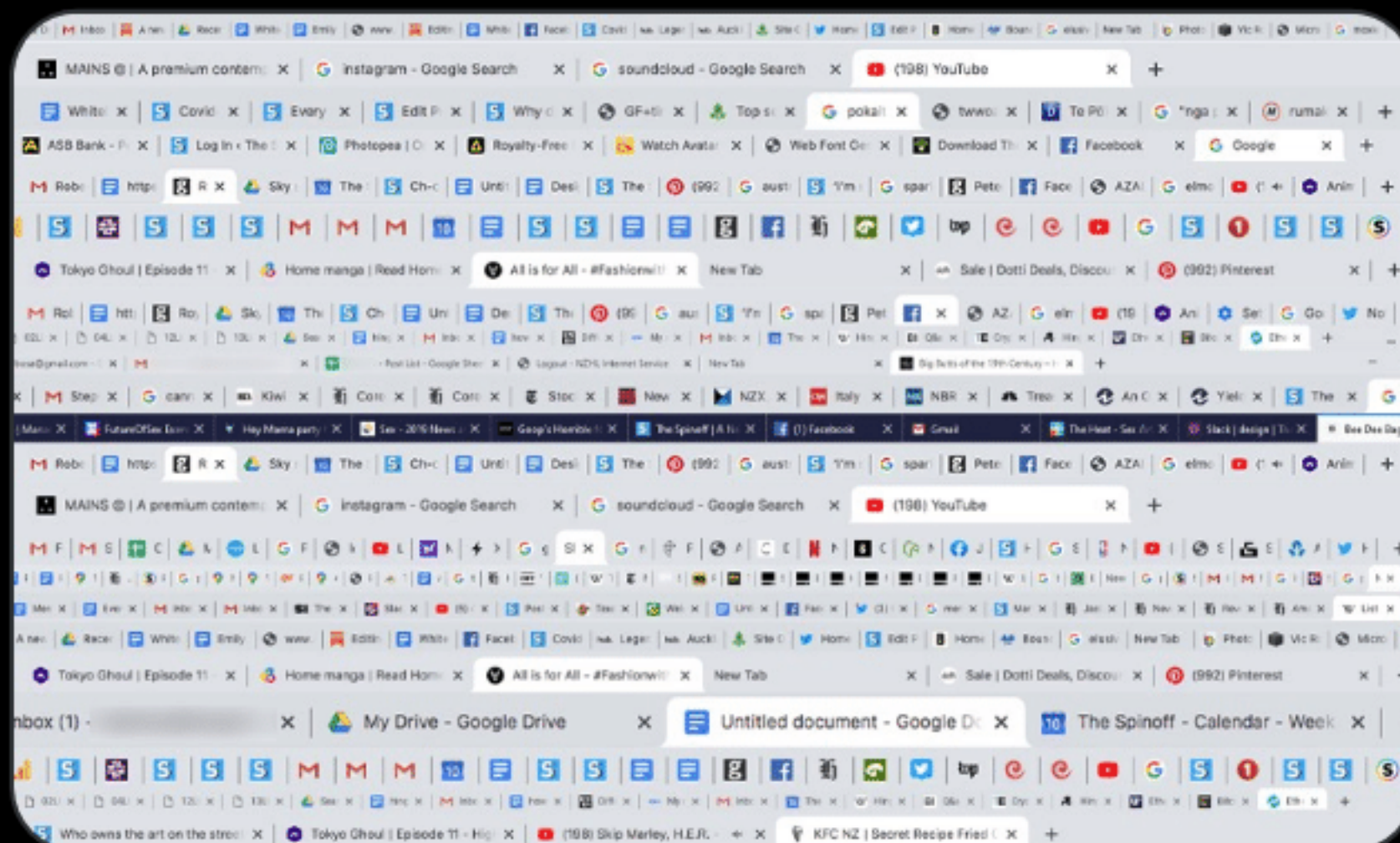
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5. Only one browser open

Be honest:

How many of your browsers
look like this?

I'm guessing more than who
care to admit it!



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This is subconscious task switching.

You may think you're focusing on one thing, but your brain processes the other 19 tabs every time you gaze over them.

It's cognitive death by 1,000 distractions.

Here's my approach now:

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I have a rule: only one browser allowed.

That browser must be in full-screen mode.

No other browsers open.

No red Slack notifications at the bottom of my screen.

100% of my screen dedicated to what I'm working on.

It's been life-changing.

That + DND form an attention moat.

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6. Work in sprints

You can brute force your brain into focusing.

Or you can gently guide it into focusing.

Work sprints is the gentle guide approach.

Here's my simple way of doing it:

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Currently, 45 minutes of focused work is about my limit.

So I work 45 minutes on, then 10 off.

This has been more effective than forcing my brain to focus longer than it wants to.

Knowing I'll switch tasks soon helps my brain settle in and focus.

Find your ideal sprint time.

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7. Ruthlessly prioritize and eliminate

Ultimately, the best strategy to reduce task switching is to reduce your number of tasks.

Ruthlessly eliminate things that are not a priority.

Find ways to delay or delegate if you can.

Less is absolutely “more” in this context.

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7 ways to reduce task switching:

- Get good sleep
- Make a plan
- Schedule your anchors
- Put your phone away
- Work in sprints
- Only one browser open
- Ruthlessly prioritize + eliminate

These ideas may sound simple
(they are).

Simple things, done
consistently, work.

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