Track Deep Work Time with RescueTime

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Let me ask you a question and I want you to be honest.

[LIVEVIDEO]
Do you FEEL like you are always BUSY, but at the end of the day you didn't achieve much YET you are still exhausted?

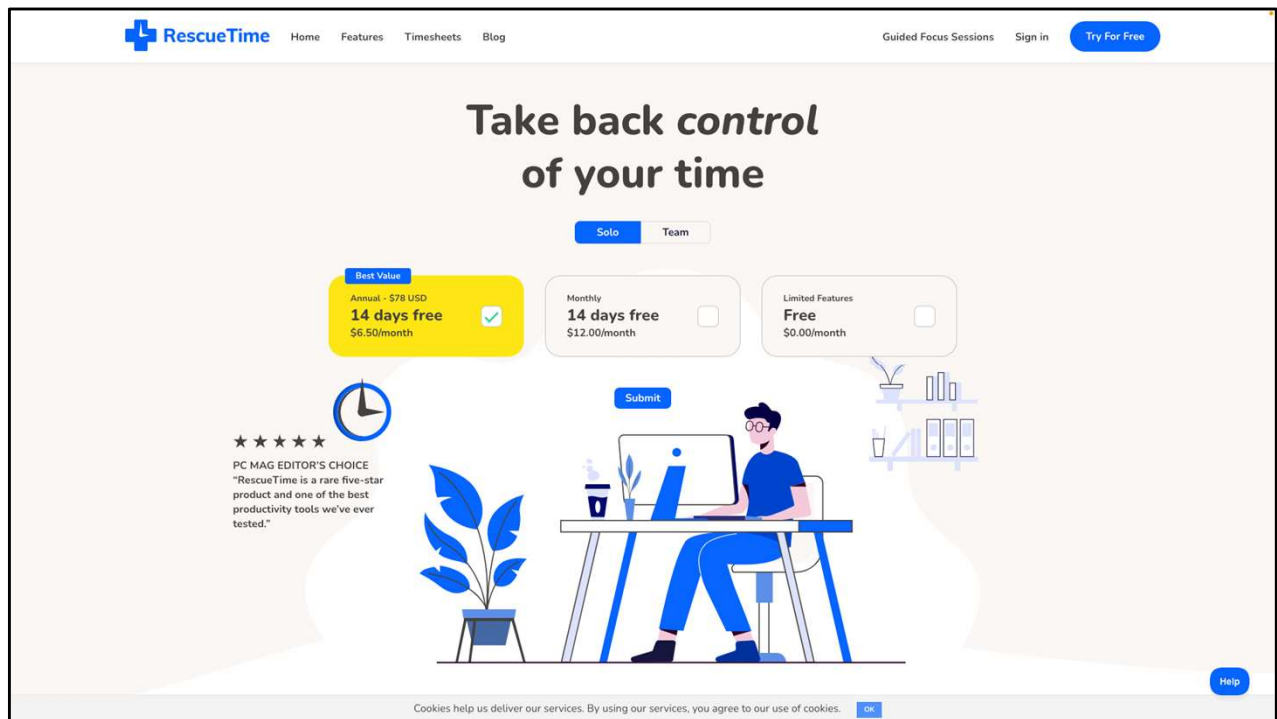This is the "busy but not productive" trap.

Deep Work

Long, focused work on important tasks

(that are often pushed aside)

That's because the real progress comes from deep work. Those high-impact tasks that need uninterrupted focus.
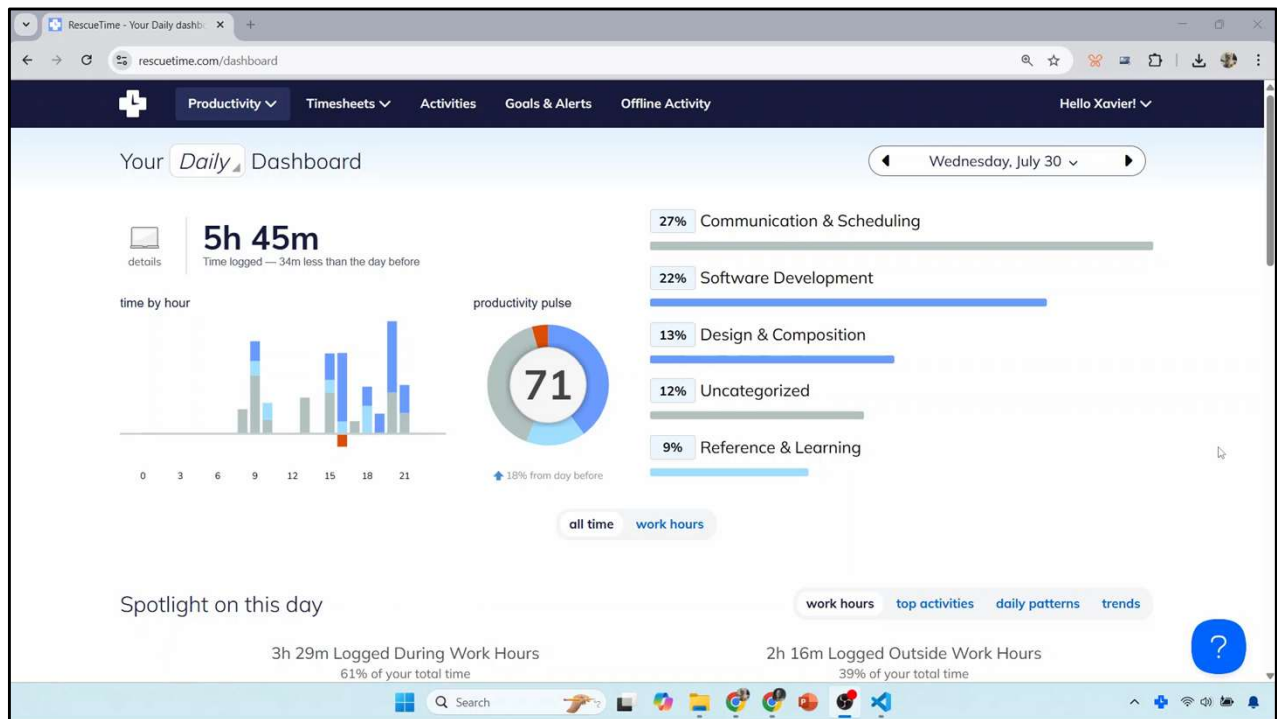
[LIVEVIDEO]
Unfortunately, deep work often gets sidelined by urgent shallow tasks and distractions.

How do you FIX this?

Meet RescueTime, which is a web-based app that runs in the background...

... and automatically tracks and logs how YOU spend your time in the computer, categorizes it, and provides insights to help you work smarter.

[LIVEVIDEO]
I want to be ruthlessly focused on how to track your deep work, thus I am going to assume you already have an account, Rescuetime is installed in your computer, and it is currently logging your activity.

m1d-01--daily-goal--export
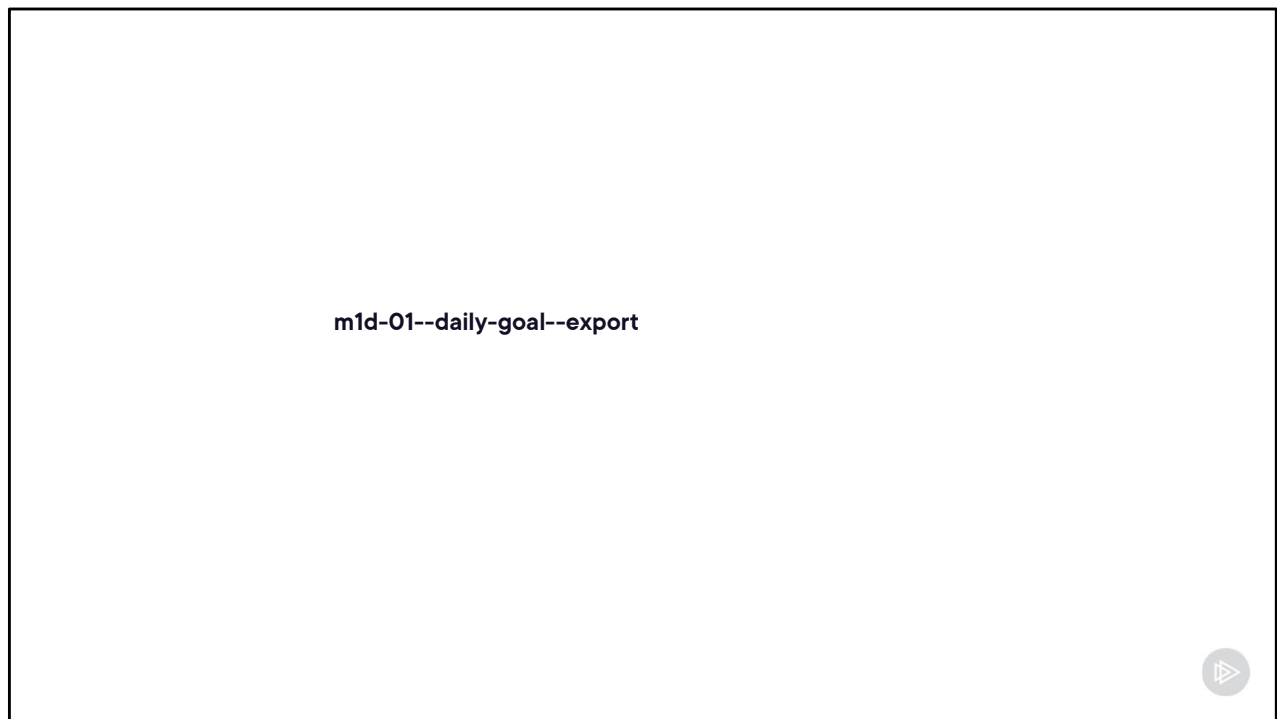
[ANIMATIC-VIDEO:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YkejCxj3jlf1_SHTSn6swMROXyUCZnLV/view?usp=drive_link]

This is my personal daily dashboard, which has all information for a particular day, categorized. There are a few configuration changes that you may need to make, but let's set that aside and go straight to the point.

To make sure I work on the most important tasks... that's deep work, I need to set a specific goal. Let's say that for example my objective is to spend at least 4 hours per day on software development... because there's a project I need to complete.

So I open rescuetime and click on View in Focus Work, which opens the goals page... where set 4 as the number of hours, per day, that I should spend on... and here is the key.. I specify the category and even, if needed, sub category. In my case, only software development category. Optionally, a description that reminds me why this goal is important and when ready, I click on create goal.

[LIVEVIDEO]
My goal is ready... this is the key metric that I care the most, at this time. This is MY deep

work. I can create other goals as needed.

m1d-02--categorize-activities--exports.mp4

[ANIMATIC-VIDEO: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Gx-yeZy7itZ96ZCSovyNMBc6-mr07LQV/view?usp=drive_link]

Next up, let's make sure that my activities are categorized properly, be it that deep work activities are classified as such as well as avoiding classifying a distracting task as productive.

I click on activities and look at my current activities, The first column are those that belong to focus work, other work, neutral and finally personal or distracting.

I click on any activity that is not classified properly and change the category accordingly. I can also switch from one column to another and after a while I am going to have my activities properly categorized.

[LIVEVIDEO]
This is key, as having the right categories ensures that my data is correct and I am focusing on the right tasks.

Next up, the productivity pulse which tells me how productive I am being. It is a number from 0 to 100.

m1d-03--dashboard-productivity-category--exports.mp4

[ANIMATIC-VIDEO:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ra9aq_x8bqsIboW9l3O2bNxRWcGsbDN2/view?usp=drive
_link]

Once I have enough data, I can start browsing through my days to see my productivity pulse, which lately has not been too high.

[LIVEVIDEO]
That's my problem. I working a lot, but not on the right tasks.

[DEMO]
I can also switch to week view, and understand where my time has been going… and at the bottom I can see my goals and my lifetime milestones. Do you see this number over here… over 19 thousand hours logged.

[LIVEVIDEO]
Yes, I've been using rescuetime for many years. Now that you have goals, your activities properly categorized, and know where to get your productivity pulse to see how much focus work you are doing, it is time to talk about the elephant in the room…. Distractions.

What am I doing… that I shouldn't be doing?

m1d.03--distractions--exports.mp4
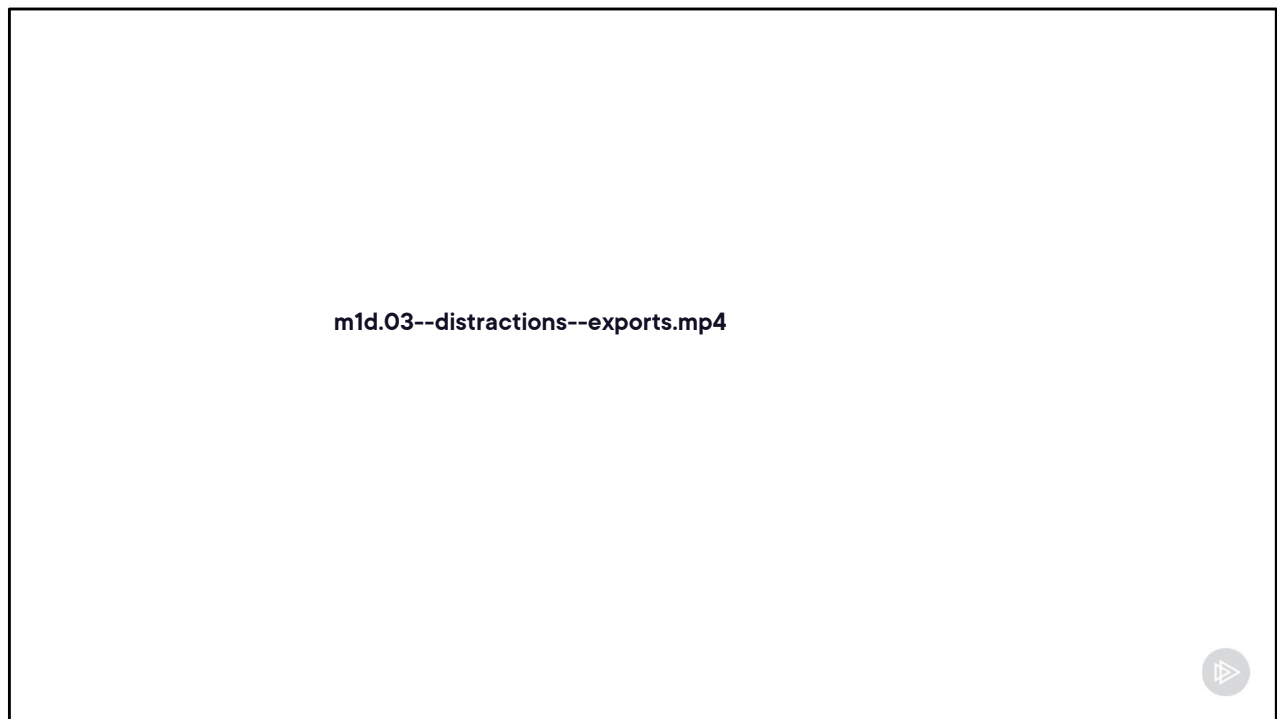
[ANIMATIC-VIDEO: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vVVytJPFCdcb7mZq__9Jvk7UWWvi4-ve/view?usp=drive_link]

One way is to go to reports… apps and websites… oh… there it is. I am spending a considerable amount of time in whatsapp… some of it may be work related, but for sure it is distracting.

I can also check within categories… I can see that instant messaging amounts to a lot of time…

[LIVEVIDEO]
time that I could instead be focusing on deep work. Let me now show you timeline view and some other interesting insights.

m1d-04--timeline-view
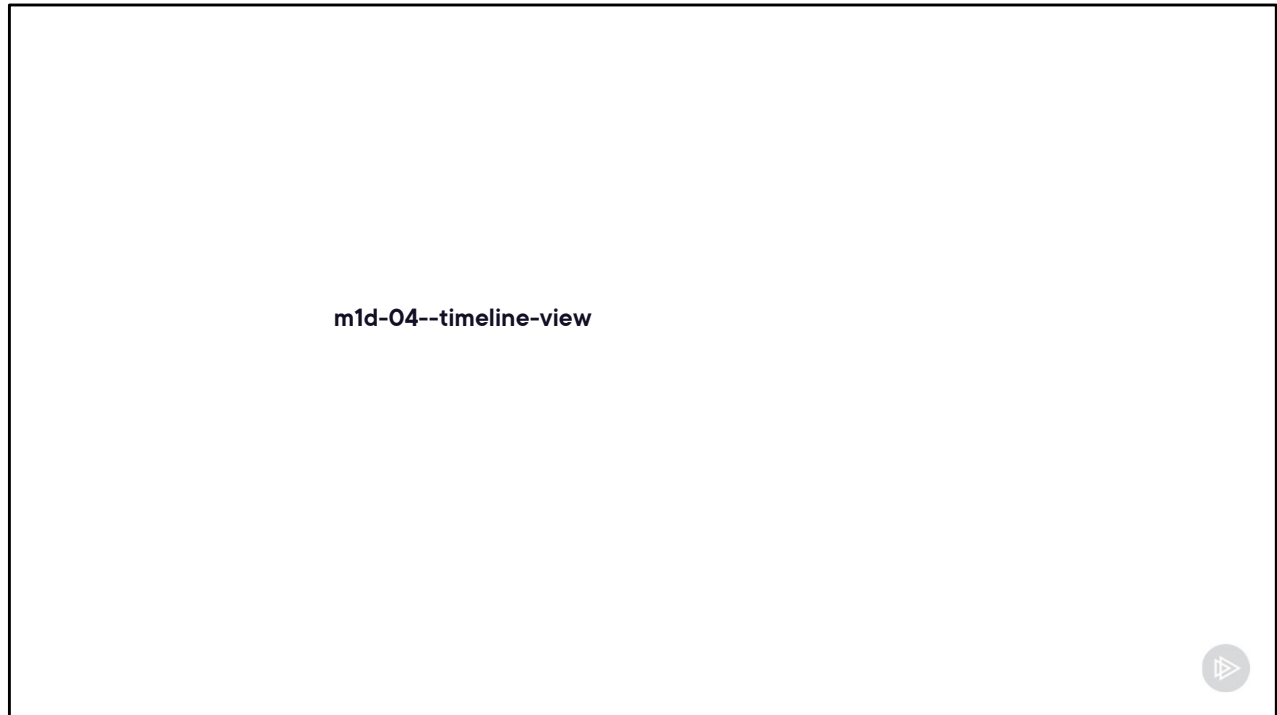
[ANIMATIC-VIDEO:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tznhbiKT9RwZftDixpdWQFXDi6oIUX_G/view?usp=drive_link]

If I want to understand further HOW I work, I can click on "time of day" which gives me summary of what I am working on, during the day. My goal right now is to get software development to show up as the top category, during focused times, for which I can block my calendar, and see how I learn to focus more and more every day.

[LIVEVIDEO]
However, let me tell you something. Some people are able to focus like a sniper. But some of us need a bit of help.

That's where rescuetime shines and comes to save the day.

m1d.05--start-focus.mp4
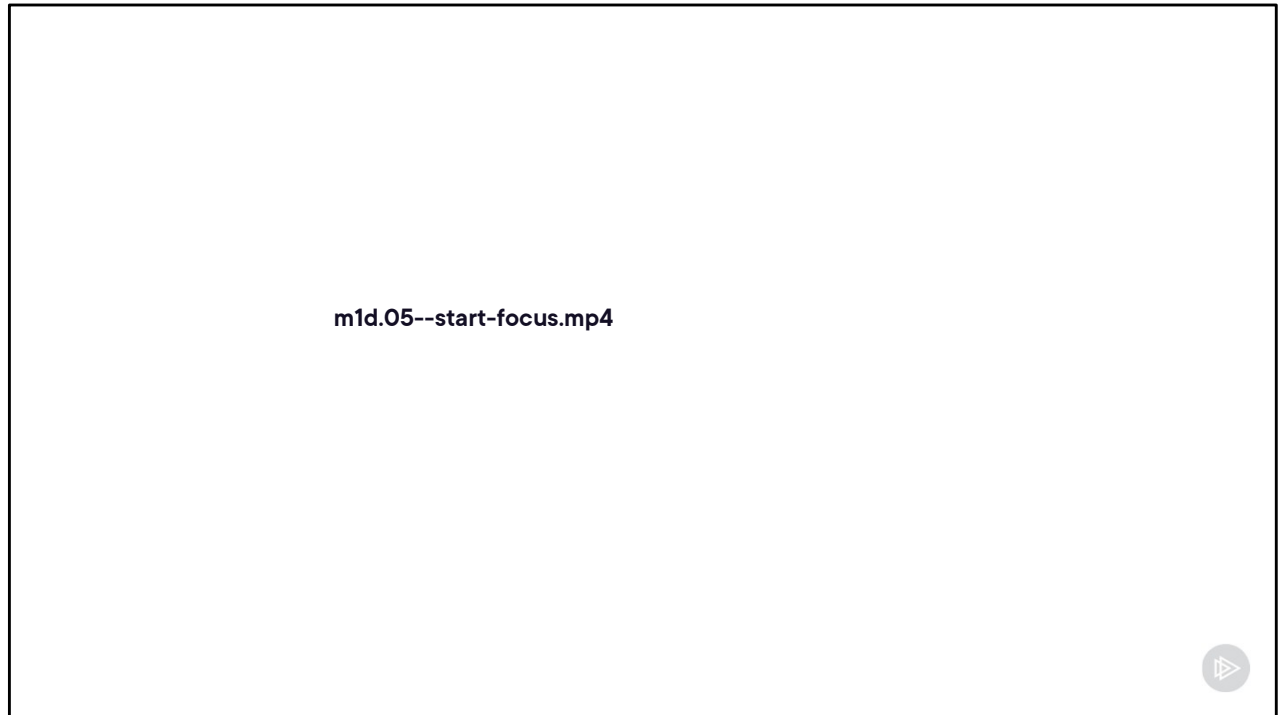
[ANIMATIC-VIDEO:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1n8a5m8GfVktPElJlfUBllqanFGkSE3yi/view?usp=drive_link]

If you need some help focusing, simply start a focus session, in this case I'll specify that I want to block distractions for 25 minutes. I begin the session, and a timer starts.

Now, whenever I try to do an activity that is categorized as distracting… like chatting on whatsapp… rescuetime is going to block it, so that I can focus on deep work… in this case, software development.

[LIVEVIDEO]
And that's it.

"What you learn is yours for life."

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I am Xavier Morera… and remember, what you learn, is yours for life.