

# Do it now | Christin Smith Myers

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Does this happen to you? You remember something you need do. You think to yourself, "I should do it now" but immediately replace the thought with, "I'll do it tomorrow." You think, "I should write that down" but immediately replace the thought with, "No, I'll remember." And then tomorrow comes and you forget that thing you needed to do until the very end of the day,. And then you beat yourself up when you remember. And then you do it. Or write it down.

Yeah, it happens to me too. I've forgotten to call someone several days in a row. I've left the house without a book I needed for work or without the lunch I left on the counter. I've gotten home from Target only to realize I forgot the one thing I needed most. I've left forms unsigned and letters unmailed. I've forgotten to ask the client one of the questions I needed to ask.

In the moment we think about doing something, and choose to delay, we are choosing momentary pleasure (not having to pause the movie, not having to go downstairs, not having to bother someone else). But that pleasure is short-lived, because inevitably a few hours or a few days later, we're beating ourselves up for the choice, and what might have been a simple task now takes on a heavier weight. In hindsight, you realize if you had just done it the very first time you thought of it, you could have spared yourself a lot of frustration, and the task would have been completed.

I've gotten better about this over the years, but continued frustration with this type of experience is exactly why I added "Do it now" to my list of [Personal Commandments](#). (Really, I should have called it "Don't trust your brain" but a "do" is more positive than a "don't.") It's not always practical or efficient to do things immediately when you think of them, but what this mantra really means to me is to do something now. Take an action before you lose the idea. Here are some ways to do this:

- Keep a pen and paper nearby at all times. I have a pen and scrap paper in the door pocket of my car, in my purse, and in my nightstand drawer. I've gotten into the habit suggested in [Getting Things Done](#) of assigning one piece of paper to each thought, so each thought gets it own space and can be addressed accordingly.
- Use the reminder or clock app on your phone to schedule alarms/reminders for certain items. I This has worked really well for me to remind myself at the right place and time to stop for milk and gas (we get both at Wawa), to discuss something with my husband after work, to follow up with a friend or client about something on a certain date.
- Create a cue. I sit at the same seat for dinner each night, so if there's something I need to fill out I leave it at my spot so I know I'll see it. I have folders I use when I pay bills on [the same 2 days each month](#); even if something is not a bill, if I don't have to do it right now, but I need to make sure I remember to do it, I put it in the folder that I'm guaranteed to open on a certain date.
- Start it. You may not be able to complete a whole task, but if you take the first step, you [set yourself up for success](#) and increase your likelihood of finishing it.

When your brain is not filled with "shoulds" and "have tos" it has more room to be creative and also to be at peace. The next time you think about a task you need to do, do it now or do something now.

