

7 **Ultraproductive** habits I wish I'd built at 20 (backed by science)



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Dr. Christian Poensgen

1. 5 mins to timebox 3 daily goals

Productivity isn't about squeezing in more things. It's about doing the right things.

Without goals, you'll be lost. So, write down your 3 most important goals for the day each morning.

Then, timebox your day to pursue them (h/t to Nir Eyal, pictured).

2. 90 mins of deep focus

That amount of daily deep work doubles your productivity, McKinsey found.

Time it when motivation and focus peak. That's about 30 mins, 3 hrs, or 11 hrs after waking.

For 75% of us, that's in the morning. If you're a night owl, do it later in the day.

3. 90 mins of breaks

That's exactly what the 10% most productive people do, DeskTime research found.

It's two 15-min breaks and a 1-hour lunch break. You got this.

Pro tip: include some deep rest (see #4).

4. 26 mins of deep rest

According to NASA, this is the ideal power nap length. You'll beat the afternoon slump and get 2 days in 1.

Not a napper? Do "non-sleep deep rest" (NSDR) instead. It's the Google CEO's favorite.

Alternatively, close your eyes and drop the pass-fail with "non-focus deep rest" (NFDR).

5. 5 mins to call it a day

“We could fill any arbitrary number of hours with what feels to be productive work”,

writes Cal Newport. Yet, that’s a recipe for burnout.

Instead, try Newport’s “shutdown ritual”. It’s a game-changer.

6. 90 mins of daily screen time

Do Intermittent Digital Fasting (IDF) to cut your screen time in half (or more).

Put your phone in another room 1 hr before you sleep. Then let it sleep in for 1 hr after you get up.

With IDF, you'll get down to 90 mins of screen time and improve leisure time dramatically.

7. 90 mins of deep sleep per night

Mere quantity (like 8 hours of shallow sleep) won't cut it. You also need quality.

So, get 90 mins of deep sleep. It boosts productivity by 150% and is vital for your resilience.

Start with our 10-10-10 rule:

- 10 mins of sunlight before 10 am
- No bright, blue light after 10 pm

TL;DR:

1. 5 mins to timebox 3 daily goals
2. 90 mins of deep focus
3. 90 mins of breaks
4. 26 mins of deep rest
5. 5 mins to call it a day
6. 90 mins of daily screen time
7. 90 mins of deep sleep per night

That's it!

Curious to learn more?

Next week, I'll start sharing deep dives into the 7 Ultraproductive habits.

Follow me if you don't want to miss out. And repost this to help others, too.

P.S.

Want to set and crush your
biggest goals in 2026?

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Becoming Ultraproductive



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