

# Tips for Dealing with Writer's Block

## Graduate Writing Center

gwrc.ucr.edu

### Things to keep in mind:

- **Don't be married to results.**
  - Remember, brilliance has no deadline. Just sit back and enjoy the sound of your fingers on the keyboard. If you DO have a deadline, be easy on yourself and accept the fact that not every sentence you write will be genius. Just work on getting a rough draft on paper.
- **Don't compare yourself to other writers.**
  - You may have classmates who can write several pages of pure brilliance in an hour or two. The same task may take you one or two days. That's okay. You know your strengths and weaknesses. Focus on what you do well.
- **Find creative ways to get support.**
  - Some writers work better under pressure—if this is true for you, find ways to create “artificial” pressure. Working with a writing partner or a writing group may help, as might emailing your advisor firm deadlines by which you will send her a copy of your draft for review. There are also many great online articles and fora that can help.

### Things you can do to help you get started:

- **Read previous papers you have written well.**
  - Re-reading your own work will remind you what you are capable of! Make sure to focus on feedback that highlights what you did well, and look for patterns in your work.
- **Read literature related to your topic.**
  - For many people, reading what other people have to say about their topic allows them to think about their own work from a new perspective.
- **Create an outline for your paper.**
  - Draft a thesis sentence for every paragraph of your paper. This can be time consuming, but once finished, you will have an easy to follow working outline for your paper. From here, you can choose to work paragraph by paragraph or in larger chunks.

### Things you can do once you have started writing:

- **Save transition sentences until the end.**
  - Transition sentences (or phrases) help create flow between paragraphs. They can be difficult to write before you've written the body of the paper. Don't spend too much time focusing on these until the body is complete.
- **Take a break from writing.**
  - Leave your computer alone! Go take a walk, indulge in some retail therapy, get a massage, etc. Giving your writing time to breathe gives you much needed rest and can also help you become a better reader when you return to your work. You will be more likely to notice things you did not see before.
- **Talk to others about your writing.**
  - Simply talking to others about your topic may help you develop new ideas and/or understand different perspectives.
- **Have someone else look at your work.**
  - Ask someone to read your writing. They will likely see something you missed.
  - Don't feel comfortable asking someone you know to read your work? Contact the Graduate Writing Center!

### **Resources:**

[Tada! Finally Finished](#)  
[The Creative Pen](#)