Divide and Conquer

To make progress on large and daunting tasks, you'll want to break them down into smaller pieces. This might seem obvious, but there are many ways to go about doing it! Two primary techniques are to divide by **task** or by **time**. The purpose of dividing things into smaller components is to turn the progress you're making into something **external** and **trackable.** *Working to complete manageable goals makes it easier to celebrate the progress you've made and push forward to finish your work.*

Dividing by Task

When dividing by task, look for some of the natural ways that the task at hand can be broken down. For reading that might look like dividing by paragraph or by page. For practice questions, it might look like dividing by each individual question or by question set. For brainstorming it might look like filling up a page with notes. *Any project can be divided into smaller pieces.* Then, once you have an idea about your segments, make a plan to complete a certain number or reach a percentage of the overall project. **Keep track of what you've done and what you've yet to do.** *This division is especially great if you like to use checklists to organize and plan your work.*

Dividing by Time

To divide by time, instead of thinking about the component parts of an assignment, split your day into chunks of time. Even though the passage of time is established and regular, how you use it is customizable! Think about whether you want to divide by 5 minutes, by 30 minutes, by an hour, by 5 hours… Whatever makes the most sense to you. **Then set timers and/or alarms to track the time.** Set yourself a goal to work for x number of minutes, or to work until x o'clock. Using timers often makes the passage of time feel more urgent and direct, whereas setting alarms is more impersonal. Think about the pros and cons and how they relate to your own working style.

Knowing you have an achievable goal in mind will help make focusing to reach it easier. And always keep in mind, your modes of separation do not always have to be the same; *what project you're working on, the way you're currently feeling, and the place you're at all impact what division will work for you in the moment.*

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