

Deep Work

Deep work is focused work with no distractions that pushes your mind to its limit. It creates real value and is hard to copy. It is getting rarer just as it gets more valuable.

PICK YOUR STYLE

M Monastic
Cut almost all shallow work. For people with one clear goal.

B Bimodal
Long fully deep periods; open the rest of the time. Jung's tower.

R Rhythmic
Same hours every day. Mark an X, don't break the chain.

J Journalistic
Go deep whenever a gap appears. Takes practice.

WHY IT MATTERS

Switching tasks leaves **attention residue**: part of your mind stays on the last thing. Each glance at the inbox costs focus. And capacity is limited: about an hour a day of intense focus for a beginner, up to around four for experts.

DEEP WORK

Full concentration, no distractions.

Creates new value and improves your skill.

Hard for anyone else to copy.

SHALLOW WORK

Email, messages, quick meetings, admin.

Little thought, often done distracted.

Easy for almost anyone to do.

THE FOUR RULES

1. Work deeply: rituals, not willpower.
2. Embrace boredom.
3. Choose tools like a craftsman.
4. Drain the shallows.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

- 1 **Sort your week.** On the Deep Work Planner, list your tasks and mark each one deep or shallow.
- 2 **Choose a style.** Pick the style that fits your job and write when your deep blocks will happen.
- 3 **Set the ritual.** Decide where, how long, the rules (no internet, phone away) and what you need within reach.
- 4 **Keep score.** Log your deep hours each day against one or two important goals.
- 5 **Shut down.** End every workday with the Shutdown Checklist and say: shutdown complete.

Based on the ideas in Deep Work by Cal Newport. Independent summary of the book's key ideas, in our own words. Not affiliated with the author or publisher.

The Deep Work Planner

Plan the week before it starts. Protect the deep blocks first, then fit the shallow work around them.

WEEK OF _____ MY STYLE _____

1 · MY ONE OR TWO MOST IMPORTANT GOALS

1 _____

2 _____

DAY	DEEP BLOCK <i>from - to</i>	WHAT I'LL WORK ON	HOURS DONE
Mon			
Tue			
Wed			
Thu			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

2 · MY RITUAL *where · how long · rules (no internet? phone away?) · what I need within reach*

3 · SHALLOW WORK TO BATCH OR CUT *how long would it take to train a smart new graduate to do this? If not long, it's shallow*

Shutdown and Boredom

Two habits that protect tomorrow's focus: a clean end to the workday, and a set time for distraction instead of a set time for focus.

SHUTDOWN CHECKLIST *every workday, in this order*

- ☐ Checked email and messages one last time
- ☐ Reviewed today's tasks
- ☐ Looked at the next days on my calendar
- ☐ Wrote a plan for anything unfinished
- ☐ Said: shutdown complete

INTERNET BLOCKS *decide in advance when you'll go online; stay off the rest of the time*

DAY	ONLINE FROM - TO	STAYED OFF OUTSIDE IT? <i>yes / no</i>	WHERE I WAS TEMPTED

PRODUCTIVE MEDITATION *one hard problem to think about on a walk, drive or shower; bring your mind back when it drifts*

Problem

What I figured out

Next step

TOOL CHECK, CRAFTSMAN STYLE *keep a tool only if its good effects on what matters clearly outweigh the bad*

TOOL OR APP	WHAT IT HELPS	WHAT IT COSTS	KEEP / DROP

Pocket Cards

Cut along the dashed lines. Keep one in your wallet, one on your desk.

THE HYPOTHESIS Rare and valuable • Deep work is getting rarer • just as it gets more valuable. • Treat it as a skill. Day 12 ▶ Road MBA	BEFORE YOU START Ritual • Where, and for how long? • What are the rules? • Phone in another room. Day 12 ▶ Road MBA
FOUR STYLES M · B · R · J • Monastic · Bimodal • Rhythmic · Journalistic • Pick one, schedule it. Day 12 ▶ Road MBA	SWITCHING COSTS Attention residue • Part of you stays on the last task. • Every inbox glance costs focus. • Batch the shallow stuff. Day 12 ▶ Road MBA
TRAIN FOCUS Embrace boredom • Schedule your internet time. • Don't grab the phone when bored. • Think on walks. Day 12 ▶ Road MBA	END OF DAY Shutdown complete • Review tasks and calendar. • Plan anything unfinished. • Say it, and let go. Day 12 ▶ Road MBA

ONE LINE TO REMEMBER

Block deep time in advance, protect it with a ritual, and shut work down cleanly every day.

Road MBA · Day 12 toolkit. Based on the ideas in Deep Work by Cal Newport. Independent summary of the book's key ideas, in our own words. Not affiliated with the author or publisher.