

**Cal  
Newport**

**Deep Work**

**PDF & SUMMARY**



# Deep Work by Cal Newport

## Summary, Rules & Daily Routine Template

In this Deep work pdf, you'll learn how to submerge yourself into a Deep Work-focused routine. A habit that does not come naturally to many. Developing this skill will enable you to regain control over your time, to enhance productivity and focus.

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## Cal Newport Deep Work/ a short summary

Deep Work was written by Cal Newport, an MIT alumnus, and Georgetown University professor. Throughout Cal Newport's Book and this PDF, you'll often see two classifications - **Deep and Shallow**:

- **Deep Work** consists of professional duties carried out in a state of distraction-free concentration. These tasks are usually more comprehensive, extensive and should reflect one's top priorities.
- **Shallow Work** consists of non-cognitive, logistical chores that are frequently completed while distracted. These initiatives are easy to replicate and don't provide any new value to the world.

Cal's book denotes why focus time is so rare, and essential in today's distracted world. He argues that our attention is often so fragmented that we do very little sincere, Deep Work in a typical day.

Maybe more concerning is his notion that months or years of engagement in frequent Shallow Work have a long-term negative impact on our ability to focus and concentrate. Something he claims is difficult to restore.

Cal Newport flips the narrative in his book *Deep Work*. Rather than stating that distraction is bad, he extols the virtues of its polar opposite. The book is also divided into two. The first part argues that establishing a solid work ethic would benefit almost any profession. It will take effort to embrace Deep Work in one's daily routine and one's time toward Deep Work. However, doing so can convert one's day from a series of shallow tasks into a productive day, aimed to achieve one's highest priorities.

The second half of the book is packed with easy suggestions for shifting our focus towards Deep Work. These helpful hints include identifying and breaking poor habits and numerous routine suggestions and tactics.

Striving for more Deep Work in our life entails doing more of the things that matter to us while doing less of the ones that don't matter. Our days should be focused on "*getting useful things done*," not just "*getting things done*."

## 4 Deep Work rules to get you started

Cal outlines that Deep Work is a skill, and a difficult one to master. We've outlined four easy rules to help get you on track, quickly.

### **Rule #1 distractions ≠ interruptions**

Rather than allowing distractions to constantly interfere with your Deep Work time, Cal recommends allocating time for distractions during "*breaks*". You crave distraction as you're wired this way. Cal encourages one to rewire their brain by frequently compartmentilzing one's time into "Deep" and "Shallow" work. By doing this you're reprogram your mind to only engage with distractions during the allocated break time.

Identify a task that is high on your priority list, according to **Cal Newport's daily routine**. Calculate how much time you'd normally set aside for a similar obligation. Then set a tight deadline for yourself that substantially minimizes this time estimate. If at all possible, make the deadline public.

## **Rule #2 Work Deeply** 🧐

Focus time will not always be completely distraction-free. The desire to check emails and notifications is difficult to avoid and will cause you to lose focus on your priorities. Before dividing one's time, Newport suggests asking yourself these questions:

1. Consider where you'll work and for how long.
2. Consider how you'll approach work.
3. What are your desired outcomes and goals?

He also notes that your brain needs time to switch off. You must make time in your day to be free from work responsibilities, by separating work from life. During personal time, try not to think about work.

## **Rule #3 quit social media** 🚫

Social media is designed to be addictive and the time we spend on such apps and tools can often escape us.

According to **Deep Work by Cal Newport**, the more tempting tools you have vying for your attention, the more difficult it will be to stay focused on important tasks. To master the skill of Deep Work, you must reclaim control of your time and attention from these numerous distractions. Try checking social media in your allocated “break” time instead.

## **Rule #4 compartmentalize time** 🕒

Newport gives a detailed explanation of how his technique works. Split your workday into blocks of time and assign activities to each block. Clearly define your goals, and how your allocated tasks can help achieve these.

Things to consider is to differentiate between Deep and Shallow work, and to also schedule in breaks or “distraction” time. Each block of Deep Work should be thirty minutes or longer. Try to stick to this schedule, to “rewire” your brain towards greater focusing-adeptness.

# Deep Work tools, tactics & resources

All it takes is three to four hours of uninterrupted Deep Work every day to witness a revolutionary shift in productivity. Cal Newport recommends focusing on one initiative at a time. Also, be patient with yourself, change will not happen immediately. Newport details several useful, practical examples to help one descend into Deep Work, including:

## 1. Classify tasks as Deep or Shallow 🔍

- Determine a big-picture goal.
- Identify just two or three Deep Tasks that make the biggest difference in achieving this goal (see [Pareto's 80/20 principle](#)).
- For each tool or task that currently occupies time and effort, ask oneself, "*Is this tool or activity vital to the programs that enable me to make progress toward my intended outcomes?*". If the answer is no, then the tool or job should be terminated.

## 2. Structural changes quickly to foster Deep Work 🏠

How to quickly develop a habit? One tip is to surround yourself with triggers that encourage positive behaviors and minimize negative behaviors. Cal offers the following structural modifications:

1. Turn off all incoming call/message notifications.
2. Become difficult to find. For example, work in the far corner of the office or home.
3. Stop using social media, or allot specific time during the day for this.
4. Work in a calm and quiet environment.
5. Only attend essential meetings. For all other meetings, request it to be recorded ([via tl;dv for example](#)), and catch up on the meeting later.
6. Try to resist the urge to respond immediately to messages and emails. Instead, allocate time for this.
7. Use a Deep Work focused daily planner. We've included one below! 📅
8. Uninstall personal or distracting tools from one's work computer. Instead engage with these during one's personal time, on one's personal devices.

### **3. Record time spent in Deep vs. Shallow Work**

To change something, you must first measure it. Begin keeping a detailed record of how you spend your time each day. At the end of the day, look over this record to see how much time was spent on Deep vs. Shallow tasks. To get started, you can use our daily routine schedule below. 🙌

### **4. Set a firm schedule and stick to it** 🙌

- **Refocus our day on our leisure time:** Even if we enjoy our work, keep in mind that money is a means to an end, not an end in itself.
- **Commit to a specific end time for your day:** Make commitments to our children, sign up for a yoga class, schedule a date with a friend, have food delivered to our home.
- **Schedule even the most minor of tasks:** Everything from checking emails, to replying to customer queries, to even keeping up with the latest industry news and articles should be scheduled. These tasks can easily take a lot of time, if not consciously monitored.
- **Make a backward plan:** Parkinson's Law states that the amount of time we have to complete a task is the time it will take to complete that task. We can begin combating [Parkinson's law](#) by allocated time according to our goals, and not the other way around.
- **Say no to last-minute work and commitments that aren't related to the task at hand:** Question whether each incoming request will support your daily goals or not. If not, then schedule it accordingly.

## **Deep Work daily schedule template/sheet**

Deep Work by Cal Newport says that the only foolproof method of tracking and planning your daily routine is to use a printable or online schedule. This helps one to be conscious about how you allocate your time and define goals. Feel free to use our schedule below, or duplicate this [Google Sheet](#).

Time	Deep or Shallow Work	Desired goals
08:00		
09:00		
10:00		
11:00		
12:00		
13:00		
14:00		
15:00		
16:00		
17:00		
18:00		
19:00		

## Final thoughts on Deep Work by Cal Newport

There is a lot to unpack regarding Cal Newport's Deep Work philosophy. Focusing on these four simple rules can help make the transition more seamless. If you're looking for some additional resources to help you make the transition, here are some of our faves:

- Download or purchase Cal Newport's book from sites such as [Amazon](#), [Flipkart](#), and [Shopclues](#).
- Deep Work rules for focused success in a distracted world podcast via [Calnewport.com](#), [Spotify](#), and [Apple Podcasts](#).