

Preparation



The purpose of the 'Preparation' stage is:

1. to **mentally transition** from the 'Recovery' to the 'Focus' stage;
2. to be **intentional** about the day, usually by identifying true priorities,
3. to make **good habits easier** to do

Without a preparation stage the next stage, Focus, becomes more difficult and distraction much more likely.

Ways to build Preparation into your routine

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Take a 10-minute walk (ideally 30-minutes) outside within 90 minutes of waking up.

WHY

This routine should have a serious payoff! Firstly, you will expose yourself to natural daylight, which is vital for setting your body clock and stimulating cortisol, which in turn helps with attention and focus. Second the walk provides thinking time, to help you mentally transition into work and identify key priorities. Finally, some exercise and movement early in the day will help oxygenate the brain and lift your mood.

Create a short preparation ritual to begin each day (10 mins)

Consider a routine where you avoid diving straight into work. Instead cultivate a ritual where you start the day on your terms – for example taking your coffee away from your desk whilst thinking through the day should give you a far greater sense of calm and control than immediately reaching for your phone or emails.



Set intentions (5 mins)

Pause to consider each of the day's most important activities - the people you'll meet, the work you'll do. What really matters most in making them a success? Which aspects do you directly control?



Practice pausing before each block of work (2 mins)

"The secret to being productive is to work on the right thing - even if it's at a slow pace." Preparation – however brief - should be worked into each block of work to avoid wasting time on the wrong thing or by working hard without a clear objective. These pauses are a bit like mental punctuation, allowing you to make sense of things far more quickly.



Tools to help

[Try the daily high-performance routine checklist](#)