

Task Initiation Strategies Menu

A personalised reference menu of strategies for getting started — for brains that know what to do but struggle to begin.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Clinician: _____

***Purpose:** Task initiation — the ability to simply begin — is one of the most challenging executive function skills for ADHD and autistic brains. This menu collects strategies that actually work for your brain. Use it as a reference when you're stuck.*

WHAT TASK INITIATION LOOKS LIKE FOR ME

Tasks I struggle to start most often:

What "being stuck" feels like in my body:

The time of day I start tasks most easily:

MY STRATEGY MENU — Rate what works for you (✓ Works ■ Sometimes ✗ Doesn't work)

Environment strategies

- | | |
|---|-------|
| Change my physical location | ✓ ■ ✗ |
| Use body-doubling (work near someone) | ✓ ■ ✗ |
| Use virtual body-doubling (online co-working) | ✓ ■ ✗ |
| Clear my desk/workspace first | ✓ ■ ✗ |
| Play specific background music or sounds | ✓ ■ ✗ |

Time strategies

- | | |
|--|-------|
| Set a 5-minute timer just to start | ✓ ■ ✗ |
| Use the Pomodoro technique | ✓ ■ ✗ |
| Tell myself I only have to do it for 2 minutes | ✓ ■ ✗ |
| Schedule tasks at my peak energy time | ✓ ■ ✗ |
| Set an external deadline (even if artificial) | ✓ ■ ✗ |

Body-based strategies

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Movement or exercise before starting	✓ ■ X
Cold water on face/hands	✓ ■ X
Specific snack or drink before working	✓ ■ X
Change clothes or get dressed formally	✓ ■ X
Stimming or fidgeting while working	✓ ■ X

Mindset strategies

Break task into the single smallest possible step	✓ ■ X
Pair task with a reward afterward	✓ ■ X
Remind myself of my "why"	✓ ■ X
Ask for accountability from someone	✓ ■ X
Give myself permission to do it imperfectly	✓ ■ X

REFLECTION & INTEGRATION

My top 3 go-to initiation strategies:

A phrase or mantra I can tell myself when stuck:

What I will try this week when I notice I am avoiding a task:
