

When Your Brain Won't Start

ADHD isn't usually a lack of motivation. It's often a difficulty getting started, switching tasks, organizing steps, holding information in mind, or maintaining attention. Your brain may know exactly what you want to do while still feeling unable to begin. Reduce the barriers that keep your brain from getting started.

1. What happens when I try to start?

- ☐ I don't know where to begin.
- ☐ Everything feels equally important.
- ☐ The task feels too big.
- ☐ I keep switching tasks.
- ☐ I forget what I was doing.
- ☐ I get distracted.
- ☐ I wait until the last minute.
- ☐ I need pressure to begin.
- ☐ I lose track of time.
- ☐ Other:_____

2. What would make this easier to start?

Barrier	Possible support
I don't know the first step.	Make the first step ridiculously small.
Too many decisions.	Decide the first three steps now.
Too boring.	Add novelty or music.
Too overwhelming.	Break into 10-minute chunks.
I keep forgetting.	Use visual reminders or alarms.
I need accountability.	Body doubling or text someone.
I can't transition.	Set a 5-minute "starting" timer.

**These are executive function supports, not emotional interventions*

- ☐ Body doubling
- ☐ Timer
- ☐ Smaller step
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Reward
- ☐ Different location
- ☐ Accountability
- ☐ Remove distractions
- ☐ Written checklist
- ☐ Take a movement break first
- ☐ Other:_____

3. Can I get started for two minutes?