

ACE Quick Guide to the Pomodoro Technique

What is the Pomodoro Technique?

The Pomodoro Technique is a time management strategy that **breaks work into focused 25-minute sessions** – known as *pomodoros* – followed by short breaks. This approach helps make large or daunting tasks feel more manageable by dividing them into smaller, time-limited chunks (Birmingham City University, 2025).



Figure 1: The Pomodoro Technique (University of Pittsburgh, no date)

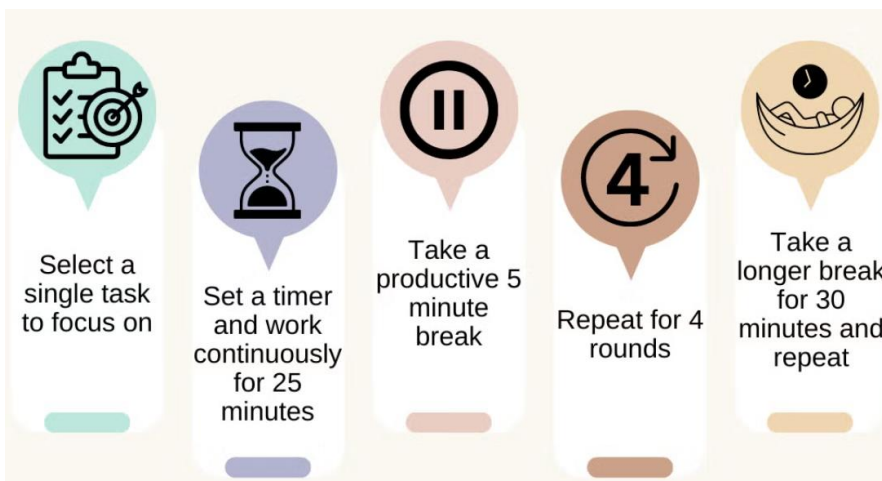
Benefits of the Pomodoro Technique

1	Improves focus and concentration, helping to reduce distractions during study time or training tasks.
2	Breaks work into manageable chunks, reducing overwhelm. This technique provides a clear and easy-to-follow structure, making tasks feel more approachable and feasible – preventing mental fatigue and burnout.
3	Reduces procrastination. The 25-minute timer creates a sense of urgency and structure!
4	Encourages regular breaks. The clear start and stop points reduce anxiety and decision fatigue.
5	Builds time awareness, teaching you how long tasks <i>really</i> take, thereby aiding future planning.
6	Supports neurodivergent learners and emotional regulation. This is useful for those with executive function challenges: you can pause without guilt, knowing you have earned the break.
7	Boosts motivation! Frequent progress markers can feel rewarding and increase momentum.

25-Minute Pomodoro Examples (for Smaller Tasks)

	Example 1	Example 2
Task Goal	"Draft one focused paragraph summarising and comparing two sources on digital transformation strategies in SMEs."	"Find and evaluate two peer-reviewed journal articles on the use of AI in enterprise data analytics."
Pomodoro Activity (25 minutes)	<p>Re-read highlighted sections from two chosen journal articles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarise key arguments in bullet points. Write a comparative paragraph in your own words. Add at least two citations (using the Harvard style). 	<p>Use Google Scholar to search for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Machine learning enterprise data analytics" Open four articles and scan the abstracts, choosing two that are recent (<5 years' old) and relevant to your assignment question. Write 2–3 bullet points per article on key findings and validity of arguments.
Break Activity Examples (5 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand up and stretch. Avoid screens or email — let your brain rest. Listen to music. Avoid switching to other "productive" work. 	

2-Hour Adaptation (for Larger Tasks)



The Pomodoro Technique can be tweaked to suit larger tasks by **repeating the steps** introduced above up to 4 times. After repeating the technique for 4 rounds, a longer break should be taken.

Figure 2: The Pomodoro Technique (University of Pittsburgh, no date)

2-Hour Pomodoro Example: Academic Research Session Plan

Pomodoro Activity 1 Clarify your research question and keywords (25 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review your assignment brief. • Identify the <i>specific</i> angle (e.g. "How AI improves enterprise decision-making"). • Generate 5–10 search keywords / phrases. • Open Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, or the University library page and run searches. • Bookmark promising titles.
Break activity (5 minutes)	
Pomodoro Activity 2 Scan and Select Sources (25 minutes)	Goal: Identify 2–3 high-quality, relevant sources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skim abstracts and introductions. • Check publication dates and academic credibility. • Choose the most relevant articles for your topic. • Save full citations in your reference manager.
Break activity (5 minutes)	
Pomodoro Activity 3 Deep Read /Notetaking (25 minutes)	Goal: Read and annotate one selected source in depth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight key points, arguments, and data. • Summarise key findings in your own words. • Note how this source supports or challenges your research position.
Break activity (5 minutes)	
Pomodoro Activity 4 Compare and Organise (25 minutes)	Goal: Start synthesising. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare key insights from 2–3 articles. • Create a simple table or mind map (e.g. method, findings, relevance). • Identify gaps, contradictions, or key themes for your assignment. • Write a short paragraph or bullet summary of what you have discovered so far.
Longer Break (30 minutes) Example: Go for a walk, snack, or chat with someone – recharge your brain / treat yourself!	

Pomodoro Technique: Dos and Don'ts

Dos	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set clear SMART goals for each Pomodoro session: e.g. "Write X words" or "Revise Y topic".• Take proper breaks: 5-minute breaks after each session, and a longer break after four sessions.• Remove distractions: e.g. silence notifications, close irrelevant tabs.• Use a timer: apps, phone alarms, or browser tools help keep you accountable.• Tailor the timing: adapt the 25/5 model to suit your concentration span (e.g. 40/10).• Combine with other methods: such as active recall or spaced repetition for study.• Communicate use with colleagues: if using the Pomodoro Technique during work tasks, make sure it fits your workflow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skip breaks – the rest is vital for productivity and memory.• Multitask during a Pomodoro – focus on one task only.• Overload each session – keep it realistic; avoid setting huge goals per Pomodoro.• Treat it rigidly – it is a tool, not a rule. Adapt it if needed.• Ignore how you feel – if you are tired or overwhelmed, rest properly instead of forcing through.• Use it for passive tasks only – aim for deep, meaningful work (not just checking emails).• Compare with others – your pace and concentration needs are unique.• Neglect collaboration – some tasks (e.g. group work) may need a more flexible approach.

ACE Tip:

Don't be afraid to ask for support! Whether it is your mentor, fellow apprentices, or ACE Team, there is a wealth of knowledge out there. If you are struggling with a task or concept, **asking for help can save you time and help reduce overwhelm.**

Reference List

Birmingham City University (2025) *The Pomodoro Technique for Focus*. Available at: <https://www.bcu.ac.uk/exams-and-revision/time-management-tips/pomodoro-technique> (Accessed: 30 July 2025).

University of Pittsburgh (no date) *Pomodoro Technique*. Available at: <https://www.asundergrad.pitt.edu/study-lab/study-skills-tools-resources/pomodoro-technique> (Accessed: 30 July 2025).

Additional Resources

1. [Nottingham University: Pomodoro Technique](#)
2. [Pomodoro Online Timer](#)
3. [The Busy Beck: Time Management for Apprentices, Undergraduates and Postgraduates](#)



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