

The Procrastination Pattern Decoder

A Self-Diagnostic Guide to Identify, Map, and Rewire Your Avoidance Blueprint

Step 1: Quick Self-Assessment Quiz

Circle the answers that feel most like you when you procrastinate:

1. When I avoid something important, I usually...
 - (A) Shut down and stare at the screen.
 - (B) Rewrite, polish, or “get ready” endlessly.
 - (C) Do 100 other things instead.
 - (D) Scroll, snack, or binge-watch to escape.
 - (E) Keep adding more to my plate so I don’t have to start the one thing.

2. When I think about the task, my body feels...
 - (A) Frozen — like I can’t move.

- (B) Tight — like if it's not perfect, I'll be judged.
- (C) Restless — I'll do anything except this.
- (D) Numb — I want to check out.
- (E) Exhausted — there's too much to handle.

3. The voice in my head says...

- (A) "I just can't."
- (B) "It has to be perfect."
- (C) "I'll get to it later, I just need to finish these other things first."
- (D) "I deserve a break, I'll do it tomorrow."
- (E) "This is overwhelming, I don't even know where to start."

👉 **Mostly A's** = The Freezer

👉 **Mostly B's** = The Perfectionist

👉 **Mostly C's** = The Over-Doer

👉 **Mostly D's** = The Distractor

👉 **Mostly E's** = The Avoider

Step 2: Nervous System Decoder Chart

Pattern	Nervous System Reflex	Hidden Belief / Survival Identity	What It Costs You
Freezer	Freeze response	“If I try, I’ll fail. Better not to move.”	Lost time, missed opportunities
Perfectionist	Fight (against self)	“If it’s not flawless, I’ll be rejected.”	Endless reworking, no finish line
Over-Doer	Flight (busywork)	“If I stay busy, I’ll stay safe.”	Burnout, avoiding priorities
Distractor	Flight (escape)	“Feeling this stress is unbearable. I need relief.”	Guilt, shame spiral
Avoider	Freeze + collapse	“This is too much, I can’t handle it.”	Paralysis, overwhelm

Step 3: Strategy Prescription

Match your pattern to a strategy that resets safety and restores action.

- **The Freezer's Strategy:** *Micro-Steps + Nervous System Grounding*
 - Pick the tiniest possible action (open the doc, write one sentence).
 - Pair it with a grounding exercise (deep breath, EFT tapping).
 - Celebrate the micro-win to build momentum.
- **The Perfectionist's Strategy:** *The "Good Enough Now" Rule*
 - Set a timer for 25 minutes and ship a draft — no edits until after.
 - Use a tapping round: "Even if it's not perfect, it's safe to finish."
 - Anchor into the truth: progress > perfection.
- **The Over-Doer's Strategy:** *Priority Triaging*
 - Write down all tasks. Circle the one that matters most.
 - Say out loud: "Doing less is how I succeed."
 - Schedule only the top 3 priorities per day.

- **The Distractor’s Strategy:** *Dopamine Reset*
 - Swap scrolling/snacking with a 3-minute embodied practice (walk, shake, stretch).
 - Use the Pomodoro rule: 25 minutes focused, then a break.
 - Tapping phrase: “Even when I want to escape, I can give myself safe relief.”

- **The Avoider’s Strategy:** *Chunk + Support*
 - Break the task into absurdly small chunks (“5-minute start”).
 - Ask for accountability — tell someone your step.
 - Pair every action with nervous system calming (breath, tapping, movement).

Step 4: Reflection & Action Plan

Journal Prompts:

1. Which procrastination pattern(s) show up most for me?
2. What nervous system signals do I notice when I'm in it (tight chest, racing mind, heavy body)?
3. What survival belief might this part of me be holding?
4. Which strategy above will help me shift into safe action?
5. What is the **one step** I will take in the next 48 hours?

Write your one-step action here: _____

Closing Reframe

Procrastination isn't random — it's patterned. When you can identify your procrastination type, you take the power back. Because once you know the **pattern + nervous system signal + strategy**, you can reset your system and act with safety.

That's not willpower. That's science, compassion, and strategy working together.