

# Deadlines

When a deadline is imposed upon me, I tend to undergo a process that involves willfully forgetting about it for as long as possible; a habit which has unmistakably followed me into Academia. It's not even as though I'm not passionate about my studies - frankly they're all I've got going for me at the moment - but for reasons I can't explain, I can never be the early bird. It always has to boil down to a stressful haze of trying to cram three weeks of work into three days of frantic typing.

But who could blame me? Life is full of distractions. We carry devices in our pockets which contain limitless information, streams of entertainment and screens to endlessly scroll. Technology is often scapegoated by people (myself included) to excuse procrastination. *'It's not my fault! It's the magic hypno-brick!'* The truth is, though, I would still procrastinate if all I had to distract me was a freshly painted wall.

I could argue that my tendency to avoid responsibility is due to some kind of subconscious awareness that I do my best work under pressure. And perhaps on some level, that argument isn't just a weak attempt at deflecting attention away from my chronic laziness. I think it's genuinely true that when you're in a tight spot, there is a tendency for the mind to go into 'no fuss' mode. Waffling certainly goes out the window with a ticking clock in your ear. I just wish I could trick my brain into engaging that level of focus a little earlier down the line. Plus, I'm not sure if this is even true. Is a half-baked essay which I spewed out while tripping on caffeine really the best I can do?

Functionally, I think deadlines serve an important purpose in the role of Academia. Without them, there wouldn't be a clear-cut boundary representing the transition from one aspect of a curriculum to the next. If we want to engage in a bit of Orwellian Doublespeak, we could even choose to refer to them as *milestones*. It would certainly take the curse off them if we were to view them merely as festivals of progression, which really, is all they are.