Instructions for using your Two-Minute Timer

Press **PLAY** button, or use shortcut key, **"S"**: Starts the countdown from 2 minutes to zero.

Press **PAUSE** button, or use shortcut key **"S"**: To pause the countdown. Press **PLAY** to resume countdown.

Press **STOP** button, or use shortcut key **"R"**: Stops the countdown and resets timer to 2 minutes.

Menu Options: Right-click anywhere on the timer to select one of these menu options.

On Top - Sets the countdown window above all windows.

Transparent - Allows you to see through the window. (This feature only works on Windows 2000 and Windows XP.)

Mute - Sets the timer to not make a sound when the two minutes is up.

Start/Pause - Toggles the countdown on/off.

Stop - Stops and resets the countdown.

Exit - Closes the timer.

One of the most powerful techniques for personal productivity is the Two-Minute Rule. It's also one of the simplest and easiest to implement. The Rule goes like this: if the next action on anything can be completed where you are in two minutes or less, do it right then, if you're ever going to do it at all. (If you're never going to do it, throw it away!)

The reasoning is the pure efficiency factor: if you can do it in two minutes, it would take longer to stack it, track it, and pick it up again than it would be to complete it in the moment.

This will not only ensure that a lot of real work gets accomplished in the process of cleaning up your in-basket (likely a third of your actions require less than two minutes), your backlog is kept to a minimum, and (best of all) it produces a good feeling of progress as all kinds of loops are closed and forward motion is facilitated in the course of your ordinary work all during the day.

The Two-Minute Rule will reduce the volume of reading and potentially junk mail you have around you, as many articles, e-mails, catalogs, and even magazines can be scanned for their value in that short time and filed, routed, deleted, or recycled. Often some of the most strategic issues you are dealing with will have a two-minute action: "Set meeting with XYZ about the acquisition possibility" – which, if you are at your computer, is often a simple and quick e-mail to send.

However, the biggest issue you may have in implementing the magic Two-Minute Rule is you probably don't know how long two minutes is! When your mind wraps around some idea or gets involved in some action, you will tend to lose track of time. Hence, a timer. I have found it very helpful to clock my short actions, especially those that involve reading, to instill a good sense of how long two minutes actually is, and what kinds of things I can and should be doing the moment they appear.

We've provided the Two-Minute Timer in digital form for your computer and in a timeless 1/30th-hourglass (of which you need two, in case you finish something before two minutes is up and you want to start timing something else!)

Please enjoy some great things to do in the six months of additional quality time in your life this rule and this tool will bring you! (No kidding – that's what many people have told us!)

Happy completions!

David

We would love to hear any feedback from your experience with this Two-Minute Timer. Through our seminars, coaching, educational materials, and practical gear, we are dedicated to providing the world's best personal productivity support. The full line of DavidAllen Gear is available at davidco.com.

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