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product builder. Run product/community for technology companies. About easy way to keep track of everything you read in one place! Note: This article is part of my toolbox [^] newsletter, a series in which I share resources about building things. Join :)As a product builder [^], I build microtools to solve my own problems. For example: article tools, portfolio tracking, SaaS tracker, habit tracker and personal finance tracking. I've always been an avid reader, and I love reading about startups, business and mindsets. I wanted to be able to track my reading list, notes and progress. Today I will share my steps on how to make your own book tracker. I also want to include a Notion template so you can duplicate a copy.1. The starting point is [^]Before this I used Goodreads to track my reading progress. I've also tracked my book notes on a separate Google Doc. But I wanted a solution that combines both.[^] To begin, I list down parts I want to buildTrack reading progressTake up reading notesSort reading list by categoryInclude a cover image for each book entryTrack number of times a book read by date[^]Access my Reading Tracker here2. Configure notion [^]Go to the show and sign up for a free account.[^] Getting StartedStart a new workspace in the NotionName document Book Reading TrackingFirst a database by selecting the Option GalleryNotion will create sample data in the gallery. You may want to delete the sample entries, including the Created and Tags property per card entries to start from scratch.3. Create a book entry [^]Fill the book titles in each of the Untitled areas. Click the + New button to add a new entry. For example:[^]A coma my Reading Tracker here4. Add a book image [^]Ne the next, add a book cover for each of these books. This will make the reading meter visually richer in each of these card screens.[^] Create an image propertyTo attach an image to the book entry, go to any short block, Right click on PropertySelect a property type > Files and mediaRegate to the property as Image.[^] Embed book imagelinkGoogle a book cover image, copy the image link of Image AddressRebreak it into Image using embed link optionClick Embed link.[^] Show book image via PropertiesBy default does not display the embedded book image in the gallery unless you customize it. To view book covers:Go to ... icon near the top right New iconSelect Properties from the drop-down listClick card preview and select ImageYou can also edit your card size with Small, Medium or Large5. Create book category [^]I love organizing my book list with relevant themes. It helps me identify a specific area of knowledge I have studied and which books to read on. In this case, I have used tagging.[^] Add a tag propertyClick + Add a property, right click on PropertySelect a property type > Multi-SelectGiable to property as Create category tagsGo to the Category field and start typing the Hit enter tab to save a code, create more If you wantYou can also change the color of the tagsYou can also enable category to appear on the gallery by using the Properties settings in step 3.6. Track read progress [^]I created a Progress Code property to track my reading progress. For example, 2019 means #07 means the sixth book of the year 2020. An entry containing 2 progress codes means that it has been read 2 times. You can also enable the progress code to appear in the gallery by using the Properties settings in step 3.[^]See my Reading Track here7. Reading date [^]Enking a Done date can improve searchability. For example, I can sort my braille display by year 2019, 2018 or 2017. You create a Date property to track this parameter:[^]Access my Reading Tracker here8. Filter and [^]A way to apply this book tracking is to apply the filter/sort in Notion. You can search for a specific book based on the parameters we have set: book titles, category, progress, finished date, etc.[^] Filter reading list by categoryLets filter a list of books related to the money category, go to ... icon near the top right New iconSelect Filter from the drop-down listSet: Category - Contains - Money.[^] Sort Reading List by categoryLett is remove the filter and try sorting the book list by book titles. Go to ... icon near the top right New iconSelect Sort from the drop-down listSet: Name - Descending9. Take reading notes [^]I take reading notes in the form of important lessons, frameworks, and inspiration. In this reading tracker, I can only enter my book notes in each book I track:[^]See my Reading Tracker here[1] Find me on personal website / Twitter / LinkedIn [^][2] In case you miss, I can send my upcoming toolkit to your inbox - Click here to join my newsletter [^][3] If you feel generous today, you can buy me a coffee [^]Join Hacker Noon Create your free account to unlock your custom reading experience. Last updated on July 10, 2020 Life is wasted in between times. The time between when the alarm first rings and when you finally decide to get out of bed. The time between when you sit at your desk and when productive work begins. The time between making a decision and doing something about it. Slowly, the day is whittled away from all unused in between moments. Finally, time wasters, laziness, and procrastination get the better of you. The solution to reclaim these lost moments is by creating rituals. Every culture on Earth uses rituals to transmit information and code behaviors that are considered important. Personal rituals can help you build a better pattern to deal with everything from how you wake up to how you work. Unfortunately, when most people see rituals, they see meaningless superstitions. In fact, many rituals are based on a primitive understanding of the world. But by building personal rituals, you get to encode the behavior you feel is important and cut out wasted mid-moment. Program your own algorithms Another way watch rituals on is to see them as computer computer An algorithm is a set of instructions that are repeated to get a result. Some algorithms are highly effective, sorting or searching millions of pieces of data in a few seconds. Other algorithms are bulky and difficult, taking hours to do the same task. By forming rituals, you build algorithms for your behavior. Take the delayed and painful pattern to wake up, discuss whether to sleep for another two minutes, press the snooze button, repeat until almost late at work. This can be reprogrammed to get out of bed immediately, without discussing your decision. How to form a ritual I have set up personal rituals for myself to handle emails, wake up every morning, write articles and read books. Far from making me inflexible, these rituals give me a useful standard pattern that works best 99% of the time. When my current ritual will not work, I am always free to stop using it. Forming a ritual is not too difficult, and the same principles of changing habits apply: Print your sequence of behaviors. I suggest you start with a single ritual of only 3-4 steps maximum. Wait until you have established a ritual before trying to add new steps. Commit to following your ritual for thirty days. This step will take the idea and condition it into the nervous system as a habit. Define a clear trigger. When does your ritual start? A ritual to wake up is simple – the sound of the alarm clock will work. As for what triggers you to go to the gym, read a book or reply to emails - you have to decide. Fine-tune the pattern. Your algorithm probably won't be completely effective the first time. Making some adjustments after the first 30-day trial can make the ritual more useful. Ways to use a ritual based on the above ideas, here are some ways you can implement your own rituals: 1. Wake up Set up a morning ritual for when you wake up and the next things you do immediately afterwards. To combat grogginess after immediately waking up, my solution is to do some pushups right after getting out of bed. After that, I sneak in ninety minutes of reading before getting ready for morning classes. 2. Web usage How often do you reply to email, watch Google Reader, or check Facebook every day? I found by taking all my daily internet needs and compressing them into one, very effective ritual, I was able to cut off 75% of my web time without losing any communication. 3. Read How much time do you get to read books? If your library isn't as large as you'd like, you may want to consider the rituals you use to read. Programming a few steps to trigger yourself to read instead of watching TV or during a break in the day can chew through dozens of books every year. 4. Kindness Rituals can also help with communication. Set up a ritual to start a conversation when you have opportunities to meet people. 5. Working One of the barriers when overcoming procrastination builds up a concentrated flow. Building these steps into a ritual can enable you to quickly start working or continue working after an interruption. 6. Go to the gym if exercise is a struggle, coding a ritual can remove much of the difficulty. Set up a quick ritual to go to training right after work or when you wake up. 7. Training Even in your workouts you can have rituals. Distance time between races or reps with a certain number of breaths can remove guesswork. Forming a ritual to do certain exercises in a certain order can save time. 8. Sleeping Form a soothing ritual in the last 30-60 minutes of the day before going to bed. This will help slow yourself down and make it much easier to fall asleep. Especially if you plan to get up full of energy in the morning, it will help if you remove insomnia. 8. Weekly reviews The weekly review is a big part of the GTD system. By creating a simple ritual checklist for my weekly review, I can make the most of this exercise in less time. Originally I made holistic reviews where I wrote my thoughts on the week and progress as a whole. Now I'm limiting my focus to specific plans, ideas, and measurements. Last thoughts We all want to be productive. But time waste, procrastination and laziness sometimes get better of us. If you are facing such difficulties, do not be afraid to make use of these rituals to help you conquer them. More tips for conquering time wasters and procrastinatingFeaturert photo credit: RODOLFO BARRETO via unsplash.com unsplash.com