

The Science of Self-Discipline

by Peter Hollins

A printable to-do list of the most effective habits from this book. Check one off each day you do it.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰¹ **Build habits, not willpower**

Pick one behavior you want to automate - exercise, reading, journaling. Reduce it to its 2-minute form. Repeat at the same time and place daily for 30 days. Once automatic, it costs near-zero willpower and you've permanently expanded your productive capacity without relying on motivation.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰² **Protect your willpower for what matters**

Audit your day for trivial decisions: what to eat, what to wear, what route to take, what to watch. Eliminate as many as possible through defaults and pre-decisions made once. Every micro-decision you automate is willpower preserved for the choices that actually shape your life.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰³ **Sleep 8 hours - not optional**

Treat sleep as your primary self-discipline intervention. Set a consistent bedtime alarm, not just a wake alarm. A single night of quality sleep produces more self-control than almost any willpower training technique. If you're failing at your goals, start here - not with more hustle.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰⁴ **Reduce decision load systematically**

This week: meal prep Sunday to eliminate 21 daily food decisions, choose your outfits for the week in advance, create a default morning routine with zero variation. Each system you install is a daily willpower deposit that compounds indefinitely. Design your environment before you need discipline.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰⁵ **Practice 'decision avoidance' for 1 week**

For 7 days, make as few trivial decisions as possible. Use defaults everywhere. At the end of each day, note your energy level and decision quality compared to your baseline. Let the data convince you that decision fatigue is real and worth engineering around - permanently.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

⁰⁶ **Train your self-control muscle incrementally**

Build the self-control muscle with micro-exercises: sit up straight for 30 minutes, use your non-dominant hand for one activity, resist one daily urge deliberately. These small acts train the same neural pathways as major discipline challenges - without depleting you - and compound over time into real structural willpower.