

THE CREATIVE HABIT:

HOW TO BE MORE CREATIVE

GETTING STARTED

- Sometimes the only way to start is... to start.
- It always gets easier once you find your flow. This might take 15–30 minutes.
- Start with something simple, something straightforward, something obvious.
- On a longer project, leave something easy to start your next writing session with.
- Creative planning is important – sometimes it helps to start with the big picture.

DRAFTING AND REWRITING

- “Every first draft is shit.” –ERNEST HEMINGWAY
- “Great songs aren’t written, they’re rewritten.” –EVERY SONGWRITER EVER
- You usually have to try the bad version to find the good version.
- Sometimes it takes 10–20 versions of something before it’s really good.
- TRY LOTS OF THINGS: the more options you give yourself, the more likely you’ll discover one that’s really great.

PERFORMANCE ANXIETY

- You can’t create well if you’re stressed, anxious, tired, hungry, hungover etc etc.
- Some days it comes more easily than others. Roll with that.
- Focus on big, overall goals, not necessarily day-to-day goals.
- Try to have fun – creativity is work, but creativity is play. Try a ‘what if’ approach.
- Take breaks. Don’t force it. Focus on finding small, productive bursts.

INFLUENCES, PLAGIARISM, BEING AN ORIGINAL

- You already are an original artist. Embrace that.
- You SHOULD be influenced by the artists you love. You can't reinvent the wheel – and you probably don't want to.
- Inspiration means combining multiple sources – giving as much as you take.
- Plagiarism means rehashing one or two sources – taking more than you give.
- Being an original means taking risks, but it's the ONLY way to create great songs.

WORKING HABITS

- Find the working habits that work for YOU.
- Rituals and routines are great.
- Make 100% sure you won't be disturbed.
- Do something to clear your head. Some procrastination can be useful.
- Plan out your writing times and commit. Have someone hold you accountable.

SOME GREAT CREATIVITY RESOURCES

- Austin Kleon: [*Steal Like an Artist*](#)
- Steven Pressfield: [*The War of Art*](#)
- Ed Bell: [*The 30-Day Creativity Challenge*](#)

For more great resources head to
thesongfoundry.com/bookshelf