



Your “Clear the Decks” Checklist

Note: This is not intended to be a list of “everything” you need to do before you write – in general. However, if you're setting out to do a focused burst of writing, such as for a weekend or a longer writing intensive, you'll want to make some extra space in your life to make that work.

Use this checklist to streamline, clean up, delegate, and clear out anything and everything you need to in order to make more space for your writing. Some of these will overlap with your regular writing life, while others are more specific to a writing intensive.

Feel free to cross off any items that don't apply to you.

Logistical Realm

- I've scheduled time for my writing.
- I've scheduled time for self-care (e.g. exercise, sleep, bathing).
- I've allowed time for my regular routines (e.g. kid pickup, eating lunch, laundry, cooking).
- I've triaged my writing schedule to eliminate or accommodate any events, guests, responsibilities, and commitments during this intensive writing time.
- I've eliminated logistical drag where I can by creating systems or routines (e.g. having your portable writing kit – e.g. a “to go” laptop bag – ready).
- I've made it easy to eat meals, through deliveries or batch meal prepping.



Physical Realm

- My writing space is conducive to writing.
- I've cleared clutter & visual distractions (even if I've just put it in a box for now).
- My living spaces are clean *enough* that they won't distract me from writing.
- I've stocked my home or office with healthy food, snacks, and beverages.
- I have physically organized any IRL materials I need for my writing.

Mental Realm

- I know how I'll reward myself for writing daily and at the end of my intensive burst.
- I've closed all my open mental loops so I can focus on my writing (e.g. undone "stuff" that's mentally preoccupying, like unwritten email messages).
- I have a method to handle new writing ideas that come up (i.e. a place to write them down).
- I have a method to track tasks I'll need to return to after my intensive writing time.
- I know what I want to feed my mind and what to avoid (e.g. what works and doesn't work for you to read, watch, and interact with online and elsewhere).
- I have a plan or support system to handle negative self-thoughts if/when they come up.



Emotional Realm

- I have a plan or support system for how I'll handle emotional challenges related to my writing if/when they come up.
- I have a plan or support system for how I'll handle non-writing emotional challenges if needed (such as might arise in personal relationships).

Digital Realm

- I have minimized or eliminated digital distractions so I can focus on my writing (e.g. turning off app notifications).
- I have digitally organized the materials I need for my writing (or adopted a "from this day forward" approach).
- I have purged any unnecessary digital subscriptions or backlogged email that might be distracting (if you feel that will be problematic).

Financial Realm

- I have automated or prepaid my bills so I can prioritize my writing.
- I've handled, scheduled, or postponed any other financial obligations I might have (e.g. filing taxes).



Relational Realm

- I've established boundaries and set expectations with my family, partners, friends, and colleagues around my writing time.
- I have a plan for how and when I'll respond to anyone who tries to contact me while I'm writing (e.g. call/text them when done writing for the day).

Spiritual Realm

- I feel centered and prepared to make the most of my writing time.
- I've set an intention for my writing and I have a vision for what I want to accomplish.
- I have a daily writing ritual I'll use to help me write each day (if you like).

Writing Prep Realm

- I know what materials, planning, or development work I need before I start, if any.
- I have a timeline to complete my writing prep before I begin my intensive stretch of writing.

I hope you've found this helpful. If you have suggestions for other things to include, I'd love to hear about it! Email me at info@calledtowrite.com with your suggestions.

Happy writing!