

Shiny Idea Time

AKA How to Finish Stuff without Losing Your Joy

Shiny Idea Time:

Why do you want to try shiny idea time? _____

What time will you set aside for your shiny ideas? _____

Where will you put your shiny ideas so you can find them later? _____

Get started:

- Set a timer if it might help
- Open your idea capture system
- Pick the shiniest idea
- Start collecting words or sketches, or make notes

If you're out of ideas:

- Go for a walk
- Do a boring task or chore
- Try something new
- Brainstorm with friends or colleagues

If you feel you don't have time:

- Try it on a different day or at a different time
- Try reframing it as a part of your process

You could also try:

- Using prompts
- Switching formats
- Using a different medium to start capturing an idea: collage, music playlists, etc.
- Coffee shop or meetup with a fellow creative
- Special critique group session (just sharing/cheering, no feedback)
- Shiny idea time right before or after your main project time
- Secret project as a reward for main project work
- Shiny retreat for more intensive work

Project status list:

- Make a list of all your ideas
- Divide it up by project status
- Date it
- Update it periodically

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Main Project Time:

Choose your main project:

- Which story do you most want to tell?
- Which story are you most excited to finish?
- Is someone expecting one of these stories?
- Which story might someone most want or need to read?

Getting another opinion:

- Pick your top three ideas
- Write a short pitch or synopsis for each
- Rewrite/polish the first 5 pages (or a selection) of each
- Share them with someone you trust (beta reader, agent, critique group)

What will your main project be? _____

Why are you choosing it now? _____

When will you work on your main project? _____

What will help you keep going? _____

To move a story from your shiny idea pile to your main project:

- Save a copy of the shiny idea
- Copy and paste the pieces you can use into rough story order
- Make notes [in brackets] for anything you know you'll need to add
- Start filling in the blanks (in story order or not)