

1.2 Delay Decisions Until The Optimal Moment

Hold off on making decisions for as long as it's useful (but no longer).

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Decisions can be hard to make, often because we do not have enough information on hand. We may need to do research or get input from other people before we feel comfortable making a decision. Alternatively, sometimes the information we need simply doesn't exist yet or is not yet concrete (for example, next week's weather). In these instances, it might be best to put off the decision for as long as possible.

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- You will have more information on which to base your decisions.
- You can postpone nonurgent decisions to a later time to combat decision fatigue.

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- Sometimes, not making a decision may weigh on your mind and create stress.
- Postponing a decision incurs the cost of remembering to make the decision at a later time.

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Sometimes, we're faced with decisions that appear urgent but in fact are not—for example, maybe you're considering making a large purchase or signing a business contract. In these circumstances, you may want to make an immediate decision. Let's say you're buying a new sofa. What color do you want? Do you want the sprayed-on protection to prevent staining in the event of a spill? What about the upgraded detail on the feet? If you haven't considered these possibilities before going to the furniture shop, you may not know what to pick.

In this case, making an instant decision may have negative consequences. For example, will the fabric protection emit toxic gas, which could trigger migraines in you or your spouse for several weeks? Will it make the fabric feel less soft? Do you eat sitting on your sofa regularly enough for this to be a concern? And does anyone ever pay attention to the detail on the furniture legs?

Unless your existing sofa has completely fallen apart, you may not need to make a decision right now. You could go home, think about it, do some research, and ask your friends or family what they think. Maybe, if you wait a month or two, you can passively collect the information you need to make a more informed decision. Passive collection means that you have a subject in the back of your mind—in this example, a new sofa—and set an intention to collect information. You then tune into that frequency, which allows you to pick up on useful information about that subject.

When you tap into the "sofa buying" frequency, you will suddenly catch a casual office conversation about someone buying a new sofa and liking a particular fabric or spot an article about toxic gas emissions you would otherwise have ignored. This kind of passive information collection is cheap—you don't need to do anything but pay attention—but it can pay off big time by providing you with both more and higher-quality information so you can reach a better decision.

