

Habit Stacking — Workbook

This workbook walks you through the practical exercises, reflections, and templates that transform the course concepts into a living habit system. Complete each section in sequence alongside the corresponding module — the exercises build on each other, so skipping ahead reduces their effectiveness. Every tool here is designed for repeated use: return to the worksheets whenever you are adding a new habit or troubleshooting a stalling one.

The Science of Habit Formation

Map the habit loop components of an existing behaviour before you attempt to design anything new.

Exercise: Habit Loop Dissection

Choose one habit you perform automatically every single day — brushing teeth, making coffee, unlocking your phone. Trace it through the full habit loop using the prompts below. Be as specific as possible; vague answers produce vague insights.

- What is the exact cue? (Location, time, emotional state, person, or preceding action — pick the most specific one)

- Describe the routine in the sequence it actually happens, step by step, not the idealised version

- What is the reward — the thing you get or feel immediately after the routine ends?

- What is the underlying craving — the anticipatory urge the cue activates before the routine even begins?

Worksheet: Habit Loop Inventory

List up to five automatic daily habits. For each, fill in all four columns. This inventory is your raw material for selecting anchor candidates in Module 2.

Habit name

Cue (be specific: location / time / emotion / person / preceding action)

Reward (what you get immediately after)

Underlying craving (the anticipatory urge)

Reliability: A (every day) / B (most days) / C (sometimes)

Checklist: Module 1 Completion Checklist

- I can name all three components of the habit loop from memory
- I have dissected at least one existing habit down to its craving
- I have read (or bookmarked) the Gollwitzer 2006 meta-analysis abstract on implementation intentions
- I understand why the 21-day habit myth is inaccurate and can explain the Lally 2010 finding

[] I have identified at least three daily habits with an A reliability rating

Designing Your Habit Stack

Select your anchor, write implementation intentions, and construct a first three-link habit stack ready to run tomorrow morning.

Exercise: Anchor Selection and Stress-Test

From your Module 1 inventory, select your single strongest anchor candidate. Then stress-test it against the four scenarios below before committing. If it fails two or more scenarios, choose a different anchor.

- Would this anchor fire on a day when you wake up 90 minutes late and have a deadline? If not, it is not an A-grade anchor.

- Would this anchor fire on a weekend, holiday, or day of travel when your normal schedule is disrupted?

- Is the anchor a physical action (stronger) or purely time-based (weaker)? If time-based, can you convert it to a physical action?

- After the anchor completes, is there a natural 30-second pause before your next automatic behaviour — a gap where a new routine could insert?

Worksheet: Implementation Intention Builder

Write your first habit stack as a sequence of When-Then statements. Fill one row per link. Keep the new behaviour column under 60 words — specificity, not length, is the goal.

Link number (1 = anchor, 2 = first new behaviour, etc.)

Anchor / preceding action (the cue for this link)

New behaviour — exact description (what, where, how many)

Duration in seconds or reps

Completion signal (what marks this link as done?)

Celebration micro-moment (the 'Shine' — fist-pump, smile, silent 'yes')

Worksheet: Stack Design Card

Summarise your full stack on this card. Print or screenshot it and keep it somewhere visible for the first 14 days. Fill in the full When-Then chain as a single readable paragraph and the total elapsed time.

Anchor habit (existing — do not change this)

Link 1 new behaviour (When anchor completes, I will...)

Link 2 new behaviour (When Link 1 completes, I will...)

Link 3 new behaviour (When Link 2 completes, I will...)

Total new-behaviour time (minutes:seconds)

Physical location for each link

Start date

Checklist: Stack Design Readiness Check

- My anchor is an A-grade habit that fires every single day including weekends
- Each new behaviour takes under 2 minutes in its current tiny form
- Each link has a specific physical location assigned
- Each link has a written completion signal
- Each link has a written celebration micro-moment
- My total new-behaviour time is under 10 minutes
- I have written the full stack as a When-Then chain and placed it somewhere visible
- I have set a 7-day review date in my calendar

Environment Design and Friction Management

Audit your physical and digital environment and apply targeted friction changes to make your habit stack the path of least resistance.

Exercise: Friction Audit

Walk through your home and phone with fresh eyes — a deliberate slow scan, not a quick mental review. For each habit stack link, answer the questions below and then take one immediate action to reduce friction before you close this workbook page.

- For each link in your stack: what equipment or prop does it require? Is that item currently in the exact location where the link runs, ready to use with zero setup?
- Identify the one competing behaviour most likely to interrupt your stack (e.g. phone checking, TV, conversation). How many seconds does it currently take to initiate that competing behaviour from your stack location?
- Apply the 20-second rule: what is one physical change you can make in the next 10 minutes to add at least 20 seconds of friction to the most disruptive competing behaviour?
- What one change would remove 20 or more seconds of setup time from the first link of your stack?

Worksheet: Environment Redesign Planner

For each room or device that is relevant to your habit stack, log the current state and your planned change. Complete the 'Change made on' column within 48 hours — not planning, doing.
Location or device

Target habit stack link (which link does this affect?)

Current friction level for target habit: High / Medium / Low

Current friction level for competing habit: High / Medium / Low

Planned friction-reduction action for target habit

Planned friction-addition action for competing habit

Change made on (date)

Checklist: Environment Setup Checklist

- All props and equipment for each stack link are pre-positioned in their designated location
- The top two competing habits have at least one friction-adding change applied
- Phone home screen has been audited: habit-disrupting apps moved two or more screens away
- A phone-free window covering my stack time is configured (iOS Focus or Android Focus Mode)
- I have designated a one-space-one-use zone for at least one stack link
- A habit-tracking method is set up (app or paper grid) and accessible within 5 seconds of stack completion
- My workspace or main daily room has been physically cleared of the most common distraction object

Sustaining, Troubleshooting, and Scaling Your Habit Stack

Build your diagnostic toolkit, write your disruption plan, and map the growth path from one stack to a full daily habit architecture.

Exercise: Stack Failure Diagnosis

Use this exercise any time a habit stack stalls (3 or more missed days in a 7-day window). Work through each question in order — stop as soon as you identify the broken leg and apply that fix. Do not attempt all three fixes simultaneously.

- Prompt check: Look at your tracking log. Is the anchor habit itself firing every day? If NO — the prompt is broken. Fix: switch to a stronger anchor or add a temporary phone reminder for 14 days only.
- Ability check: At your lowest-energy point in the past week — exhausted, rushed, stressed — could you have done each link in its current form? If NO for any link — the routine demands too much ability. Fix: shrink that link to a 30-second version and restart.
- Reward check: After completing the stack on the days you did run it, did you notice any positive emotion — even faint satisfaction or relief? If NO — the reward is broken. Fix: add an explicit celebration (out-loud 'yes', fist-pump, text an accountability partner) immediately after each link.
- After identifying and applying one fix, run the stack daily for 7 days and re-score before attempting any further change.

Worksheet: Disruption Resilience Plan

Write your minimum viable stack (MVS) and your if-then disruption responses before disruption happens. The most common prediction errors: underestimating travel frequency and overestimating how quickly you will 'get back to normal' after illness.

Minimum viable stack — link 1 (30 seconds or less, zero equipment, any location)

Minimum viable stack — link 2 (optional; same constraints)

Minimum viable stack — link 3 (optional; same constraints)

MVS total time (seconds)

Disruption scenario 1 (most likely in next 30 days)

If-then plan for scenario 1

Disruption scenario 2

If-then plan for scenario 2

Disruption scenario 3

If-then plan for scenario 3

Two-day rule reminder: If I miss one day, my commitment is to never miss the next day — what will I do the morning after a missed day?

Worksheet: Habit Architecture Growth Map

Plan your growth path from one stack to a full three-stack day. Fill in target dates only after the preceding stack reaches 25 consecutive days at 6/7 adherence. Do not fill this column speculatively — use it as a milestone log.

Stack name (morning / work-entry / evening)

Anchor habit for this stack

Number of links at launch

Target links at maturity

Start date

25-day milestone date (fill when achieved)

Identity statement this stack votes for (I am someone who...)

Checklist: 30-Day Mastery Checklist

- I have run my primary habit stack for 25 of the past 30 days
- I have used the three-question diagnostic at least once after a missed day
- My minimum viable stack is written and I have rehearsed it at least once
- I have applied the shrink-then-scale technique to at least one stalling link
- I have completed at least one 7-day review and adjusted my stack based on the data
- I have written my target identity statement and reviewed it at least once
- I have designed (but not yet launched) my second stack, pending 25-day milestone on stack one
- I can explain the Fogg Behaviour Model diagnostic to someone else from memory

Your Action Plan

1. Today: complete the Habit Loop Dissection exercise for one existing daily habit and identify your three strongest A-grade anchors
2. Day 1: select your top anchor, stress-test it against all four scenarios, and write your three-link stack using the Implementation Intention Builder
3. Day 1 (evening): complete the Environment Redesign Planner and make at least two physical friction changes before sleeping
4. Day 2: run your stack for the first time; celebrate each link completion out loud; log a binary yes in your tracker
5. Days 3–7: run the stack daily; mark the tracker; do not add or change anything during this first week
6. Day 7: conduct your first 7-day review — calculate adherence score (days run / 7), identify any missed days, and use the diagnosis prompts if score is below 5/7
7. Days 8–14: if adherence is 6/7 or 7/7, add one small increase per link (e.g. 5 reps becomes 10); if below 6/7, shrink one failing link using the shrink-then-scale technique
8. Day 14: write your disruption resilience plan including your minimum viable stack and three if-then disruption responses
9. Day 21: run your MVS intentionally on one low-stakes day (e.g. a weekend morning) so it is rehearsed before you need it
10. Day 25: assess whether the stack has reached automaticity (you notice discomfort when you miss it); if yes, begin planning — not launching — your second stack

