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# Writing tips from Diana Evans

In March 2020 Diana Evans shared her top tips for writing with the Women's Prize for Fiction:

## Diana Evans: Writing Tips

1. Write according to your own strengths and instincts. If it suits you to write at night, do it that way. If you're more of an office-hours writer, adopt that structure instead. Some writers can only work on one thing at a time while others need to work on several. Some work in cafes and libraries and others in solitude. There is no right or wrong way to write. Only consistency and commitment are the common prerequisites.
2. Follow scenes through to completion or exhaustion. Don't hold back when you're writing. Let out every intriguing idea or image that wants to come out and avoid the limitations of neatness in the early stages. There's lots of time for neatness and perfecting during revisions.
3. Try not to write like Tolstoy/Yates/Rhys/Dickens/Morrison or whoever it is that you adore. Take inspiration without imitation. No one can write like you can because everyone has a different and particular voice. Write the kinds of books you'd like to read. Fill the gaps. Always aim for something new that does not yet exist.
4. Lots of writing happens in not writing. Sometimes more can be achieved in half an hour of driving/shopping/walking/dancing than during an entire day at the desk. The mind loosens and the work marinates, and when you go back to it some problem or barrier has been solved all by itself.
5. Read copiously, every day. Writers need words to make worlds. The words are food. Reading keeps us in touch with rhythm and pace, voice, image and how stories work. Read a variety of genres and forms: plays, novels, short stories, nonfiction. Keep a notebook by your side and always take the note when it asks to be taken.

Head to the [Women's Prize for Fiction](#) to find out more.