Reading is an essential part of my work, an important aspect of my social life, and most importantly, my favorite thing to do. I’m not a well-rounded person. But reading takes time, and most days, I can’t read as much as I’d like. Here are some habits that I’ve adopted to help me get more good reading done. Consider whether they might work for you.

1. Quit trying to finish every book. I used to pride myself on finishing every book I started. No more. Life is short, and there are so many wonderful books to read.

2. Skim. Especially when reading newspapers, magazines, and the Internet.

3. Always have plenty to read. Never go anywhere empty-handed (digital devices are a big help here).
   And in order to have plenty to read . . .

4. Keep a reading list, and keep it handy. A handwritten list can be left behind, but a cell phone list is always available.

5. Set aside time to read demanding books. It’s satisfying to stretch. Try setting aside some time each week to read books that are a bit challenging—a dense biography, a religious work written hundreds of years ago, a scientific book with a lot of unfamiliar terminology.

6. Try audiobooks. Listening to a book can be a way to experience it in a terrific new way, and makes books available in situations where it’s impossible to read—say, when driving.

7. Don’t fight your inclinations. Sometimes I feel like I should be reading a particular book when I actually feel like reading something entirely different. Now I let myself read what I want, because that way I read so much more.

For more insight, tips, and practical advice on reading-related habits, read:

Better Than Before: Mastering the Habits of Our Everyday Lives by Gretchen Rubin,
#1 New York Times bestselling author of The Happiness Project