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Deliberate Practice: What It Is and How to Use It

What is Deliberate Practice?

Let's define deliberate practice.

Deliberate practice refers to a special type of practice that is purposeful and systematic. While regular practice might include mindless repetitions, deliberate practice requires focused attention and is conducted with the specific goal of improving performance.

Read *The Beginner's Guide to Deliberate Practice*

(<https://jamesclear.com/beginners-guide-deliberate-practice>) to learn exactly how you can start practicing deliberately. You'll also find seven in-depth examples of how to practice deliberately.

Can You Achieve Anything With Enough Practice?

Deliberate practice *does not* mean that you can fashion yourself into anything with enough work and effort, though. While human beings do possess a remarkable

ability to develop their skills, there are limits to how far any individual can go. Your genes set a boundary around what is possible.

However, while genetics influence performance, they do not *determine* performance. Do not confuse destiny with opportunity. Genes provide opportunity. They do not determine our destiny. It's similar to a game of cards. You have a better opportunity if you are dealt a better hand, but you also need to play the hand well to win.

Regardless of where we choose to apply ourselves, deliberate practice can help us maximize our potential—no matter what cards we were dealt. It turns potential into reality.

Read *The Myth and Magic of Deliberate Practice*

(<https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice-myth>) for more on genetics, practice, and how to maximize your genetic potential in life.

Examples of Deliberate Practice

- Joe DiMaggio was one of the greatest hitters in baseball history. I recently heard a little-known story about how DiMaggio developed his exceptional ability. Read more... (<https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice-myth>)
- In some circles, golfer Ben Hogan is credited with “inventing practice.” Hogan methodically broke the game of golf down into chunks and figured out how he could master each section. Today, experts have a new term for his rigorous style of improvement. Read more... (<https://jamesclear.com/beginners-guide-deliberate-practice>)

- How long does it take to become elite at your craft? And what do the people who master their goals do differently than the rest of us? Check out these lessons on success from Mozart, Picasso, and Kobe Bryant. Read more... (<https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice>)

Best Deliberate Practice Books

- Peak (<https://jamesclear.com/book/peak>) by Anders Ericsson and Robert Pool
- The Art of Learning (<https://jamesclear.com/book/the-art-of-learning>) by Joshua Waitzkin
- The Talent Code (<https://jamesclear.com/book/the-talent-code>) by Daniel Coyle
- Deep Work (<https://jamesclear.com/book/deep-work>) by Cal Newport
- The Practicing Mind (<https://jamesclear.com/book/the-practicing-mind>) by Thomas M. Sterner

Want more great books? Browse my full list of the best self-help books (<https://jamesclear.com/best-books/self-help>).

All Deliberate Practice Articles

Looking for more articles explaining how to apply these principles in practical ways? This is a complete list of articles I have written on deliberate practice. Enjoy!

- The Beginner's Guide to Deliberate Practice (<https://jamesclear.com/beginners-guide-deliberate-practice>)
- The Myth and Magic of Deliberate Practice (<https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice-myth>)
- If Nothing Changes, Nothing Is Going to Change (<https://jamesclear.com/repeated-bout-effect>)
- Warren Buffett's "20 Slot" Rule: How to Simplify Your Life and Maximize Your Results (<https://jamesclear.com/buffett-slots>)
- Fast Growth is Overrated (<https://jamesclear.com/yuri-wardanyan>)
- Pat Riley on the Remarkable Power of Getting 1% Better (<https://jamesclear.com/career-best-effort>)
- Zanshin: Learning the Art of Attention and Focus From a Legendary Samurai Archer (<https://jamesclear.com/zanshin>)
- Stop Thinking and Start Doing: The Power of Practicing More (<https://jamesclear.com/learning-vs-practicing>)
- Vince Lombardi on the Hidden Power of Mastering the Fundamentals (<https://jamesclear.com/vince-lombardi-fundamentals>)
- Constraints Make You Better: Why the Right Limitations Boost Performance (<https://jamesclear.com/futsal>)
- How Experts Practice Better Than the Rest (<https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice-strategy>)
- Minimalism, Success, and the Curious Writing Habit of George R.R. Martin (<https://jamesclear.com/george-rr-martin>)
- How to Build Skills That Are Valuable (<https://jamesclear.com/ingvar->

kamprad)

- How to Get Your Brain to Focus on What Matters
(<https://jamesclear.com/selective-attention>)
- Why Trying to Be Perfect Won't Help You Achieve Your Goals (And What Will)
(<https://jamesclear.com/repetitions>)
- The Weird Strategy Dr. Seuss Used to Create His Greatest Work
(<https://jamesclear.com/dr-seuss>)
- Lessons on Success and Deliberate Practice from Mozart, Picasso, and Kobe Bryant
(<https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice>)
- The Difference Between Professionals and Amateurs
(<https://jamesclear.com/professionals-and-amateurs>)



Thanks for reading. You helped save a life.

THANKS FOR READING. YOU HELPED SAVE A LIFE.

Whenever you buy one of [my books \(https://jamesclear.com/books\)](https://jamesclear.com/books), join the [Habits Academy \(https://habitsacademy.com\)](https://habitsacademy.com), or otherwise contribute to my work, 5 percent of the profits are donated to the Against Malaria Foundation (AMF).

With each donation, AMF distributes nets to protect children, pregnant mothers, and families from mosquitos carrying malaria. It is one of the most cost-effective ways to extend life and fulfills my bigger mission to spread healthy habits and help others realize their full potential.

17077

MALARIA NETS DISTRIBUTED

30739

PEOPLE PROTECTED

317

YEARS OF ADDITIONAL LIFE

9

LIVES SAVED

BETTER HABITS

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[Motivation \(https://jamesclear.com/motivation\)](https://jamesclear.com/motivation).

[Procrastination \(https://jamesclear.com/procrastination\)](https://jamesclear.com/procrastination).

BETTER PERFORMANCE

[Constant Improvement \(https://jamesclear.com/continuous-improvement\)](https://jamesclear.com/continuous-improvement).

[Deliberate Practice \(https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice-theory\)](https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice-theory).

[Goal Setting \(https://jamesclear.com/goal-setting\)](https://jamesclear.com/goal-setting).

[Productivity \(https://jamesclear.com/productivity\)](https://jamesclear.com/productivity).

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(<https://www.linkedin.com/company/jamesclear/>)

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[Decision Making \(https://jamesclear.com/decision-making\)](https://jamesclear.com/decision-making).

[Focus \(https://jamesclear.com/focus\)](https://jamesclear.com/focus).

[Mental Toughness \(https://jamesclear.com/grit\)](https://jamesclear.com/grit).

OPTIMAL HEALTH

[Better Sleep \(https://jamesclear.com/sleep\)](https://jamesclear.com/sleep).

[Eating Healthy \(https://jamesclear.com/eat-healthy\)](https://jamesclear.com/eat-healthy).

[Strength Training \(https://jamesclear.com/strength-training\)](https://jamesclear.com/strength-training).

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