

The Two-Minute Reentry

The transition ritual between your work brain and your home one

Any good ops team builds in a handoff buffer between shifts, because walking straight from one context into another without a pause is how mistakes happen. You do this every day without any buffer at all: laptop closed, straight into the kitchen, still running the 4 PM meeting in your head while someone's asking about dinner. No wonder the first ten minutes home feel like a system error. The two-minute reentry is a deliberate pause between work-you and home-you, so you actually arrive instead of just physically showing up.

What you need: 2 minutes, alone, before you walk through the door. The car, the elevator, the hallway, wherever the last private moment happens.

The steps

1. **Name three things from work, out loud or in your head.** (30 seconds) What went well, what's unresolved, what you're worried about. Getting it out of your head and into words closes the loop enough to set it down.
2. **Put the phone somewhere you won't see it.** (15 seconds) Glovebox, bag, drawer by the door. Out of sight matters more than "on silent."
3. **Take five breaths, longer exhale than inhale.** (30 seconds) This isn't a meditation retreat, it's a nervous system reset. Five is enough.
4. **Ask yourself one question: who do I want to be for the next hour?** (30 seconds) Not a resolution, just a target. Patient, playful, present, whatever's true tonight.
5. **Walk in.** (15 seconds) No further prep needed. The two minutes did the work.

Your reentry checklist

Where I'll do this today

- - ☐ Named three things from work
- - ☐ Phone put away
- - ☐ Five breaths
- - ☐ Picked who I want to be tonight

When it goes sideways

You forget the second you park the car. Set a recurring phone reminder for the exact time you usually leave. Two weeks of the reminder and it becomes automatic.

Someone's waiting at the door before you finish. Do the abbreviated version: one breath, one word for who you want to be. A partial reentry beats none.

You do it and still walk in irritable anyway. That's data, not failure. Some days work follows you home no matter what. The ritual isn't a guarantee, it's a better starting point than zero transition at all.

Two minutes is a small tax for not bringing your whole workday through the front door.