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Research in Ink Readers
<https://www.researchinink.com/>

Dear readers,

SUBJECT: I recently got a typewriter in an attempt to regain my focus

My mind and general interests are currently in a very hard spot. I am a Computer Science researcher. This brings me face-to-face with technology every day. And I do that with immense pleasure: I love keeping updated on the latest tech news and gadgets. I usually follow, every year, at least Apple's WWDC, in an attempt to understand where the software I use every day is moving to. And I feel genuine excitement about any new announcement they make. As an example, working in the field of Human-Computer Interaction, I was genuinely thrilled when Apple introduced the "Dynamic Island" because, in a way, it was blurring the line between hardware and software.

Every new gadget, tool, app, software, and whatnot sparks my curiosity. I *must* try them all.

However, this sort of "maximalism" when it comes to the tools I use every day for my work is not something that is actually useful, but rather almost harmful.

I usually struggle with an astonishingly easy-to-distract brain. Therefore, the sheer amount of tools is a perfectly fertile ground to get my mind out of the zone and start trying new stuff out. Some days, I happen to not be able to do any actual work at all, but rather I spend the entire time trying out new stuff, or customizing (which I justify as "improving") already-known tools.

Obviously, this is a serious hazard for my productivity on its own, but the effects are amplified by the usual digital distractions: messages, e-mails, MS Teams calls, calendar invites, social media... A nightmare full of inputs for my already lazy and easily distracted brain...

Now, being a researcher means that a great deal of my time is spent on writing stuff. Whether it is a report, a paper, some documentation, bureaucratic forms, or whatever else, I am writing. So, I need a way to improve my focus and get myself in flow for writing.

Here enters my grandad. During a routine clean-up of his garage, he found an old typewriter that he had: an old *Olivetti Studio 45 i*. Before he threw it away, I got an idea: why not try using it to reach my goal of distraction-free in-the-zone writing?

I wouldn't be the first one using a typewriter in 2025 for the purpose of typing drafts of text: a quick search on YouTube or Google surfaces enough results to help me not feeling stupid for even having had this idea.

Did it work? I currently have no idea. In theory, it should: using a typewriter lets you have absolutely no form of distractions (unless someone comes tapping on your shoulder, clearly), and having a material piece of paper with writing on it is a plus since it makes reviewing your text a far more pleasurable experience (at least for me, since I prefer reading on paper). However, I have not had this typewriter for enough time to understand whether it has improved my workflow.

One thing is certain, though: the initial draft of this post was written on this typewriter, and I had words flowing out of me like they never did. So, I'm faithful, and I'll post updates with the results of my very non-scientific test.



Figure 1. The typewriter

[See the original draft here!](#)

Until later!

Andrea Esposito