

## **Urban Writers' Retreat**



## **2014 Quick & Easy Writing Roadmap**

[www.urbanwritersretreat.co.uk](http://www.urbanwritersretreat.co.uk)

## I'm gonna get dressed for success

If we've met before, you probably know that I LOVE goals. A good, fulfilling writing life doesn't happen by accident; you have to really commit and go for your dreams. The problem with a proper annual review and goal-setting process is that it takes a long time, and, well, a review isn't much good if you do it then forget about it.

Yeah, I know someone who does that... This year I wanted something quick that would set me up in half an hour, tops.

So get yourself some mulled wine and a mince pie and let's work out what it is that makes your heart sing as opposed to that thing you think you should be doing. Then we'll make a quick, dirty plan to pin above your writing desk.

If you want a more comprehensive process then [here's the annual review for writers](#) I made last year. Enjoy!

Charlie

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I started running writing retreats in London in 2008 to overcome my own chronic procrastination. I'm now on a mission to get writers writing and also run residential retreats, online bootcamps and more. Be warned, if we meet in person I'll probably try to feed you cake.



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## Step 1: Looking ba-ack over my shoulder

What went well in your writing life last year? What did you achieve?

What wasn't so positive? What would you like to do differently in future?

## Step 2: I'll tell you what I want, what I really really want...

What do you want to write in 2014 or achieve with your writing? List anything and everything that comes to mind.

What are the things (stories, ideas, subjects) that you want to write about, the things you want to say?

Now **cross out anything that's only there because you think you should do it**. You should be left **only** with challenges and ideas that really excite you, that sound fun and amazing or that feel like they're going to burst out of you.

## Step 3: Take it easy

You should have one or more things in mind that you want to write about, and what it is that you want to achieve or do with that writing once it's finished, your big goal, your heart's desire.

Write down that thing(s) you really want to do more than anything in the world, the things you hardly dare to wish for. It's fine if your goals for this year are just a step on that path, but don't sell yourself short or aim for things you don't really care about.

All you have to do now is fill in the blanks for each thing you want to do to get your goal-in-a-nutshell.

I want to\_\_\_\_\_. In 2014, I really want to write about \_\_\_\_\_.

I'm going to write \_\_\_\_\_, and then I'm going to\_\_\_\_\_.

Examples:

I want to be a published author. In 2014 I really want to write about an aardvark called Jim who has lost his way home. I'm going to write a book for 5-8 year olds, and then I'm going to edit it and submit it to an agent.

I want to learn to be a better writer. In 2014 I really want to write about love and the complexity of relationships. I'm going to write lots of short stories, and then I'm going to submit them once a month to competitions.

Bingo! Quick and easy goals, done.

## Step 4: Let's get dirty

Now for the sneaky superpower trick. Imagine it's 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014 and you've achieved all of these goals. How did you actually do it? What's your attitude towards writing like, what are your habits, your lifestyle? What did you change to get here?

Circle the 2-3 habits or attitudes from the last exercise that will make most difference to your progress, or the things you're doing already that you know make a real difference to your creativity and productivity. What do you need to remember?

Now, to the planner!

1. Fill in your goal-in-a-nutshell at the top, and your 2-3 habits/attitudes in the 'Remember' box at the bottom.
2. Write what you want to have done by the end of 2014 in December's box.
3. Work backwards, filling the major things that you will need to complete or do each month in order to reach your goal. You can use one colour for the month's primary focus and another to write actions/smaller targets if it helps. This is your simple roadmap.
4. Review it. If it looks totally unrealistic it will depress you and you'll ignore it, so change it. It should look exciting!
5. Pin it up above your writing desk.

## 2014 Writing Planner

Goal-in-a-nutshell:

January	February	March	April
May	June	July	August
September	October	November	December

Remember: