

1. I'm no good at mixed days — it's either work or play. If it's a work day, then I'll start with a huge mug of strong black coffee and then I'll go to my study at the top of the house. I've learned to start writing early and to have a scene hanging over from the day before. I'm obsessive about silence. I can't talk in the middle of work — if I talk, the morning is over. When I go out, I do all the things you're supposed to as a writer, like going out to London clubs. But when people see you at book launches (*презентация*) they forget that being a writer is also about that little thing in between — sittin on your own all day. But you've got to have contact with the outside world and real people or you can go completely mad.

2. I'm envious of people who write in the mornings and do what they like in the afternoon. I work through the day and treat writing like an office job. My office is in a flat about ten minutes from our house. It's good to have a geographical break between home and work. I arrive about 9 am, have a coffee and then I'll just get on with it and work through until lunchtime. There's a definite post-lunch dip — that's when I have another coffee. But in the end, the only way I get concentration back is by pushing it. My wife picks me up about 6.30 and we go home together. I've been doing this for ten years now. It's a routine that suits me and, to be honest, I'm always a little worried about breaking it.

3. My seven-month-old daughter, Matilda, gets me up around 6.30 and I'll play with her for a couple of hours, then go to my desk. I officially sit there for three hours but I'll do an hour's work. Like a lot of writers, I tend to get a great sense of achievement very easily. One good sentence entitles me to half an hour off — two or three lines means I can watch daytime TV. My study is at one end of the flat and my wife and daughter are at the other. In theory, no congress takes place until lunchtime, but actually we pop in and out all the time. I've never been one of those writers who likes being isolated — I want people around me R the time.

4. I have a really slow start to the day. I'll do anything to put off starting work. I have toast, read newspapers — I have to do the crossword every morning — and deal with my post. I write quite slowly and not in chronological order. I've structured the story before I start, so I can hop around which I think keeps my writing fresh. Sometimes I wake up and just know it's not going to work — because I'm just not in the right mood — but I know that it's only temporary. Once you've got the first draft down, you know that it's going to be OK. When I started writing and just stayed at home I felt incredibly guilty but now it feels normal. Lots of my friends are creative and don't go to offices, which helps. When we go out we don't talk about work — we gossip about the people we know instead. But if I want to use anything my friends have told me, I always ask.

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Which writer says that on some days he knows in advance that writing will be difficult?

- 1) 1    2) 2    3) 3    4) 4