

YSG TIPS ON MANAGING YOUR TIME THROUGHOUT YOUR RESIDENCY

While everyone has their own way of managing their creative time, here are some practical guidelines you may find useful to structure your own time with YSG. They're designed to balance **making**, **research**, and **reflection**—so the residency doesn't just produce work, but also direction.

Once you have completed your mind map (see YSG and AAV Residency Handbook), divide the residency time into phases:

Most strong residencies move through loose stages rather than one constant mode.

Phase 1 — Arrival & Research

Focus: observing, gathering, testing

- Site exploration, photographing, sketching
- Material tests without pressure for outcomes
- Reading, watching, listening
- Small maquettes, quick experiments
- Daily notes on what's catching your attention

Goal: build a fertile ground, not finished work.



Source: Katie Moody – How to Start an Art Journal

Phase 2 — Experimentation & Prototyping

Focus: structured play

- Push materials, scale, and processes
- Allow multiple works to start at once
- Keep things rough, modular, changeable
- Document everything (even failures)

Goal: generate possibilities.

Phase 3 — Production & Development

Focus: commitment

- Select the strongest directions
- Increase scale, complexity, or refinement
- Solve technical and structural problems
- Begin thinking about presentation, context, audience



Julian Di Martino: Another Time Perhaps

Goal: develop resolved or semi-resolved works.

Phase 4 — Reflection & Articulation

Focus: meaning-making

- Review what was made and learned
- Photograph finished work properly
- Write short reflections on each piece or line of inquiry
- Consider future pathways (exhibition, grant, next project)

Goal: turn experience into usable knowledge.

Use a Weekly Rhythm

A simple structure many artists find helpful:

1–2 days: research / testing / thinking

- **2–3 days:** active making
- **1 day:** review, documentation, writing, studio reset

At the end of each week:

- What worked?
- What surprised you?
- What should next week focus on?



Jenny Reddin: Exhibition of New Work

Design Your Days Intentionally

Instead of vague “studio time,” define modes:

- Making days → tools out, phone away, physical focus
- Thinking days → reading, drawing, mapping, writing
- Processing days → documentation, editing ideas, reorganising

You can also use daily anchors:

- Start: 10 minutes journaling/sketching
 - Middle: main creative? push
 - End: photograph, note what happened, plan tomorrow
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Build in Reflection (This Is Where Growth Happens)

Keep one central residency record:

- Studio notebook
- Voice notes
- Daily photo log
- Weekly reflection page

Useful prompts:

- What am I actually making again and again?
 - What materials feel alive? Which feel dead?
 - What questions are forming?
 - What am I avoiding?
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Leave Space for the Unknown

A strong residency structure still protects:

- Unplanned days
 - Wandering
 - Following accidents
 - Changing direction mid-way
 - Think of your structure as scaffolding, not a cage.
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End with a Synthesis

In the final days, aim to produce:

- A small body of work or key experiments
- A visual archive (good photos/video)
- A 1–2 page reflection you can reuse for:
 - grant applications
 - residency proposals
 - artist statements
 - future projects

