

Getting Ready

Humorous monologue by Samuel Stokes

There's nothing quite like the wonderful feeling of getting ready to go in the morning... with the possible exception of the wonderful feeling of having a root canal. Yeah, it can be kind of a difficult thing some mornings, especially if I stayed up too late the night before watching reruns of *Night Court* or *Star Trek* or something. Some days, that alarm just rings way too early, as if I just closed my eyes to sleep and now it's ringing.

Thank goodness for the snooze button. I tell you, whoever invented that thing is only working if they want to. So, I can hit the snooze button once or twice and be safe. If I hit it a third time, that's when things get hairy. That's when the morning shower must be reduced from ten minutes to 97 seconds. That's right – 97 seconds exactly. I've timed it just for this eventuality. It's an ultra-quick soaping, shampooing, and rinsing. Unfortunately, to shower this quickly, I have to hop in while the water is still warming up. The first 23 seconds are rather unpleasant as the water goes from icy cold to scalding hot. Then there is a 15 second adjustment period as I adjust it to an acceptable temperature. The other 59 seconds are smooth sailing, unless I run out of soap or shampoo, which really throws things off. Anyway, assuming there is sufficient soap and shampoo, then when I finish showering, I hop out and dry off really quickly. Now, hopefully I remembered to pick out clothes the previous night, because if I didn't, it will take another 2 minutes and 32 seconds, and that's assuming I remembered to do the laundry.

Then I have a very specific order of doing things: hair, teeth, dog, lunch, bag.

Yep, I have it down to a simple, single-word mnemonic system:

Hair, teeth, dog, lunch, bag.

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This is short for: comb hair, brush teeth, put the dog out, pack my lunch, and grab my school bag on the way out the door. So, I go around chanting under my breath: hair, teeth, dog, lunch, bag. Just DON'T talk to me in the morning! If anyone in my family says anything to me or does anything to distract my attention, I'm liable to lose my whole rhythm. I know this from experience. I've definitely shown up to school just to find that I completely forgot to comb my hair. I can sort of comb my hair with my fingers, but it's just not ideal. If I forget to brush my teeth, I can at least get by with breath mints, but combing my hair with my fingers is a mediocre solution at best. Even worse though, if I forget to let the dog out, I will most likely find a lovely present for me waiting in the corner by the back door when I get home, and not the kind with wrapping paper and a bow. There have been many days that I've forgotten my lunch and had to eat cafeteria food, which isn't the worst thing in the world, but it is highly dependent on what is being served that day, whether it will be enjoyable or not. Pizza and nachos are good. Fish sticks – not such much. And then there's my bag. If I forget that, I'm in trouble. Without it, I can't do any of my work all day long. On second thought, maybe that's not such a bad thing!