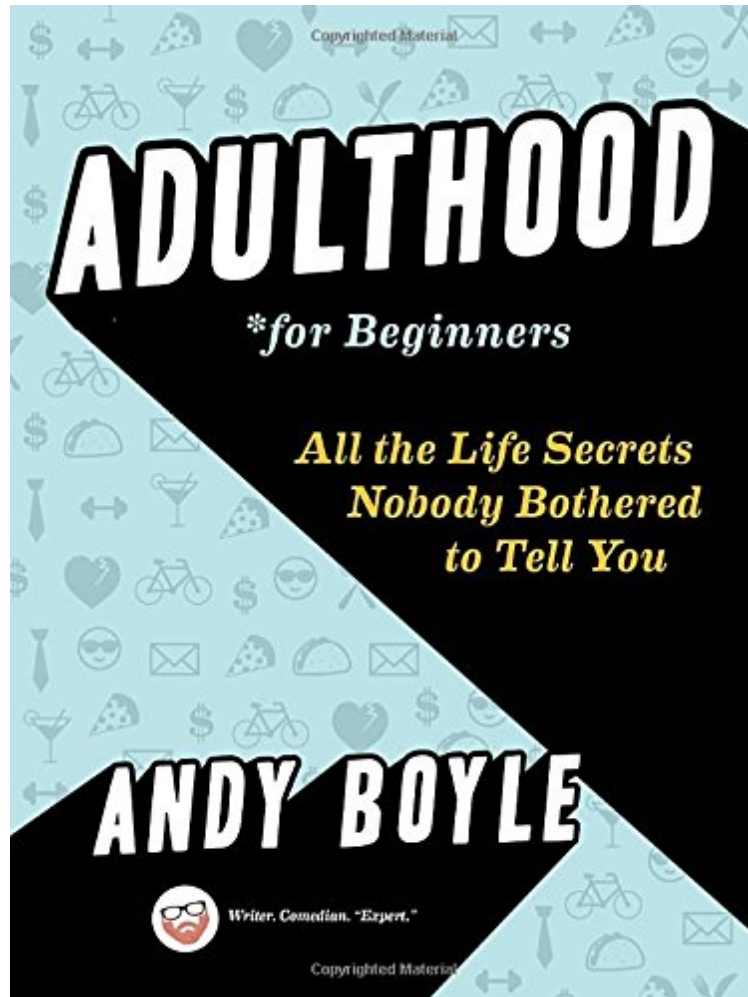


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# Adulthood for Beginners: All the Life Secrets Nobody Bothered to Tell You

Andy Boyle

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**Andy Boyle : Adulthood for Beginners: All the Life Secrets Nobody Bothered to Tell You** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Adulthood for Beginners: All the Life Secrets Nobody Bothered to Tell You:

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Andy Boyle is hilarious and smart.By JMCWI knew Andy Boyle in college, and I never thought I'd ever be taking advice from him. However, this book is truly hilarious AND helpful. Andy Boyle's writing is conversational and friendly, and he approaches the subject matter in a highly accessible way. I recommend this book for the recent college graduate.5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Great graduation gift!By Vaughn RoycroftI don't have kids, but lots of nieces and nephews. This book is exactly what they

need to hear, and it's not coming from a parent, boss, aunt or uncle. The humor makes the spot-on advice memorable. Great book! (Given away five so far.) 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By P.W.ParcellsGood. Gave it to my grandchildren.

"A hilarious guide to help young workers not be idiots....a guide to being an adult in the modern age." --Chicago Tribune Stop saying "adulting" -- and other life advice you didn't know you needed. But you do. It's no secret that being a grown-up can be hard. Most people spend a decade or more figuring out the unwritten rules of life through trial and error (mostly error). Does Andy Boyle have everything figured out? No. But the honest and good-natured advice in this genuinely helpful book will help any newly minted adult get through the hard parts faster, guaranteed. (Note: sorry, not literally guaranteed.) Topics include: \* The A\*\*hole Test \* "Friend Zone," "Adulting," and Other Things to Stop Saying \* Should I Get Back with My Ex? (Spoiler: No) \* Networking Like a Not Gross Person \* Failing Isn't Failure, and Other Mostly Good Rules to Live By \* Don't Be Creepy Perfect for anyone who's ready to graduate into adulthood, or at least out of their mom's basement.

"Darn funny...an advice book aimed at young people that might just do them some good while providing a laugh or two." --Associated Press "Boyle's book is hard to put down and full of solid advice. It's the perfect gift for a high school or college graduate." --Library Journal About the Author Andy Boyle is a writer, web developer and speaker. His work, including a viral piece about giving up drinking has been in Esquire, The Chicago Tribune, The Boston Globe, The St. Petersburg Times and The New York Times Regional Media Group, where his work was cited in the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News. When he's not teaching a class in digital storytelling at Columbia College Chicago or working on screenplays and novels, he gives funny talks wherever he can, usually in venues that shouldn't allow jokes. He lives in Chicago with his way-too-fluffy cat Tiberius. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. How to Get Good at Damn Near Anything When I was in college, I used to tell people I was a writer. I read a lot about writing. I read a lot of books. I thought all the time about what would make a great story, a great hook. I was doing everything a writer should be doing. Except writing. The main way you get better at anything is by doing that thing over and over and over. Sounds simple, but my entire life is proof that it works. As is the fact that we have seen billions of people throughout history who have gotten good at shit. To paraphrase a Macklemore lyric (because quoting it would literally require me to ask him permission to include it in a book) that's always stuck with me: The greatest painters weren't great because they could paint awesome at birth. They became great because they practiced their craft frequently. So that's what you should do if you plan on getting good at damn near anything. Other than that, here are some other hints. \* Surround yourself with people better than you. When I was starting out as a comedian, I was lucky enough to do it in Boston, a city with a strong comedy community. Every day of the week I could see people doing what I wanted to do at a high level. Every show at the Improv Asylum, an improv theater in the city's North End, was like a master class in being hilarious. Same thing for most of the stand-up comedy shows. I immersed myself in that world, just making sure I could be around people who were better than me at comedy. Eventually, just by watching them do what they do, you learn a few tricks. It's the only time trickle-down economics ever works. \* Take classes. Not everyone is able to surround themselves with people more skilled than themselves. But odds are, someone's teaching a class in a skill you want to get better at. Just Google your city's name and the thing you want to get better at. If I look up "Chicago cooking classes" oh, my God, I get so many options. Did you know couples take cooking classes? Wow, what a world we live in. Classes are great because they're usually taught by an expert, or someone who at the very least knows more than you. It'll also help you get surrounded with other people who may be at your level, or a little more ahead. This lets you find a local community of people who are also interested in the thing you enjoy. \* Know you're gonna suck. What you don't often learn about getting good at shit is, well, you are usually awful when you start out. You know you're awful because you like cool shit. When I was learning guitar, I loved all these shred metal gods, these people who were the fastest guitar players of all time. So here I thought I was the worst, because I was comparing myself to literally the greatest guitarists ever. That's like being a Little League first baseman and being pissed you're not as good as [insert famous first baseman here, or maybe don't, because it's funnier if you intentionally leave this blank—yeah, I'm gonna leave it blank]. See how ridiculous that seems? Your taste is so much better than your talent, so you know how big the gap is. This is why you should compare yourself with only yourself. You aren't competing against anyone else. If you're a writer, you're not trying to be better than Joan Didion. (Because you're just not gonna be, okay?) You're trying to be better than you were six months ago. That's why you should be always doing the thing you want to get better at. Because after six months, go back and look at your old work. You'll go, "Wow, I'm not as bad as I used to be! Holy shit, I am getting better!" You will still think you suck, because your tastes are always ahead of your talents. But you can at least appreciate that you have, objectively, gotten better than you once were. That's what's important. Knowing that even though you kind of always think you suck, after some time you don't suck as much. I cringe when I go back and watch videos of me doing stand-up comedy five years ago. It's so so so so so so so bad. It's so cliché. I don't even know how to stand on stage and breathe. But if I watch a recent clip, I can tell I'm better than that older version of me. There's still a lot I'm not happy with, but it's better. \* Set

goals for yourself. I already talked about this at length in a previous chapter (“Measure Success by Setting Goals”), but it’s important enough to mention again. Make them quantifiable. By that, I mean something you can measure. If you’re into cooking, your goal can be “try three new dishes a week.” If you’re into writing, it could be “write one thousand words a day.” If you’re trying to get better at painting, it can be “paint for sixty minutes each day.” You can set up a spreadsheet, or a calendar, to track yourself.\* It’s okay to decide you don’t wanna do something anymore. I played guitar for hours every day from sixth grade through the end of high school. I joined bands. I played shows whenever I could. I recorded albums in my basement. But then I reached a point where I just didn’t want to play guitar anymore, so I kind of just stopped. That’s totally fine. You can get to a level of ability you’re happy with and you don’t need to push yourself further. It’s not bad if you want to do something just as a hobby, even if others want to make you feel that way because you’re not dedicating your life to something. (Ever know someone’s mom or dad who jammed with a cover band on the weekend? I’m going to be that guy someday. I can’t wait.) Sometimes it feels good to take a guitar out, plug it into an amp, turn it up loud, and blast out some chords. Doesn’t mean everyone needs to end up joining Coldplay. (A note to any members of Coldplay reading this: First of all, thanks for making music that me and my mom can both enjoy. And secondly, “Fix You” made me cry at a Walgreens once. Thanks!)