

Quotations by Mark Twain, the pen name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1835 – 1910), American writer and humorist:

action / goals / initiative	"The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one."
attitude	"Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest."
attitude	"Common sense is a most uncommon virtue."
attitude	"Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear - not absence of fear."
attitude	"It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog."
attitude	"Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."
attitude	"Sing like nobody's listening, dance like nobody's watching, love like you've never been hurt, and live like it's heaven on earth."

change	"If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got."
character	"If you tell the truth you don't have to remember anything."
children / family / parenting	"It is a wise child that knows its own father, and an unusual one that unreservedly approves of him."
friends / enemies	"If you are looking for friends when you need them, it's too late."
government / politics	"If you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed, if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed."
government / politics	"No man's life, liberty, or property is safe while the legislature is in session."
government / politics	"Suppose you were an idiot and suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself."
government / politics	"The only difference between a tax man and a taxidermist is that the taxidermist leaves the skin."

government / politics	"There is no distinctly native American criminal class...save Congress."
happiness	"The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up."
humor	"It usually takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech."
humor	"In Paris they simply stared when I spoke to them in French; I never did success in making those idiots understand their own language."
leadership	"The right word may be effective, but no word was ever as effective as a rightly timed pause."
learning / knowledge / wisdom	"A classic is something that everybody wants to have read and nobody has."
learning / knowledge / wisdom	"A man who does not read good books does not have any advantage over the person who cannot read them."
life	"Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first."

life	<p>"Life would be infinitely happier if we could only be born at the age of eighty and gradually approach eighteen."</p>
life	<p>"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."</p>
optimism / pessimism	<p>"The man who is a pessimist before forty-eight knows too much; if he is an optimist after it he knows too little."</p>
success / failure	<p>"Why not go out on a limb? That's where the fruit is."</p>