

Managing Time for Success in College

Time is one of our most important resources.

Effective time management is a skill most people need to make the most out of their personal and professional lives.

To a college student, it can make the difference between a mediocre and a superior performance.

To manage time effectively, you must control it by **establishing goals** and **following a schedule**.

Below is a method of scheduling and time management that will help you achieve your goals and manage your time effectively:

A Weekly Priority List

Before each school week begins, prepare a weekly priority list that takes into account both short and long-term assignments. List those things that you both need and want to accomplish during the week. Use your weekly priority list to break down long-term assignments into manageable pieces and to monitor progress toward your goals.

- Identify what needs to be read, reviewed, or written for each course (list specific chapters and pages).
- Review test schedules and long-term assignments and specify time for preparation, including, for example, library time for research if a research paper is assigned.

A Month-at-a-Glance Calendar

Write all important dates on a month-at-a-glance calendar. These dates are your goals and referring often to your calendar will help you keep focused on your goals.

- Note when assignments, reports, and research papers are due.
- Record dates for quizzes, tests, mid-terms, final examinations, and presentations.

In order to create an efficient schedule for yourself follow these five steps:

1. Identify committed time.

- Record things you must do and/or will do (class, work, church, family activities, exercise, commuting, etc.) and record their appropriate times.

2. Identify personal time.

- Record the time you need for sleeping, eating, grooming, doing household chores, etc.

3. Estimate study time.

- Begin by following the two-for-one rule: Plan to spend two hours studying outside of the classroom for every one hour of class each week. If you spend a total of 12 hours in classes each week, plan at least 24 hours of study time in your schedule. Allot more time to difficult classes and less time to easier classes. Eventually, you will discover how much study time you will need in order to succeed in each class.

4. Establish a study plan. Set specific times for studying. When possible, incorporate the following time management principles:

- Determine when your high and low periods of concentration occur. Reserve peak times for intensive studying. Use less efficient times for less intensive tasks like rewriting notes and recopying or typing assignments.
- Schedule study times according to class periods and course formats. Study close to the time you are in class. Some classes take more preparation before class, others require review after class.
 - *For a class in which you discuss and recite, plan to study just before class begins.
 - *For a lecture course, plan to study soon after the class ends.
- Study in time blocks. Plan 50-minute blocks of study time separated by 10-minute rest periods. Your study time will be more focused when you know when a break will occur.
- Study difficult subjects first. When you begin studying, your mind is alert and fresh and your concentration is better. *Do not give in to the temptation to get easy things and little assignments out of the way first.*
- Practice distributed learning. Learning occurs more effectively if it is spaced over several study sessions. Study a subject one hour each on three nights rather than three hours in one evening. You will master the material more easily if you follow this method.

- Use daylight hours productively. Research shows that each hour used for studying during the day is equal to 1 ½ hours used at night.
- **Disconnect!** Silence your cell phones so you are not distracted from incoming calls, text messages, and social media.
- Allow adequate time for eating well-balanced meals, sleeping eight hours a night, resting quietly, and relaxing with friends. Your physical health and mental attitude contribute significantly to your success as a student. Leave enough time in your schedule for your physical, social, and recreational needs.

5. **Revise your plan.** Eventually you will discover what kind of plan will work best as you live with your plan and edit it. Remember to make sure your plan is sensible and well-balanced to ensure success.

Timesaving Tips

Learn how to read your textbooks, take tests and class notes, and organize material more efficiently.

Pick up handouts, attend workshops, and enroll in courses that will improve your study and test taking skills.

Form the habit of studying in one place that is conducive to study.

- A routine of study in one place establishes an association between the studying habit and the place.
- Do not select a place to study that you already associate with another activity, like your bed or where you watch TV.

Look critically at your habits and methods.

Use spare moments for memorizing, reviewing, organizing, reflecting, etc.

Use lists to keep yourself organized and save time:

- Keep lists of errands to run, purchases to make, books to borrow at the library, ideas to remember, etc.
- Look over your lists daily and see where you can combine activities.
- Keeping lists and combining activities can reduce the time you need to do things.

Be tough on yourself.

Make a habit of setting an alarm and obeying it.

Realize that laziness, procrastination, distractibility, and daydreaming are self-defeating behaviors.

Avoid making excuses for yourself and exceptions in your study schedule and routines.

Time pressures often are the cause of failures in college. Relieve yourself of some pressure before your performance in all courses is affected. You need to find your optimum workload by managing your time well and by trying not to do more than you can realistically accomplish.

Be determined and courageous.

Realize that you will be successful if you focus on your goals.