

A Note about Time Management

Personal style often defines what works and what doesn't as far as managing time is concerned. The point is that **you need an organizing system that works for you**, not one that burdens you. This may entail that you pull useful elements from multiple time management tools in order to customize your own time management system. Consider your own needs and "preferences". Feel free to modify the suggestions to fit your way of being in this world. Good luck.

Habits of Effective Time Managers

HABIT 1: BE PROACTIVE IN YOUR EDUCATION

- Take initiative; don't wait for others to act first
- Be responsible for what you do and don't do
- Take control over your semester, rather than it taking control of you!

HABIT 2: BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND

- Think things through
- Plan your work
- Set realistic goals
 - List the steps and time frame needed to achieve your goals

HABIT 3: PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST

- Make sure to distinguish the goals that are truly important (e.g. completion of a research project) from those that may seem urgent but are really not important (e.g. arranging the weekend's softball game for your buddies).
- Do not spend a large amount of time doing busywork--work that appears productive but only keeps you occupied.

HABIT 4: LOOK AHEAD

- Essential to being proactive, as opposed to reactive, is to project ahead
- One way to effectively do this is to keep a calendar for each month of the semester
 - From the syllabi for your courses and the General Information Catalogue, note the important dates such as test dates, due dates of important assignments, times of mid-term and final exams, holidays, registration periods, drop dates, and financial aid deadlines.
 - In filling out your calendars, note the times of the semester that will be difficult for you and begin to develop a plan to address the difficulties you anticipate.

- Because there are numerous activities you will have to balance in a given week, keeping a weekly schedule in which you determine the week's work is highly advised.
 - First block in fixed activities, such as classes, labs, meetings, meals, chores, and sleep. Use this as a master schedule template that you will use to make each week's schedule.
 - Then, before each week, make a list of study and other tasks that need to be completed; using this list, add study and recreation times to your schedule. Be specific and realistic.
 - An effective tool for those students who occasionally have more to do than they can keep track of in their minds is the daily "to do" list.
 - If regularly composing daily "to do" lists is not your thing, consider using one when you find yourself "in the weeds" for example, during mid-terms or the well-known end-of-semester crunch. A well-crafted list can do wonders.

ONE LAST WORD...

- If you have never managed your time before, it will take a little bit of time to learn how and to do it.
- Keep in mind, the more you do it the better and faster you will get.
- Stick with it for approximately **30 days** so that you can evaluate its effectiveness. You may discover that you need to make some slight modifications.
- You do not have to do everything outlined in this paper. Instead identify those suggestions mentioned that will enhance your way of managing time.
- Remember, in many cases, you will have to modify our advice to fit your learning style and circumstance.
- While you are scrutinizing your use of time, make sure to note any patterns to your wasting time. Also note under what circumstances you use time effectively. **No one knows you better than yourself.**

Things to Consider While Composing Your Schedule

1. Schedule fixed blocks of time first

- Start with class and work time, for instance.
- Then schedule essential daily activities like sleep and eating.
- Once you've schedule fixed blocks of time, then you can see what time you have left and schedule around them.
- Also note that optimum efficiency is often reached by planning in blocks of 1 hour- fifty minutes to study and ten minutes for a break. Yes... take breaks when you study!
- Schedule time for fun, but make sure to schedule study hours before fun activities.

2. Discover how long to study for each course.

- **Study approximately two hours for every hour in class.** Start out by allowing two hours of study for every hour in class. Adjust the hours accordingly.
- The time required varies from student to student and from subject to subject.

3. Use daylight hours effectively.

- Research shows that many students do not make effective use of daytime hours. These students tend to save all of their work for the evening, when they are least likely to do it or when they are most susceptible to procrastination.

4. Break large assignments into more workable tasks.

- When one of your assignments is large and overwhelming, divide it into small, more manageable units. Then schedule your time appropriately.

5. Allow larger blocks of time for learning new material.

- Understanding new material often requires that you analyze difficult concepts, which requires a lot of time.

6. Make use of small blocks of time, particularly for review.

- Busy students often need to take advantage of small blocks of time.
- Use short blocks of time to memorize lists of items.
- Spend a few minutes after each class reviewing and editing your lecture notes

7. Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions.

- Distributed study (distributing the work over a period of days) is far more effective than massed study (cramming).
 - The problem with cramming is that there is too little time to seek clarification about difficult concepts and to prepare adequately for most test--all of which can increase anxiety and lessen your ability to concentrate during a test.
 - In a nine- or ten-hour study marathon, the percentage of time actually spent on task can be depressingly small due to fatigue and burnout. Whereas three shorter sessions will likely yield much more productive use of time.

8. Schedule study periods for difficult courses for times when you are most alert and can concentrate best--that is, when you're "running on all cylinders."

9. Set clear starting and stopping times.

- If you note only the deadline, there's a good chance that you'll wait until the last minute to get started.

10. Schedule time for exercise and plan for adequate amount of sleep.

- Regular exercise can alleviate stress and enhance concentration.
- Too little sleep contributes to fatigue, a lack of mental alertness, and irritability.
- The quality of your education often depends on sufficient sleep.

11. Allow flexibility into your schedule; don't schedule all of your time.

- Leave a little room for unexpected events. If you pack your weekly schedule with too many details, the chances of your following such a schedule are very slim.
- Leave one of the weekend days free for errands, fun and relaxation. Not leaving time for errands and relaxation can contribute to stress and lower productivity.

Evaluate your Study Needs for this Semester

DIRECTIONS: Print this page

1. Using the form below, list your courses by title.
2. Write in your instructors' names.
3. Fill in their office location (building and office number) and office hours so that you can find them when you need help.
4. If you will have graded quizzes, check the appropriate box. Record in the next column the number of major tests that you will have.
5. Check if class participation is graded. You are being graded if your instructor writes in a grade book during question periods.
6. Under Written Assignments and Outside Readings, either write in "little," "some," "much," or "none" Use abbreviations if necessary.
7. Check if you have had some recent preparation for a course.
8. Under performance in similar course record "superior," "average," "could be improved" or write in your grades from previous courses.
9. After reviewing each course's requirements and your preparation and past performance, write in the final box opposite each course title "yes" or "no." For each "yes" answer in that column, see your instructor for help or find out where you can get help, for example, tutoring.

Course Title	Teacher	Office Location	Office Hours	Quizzes	Tests	Class Participation	Written Assignments	Outside Reading	High School or other Preparation	Performance in Similar Course	Need for Special Help