

TIME MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

1. Take one minute to write next to each activity about how much time you spend on it each week:

- a. Classes _____
- b. Work _____
- c. Homework/ Studying _____
- d. Life _____

2. Following the class activity, fill out the attached weekly calendar with your actual schedule.

3. After you have completed the calendar, re-calculate the time for each activity that you estimated in Question #1.

- a. Classes _____
- b. Work _____
- c. Homework/Studying _____
- d. Life _____
- e. Other _____

4. What did you notice?

5. What changes do you need to make?

6. How might you apply these strategies at work?

Name _____

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TOP 12 Time-Management Tips

How to balance your college course load and homework (and still have a life).

By Lynn F. Jacobs and Jeremy S. Hyman – Oct 14, 2009 from:

<http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/professors-guide/2009/10/14/top-12-time-management-tips>

College is like juggling. Five balls in the air that you're trying to not let drop. Between going to class, doing the homework, taking the tests, perhaps holding down a job, raising a family—well, how's a mere mortal supposed to do all this stuff? It boils down to managing your time. But how are you supposed to do *that*? Here are our top 12 tips for managing your overcrowded schedule:

1. Block your courses. Many students think that they'll learn better if they scatter their courses throughout the day, with frequent off-hours. Wrong. If you take your courses back to back as much as possible, you'll have larger blocks of time to devote to concerted bouts of studying. Usually, if you have a gap of 50 minutes between classes, it's much more likely to end up as Twitter or Facebook time rather than study time. And if you can group your classes on only two or three days, it will free whole days for studying.
2. Make a plan. It's never too early to start figuring out how you'll do all the work in each of your five classes. In fact, the very first day of classes is the right time. Enter all the assignments—including weekly assignments, quizzes, and exercises or short papers—into your electronic or print calendar. Then develop a plan for both your run-of-the-mill weekly studying and the mondo research paper or killer final.

Rule of Thumb: 1 hour of lecture time = 2 hours of study time. Plan accordingly.

3. Aim to make all the classes. Going to classes is one of the most time-efficient things you can do. When you miss class, it takes much more time to learn the material you missed than it would have taken if you went to class in the first place. And you never learn it as well. Who could, getting notes from that guy who writes illegibly?
4. Determine whether you're an owl or a rooster. Schedule your studying for times when you can seriously engage with the work. This can be very different, depending on your biochronology. Some students find 11 p.m. the perfect time to focus, others 7 a.m. Just because your roommate or partner studies at a particular time doesn't mean it will work for you.

Extra Pointer. Be sure to schedule time for sleep. Whether you study in the depths of night or at the crack of dawn, you'll need seven or eight hours of sleep. What good is it managing your waking time if you're so wasted that you can't concentrate on what you're doing?

5. Keep a log. Especially at the beginning of the semester, you should track how long it takes you to do the homework in each of your classes, prepare for quizzes and tests, and write short papers. Knowing this can help you plan the time frame for future course assignments. Also,

writing it down will prevent you from overestimating how long you're really studying (at least if you're recording honestly).

4-Star Tip. Adjust your study plan dynamically as the semester progresses. Typically, you'll find that some courses get harder as they go, that some projects take longer than you planned, and that the workload is divided unevenly over the semester in some courses. The more flexible and open-minded you are about time management, the more successfully you will do it.

6. Do your homework on time. Even though there's no parent or teacher to stand over you, be sure you're doing the outside-of-class work when it's assigned. Doing the reading *in advance* of the lecture, studying for each quiz as it comes along, and memorizing what needs to be memorized on a week-by-week basis are all strategies that will increase your efficiency and cut down on overall study time. Sure, it's tempting to blow off the homework when there's no test looming or when the prof doesn't bother to call on anyone in class. But the fun will quickly diminish when you have 500 pages of reading to catch up on two days before the test.

7. Balance your courses. Every professor thinks his or her course is the most important activity in the universe. Learn to *triage* your courses—that is, to spend different amounts of time on each course, depending on how important or difficult that course is. Do not spend all your time on the course you find most enjoyable or easiest to do. And if you find you're spending every waking hour on one of your courses, cut back. Keep in mind that you've signed up for four or five courses, each of which will count for 25 or 20 percent of your grade.

8. Learn to focus. You're used to getting your content in 140-character units, in 20-second bursts, or with lots of video to go with it. But college is not Twitter, YouTube, or Hulu. In college, whether in the lecture, the reading, or the problem sets, sustained attention is needed. Learn to focus—without breaks and without additional stimulation—for 15- to 20-minute units. We know it's hard to reprogram your brain. But doing so will prevent your having to start focusing again—and overcoming your resistance—50 times an hour.

9. Plan to do each task once. It's very time-inefficient to do things twice. Some students think they'll learn better by copying their notes over (more neatly this time) or listening to the same lecture twice (once in person, once on their mp3 player), or doing the reading three times (once to get the general idea, once to focus on the plot and characters, and once to take notes). Fuggetaboutit. All these are incredible time-wasters. And it's not likely that you'll be able to focus or understand better the second time. Advice? Do it once, and do it right.

10. Divide and conquer. Break up larger projects, such as research papers, field studies, and cumulative finals, into manageable chunks. And spread the stages over a reasonable number of days. Always add some extra time above what you think you need, because usually there's a major crunch or crisis toward the end. It's better to have a little extra time than to find yourself running around like a madman when your computer crashes at 4 o'clock the morning before a paper is due.

11. Don't take 10-day holidays. Some students think it's their God-given right to take off a few days before Thanksgiving holidays and spring break—and a few days after. Instead, consider it your religious duty to tote your textbooks to Cancun and consult them while bonging your beer.

12. Tell them where to go. During periods of peak work—midterms, seminar presentations, and exam times, for instance—shed commitments that are not absolutely necessary. Tell your parents you can't worry about their Christmas plans; tell your frat head that you can't be bothered with his community service project; tell your boss you need a much-reduced work schedule; and tell your minister (gasp) that someone else needs to help with the reception after church. There are only 168 hours in a week, and you'll be managing your time a whole lot better if you devote yourself exclusively to schoolwork. At least a few weeks a semester.

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Time Tips

- 1.Count all your time as time to be used and make every attempt to get satisfaction out of every moment.
- 2.Find something to enjoy in whatever you do.
- 3.Try to be an optimist and seek out the good in your life.
- 4.Find ways to build on your successes.
- 5.Stop regretting your failures and start learning from your mistakes.
- 6.Remind yourself, "There is always enough time for the important things." If it is important, you should be able to make time to do it.
- 7.Continually look at ways of freeing up your time.
- 8.Examine your old habits and search for ways to change or eliminate them.
- 9.Try to use waiting time-review notes or do practice problems.
- 10.Keep paper or a calendar with you to jot down the things you have to do or notes to yourself.
- 11.Examine and revise your lifetime goals on a monthly basis and be sure to include progress towards those goals on a daily basis.
- 12.Put up reminders in your home or office about your goals.
- 13.Always keep those long term goals in mind.
- 14.Plan your day each morning or the night before and set priorities for yourself.
- 15.Maintain and develop a list of specific things to be done each day, set your priorities and the get the most important ones done as soon in the day as you can. Evaluate your progress at the end of the day briefly.
- 16.Look ahead in your month and try and anticipate what is going to happen so you can better schedule your time.
- 17.Try rewarding yourself when you get things done as you had planned, especially the important ones.
- 18.Do first things first.
- 19.Have confidence in yourself and in your judgement of priorities and stick to them no matter what.
- 20.When you catch yourself procrastinating-ask yourself, "What am I avoiding?"
- 21.Start with the most difficult parts of projects, then either the worst is done or you may find you don't have to do all the other small tasks.
- 22.Catch yourself when you are involved in unproductive projects and stop as soon as you can.
- 23.Find time to concentrate on high priority items or activities.
- 24.Concentrate on one thing at a time.
- 25.Put your efforts in areas that provide long term benefits.
- 26.Push yourself and be persistent, especially when you know you are doing well.
- 27.Think on paper when possible-it makes it easier to review and revise.
- 28.Be sure and set deadlines for yourself whenever possible.
- 29.Delegate responsibilities whenever possible.
- 30.Ask for advice when needed.

Adapted from A. Lakein. *How to Get Control of Your Time And Your Life*

Using Time Management to Improve Study Skills

Step 1. Prepare a Term Calendar

At the start of each new term, before you get heavily involved in your studies or other activities, prepare a calendar that covers the entire term. Your term calendar can look like a regular monthly calendar, or it can employ a different format. Whichever format you choose, your term calendar should outline the following:

- Assignments with their due dates
- Tests with their dates
- All school activities
- All out-of-school and extra-curricular activities

Step 2. Prepare a Weekly Schedule

Unlike your term calendar, which is planned out in its entirety at the beginning of each term, your weekly schedule is prepared at the beginning of each new week. Each Sunday sit down and prepare your weekly schedule. Although you'll prepare your weekly schedule each Sunday, you should update your schedule as the week progresses and new items arise. To prepare your weekly schedule do the following:

- Write down on your calendar each class you have for each day of the week
- Take a look at your term calendar and write down on your weekly calendar items that need to be completed, or are occurring that week (i.e. assignments, tests, events, etc.)
- Go back and review all your class notes and your schedule from the prior week to see if there is anything you need to add to this week's schedule that is carrying over.
- Add to your weekly schedule any out-of-school and extra-curricular activities you'll be participating in during the upcoming week.
- Note down the day and time for each assignment, study session, work group or project you'll be completing during the week. These may be occurring in the evening, after school, or during school.

Step 3. Prepare a Daily Schedule

You'd think a term calendar and weekly schedule would be sufficient to effectively manage your time, but they aren't. You also need to prepare a daily schedule. Each evening, prepare a daily schedule for the next school day. Place a check mark next to each item to be completed as it is completed. To prepare your daily schedule do the following:

- Jot down everything from your weekly schedule that you need to do for the coming day.

- Write down everything from your previous daily schedule that wasn't completed and needs to be completed the next day.
- Check your daily schedule for the current day to see if there are any other school activities that you need to include for the following day.
- Include any other activities from your weekly schedule that need to be included in your next day's schedule

You'll notice that one of the keys to effectively managing your study time is to start with the big picture and then work down to the detail. Your term calendar provides direction and instruction for accomplishing the big picture. Your weekly and daily schedules provide the detail required to accomplishing everything in your term calendar, whereby enabling you to accomplish your term goals one day and week at a time.

Other Time Managements Skills

Once you've developed a term calendar, weekly schedule, and daily schedule, there are several other strategies that will help you accomplish more and make the most effective use of your time. These include:

- **Prioritize your assignments.** As you progress through your education, you'll find the topics of study become more complex, the work load more demanding and the material more challenging. By the time you arrive at college, there just isn't enough time in the day to get everything done. Start the habit of beginning your studying with the most difficult, or important, subject or task first. Tackling the hardest subjects first, while you're still fresh and energized, will make the remainder of your studies much easier.
- **Find a dedicated study space.** Some students will spend the first 20 minutes of their study time just looking for somewhere to study. A key to ongoing time management is to find a dedicated study space free from distractions where you can concentrate. If you want to change up your study space, that's fine, just make sure to find a study space that works and stick with it.
- **Create blocks of study time.** Not only should you have a dedicated study space, you should have dedicated study time—blocks of time where you focus on your studies. Blocks around 40 to 50 minutes are ideal, but may be longer or shorter based on the subject and your ability to focus. It's okay to take study breaks during your blocks for a snack, or just to get up and walk around, but make sure to return to your studies.
- **Schedule activities for after your school work.** One of the most difficult, yet important, elements of effective time management is to put your school work first. It's easy to say you'll get your school work done later, or just before you go to bed. It's just as easy to say you'll do it tomorrow when bedtime arrives and you no longer have the disposition or energy to get it done. Complete your school work as soon as possible. Putting off less important activities until after you

complete your school work will allow you stay on track and focus on your "fun" activities without the pressure looming school work.

- **Use helpful resources.** The old adage, if at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again, while useful for many of life's situations, isn't always the best philosophy when you're strapped for time and can't figure out your chemistry homework. As you progress through middle school, high school and then into college, it's wise to rely on the help, expertise and knowledge of others to assist you with the learning process. Smart friends, tutors, study groups, and even the Internet, are useful resources for tackling complex subjects and making the most effective use of your time.
- **Join a study group.** [Study groups](#) offers several advantageous to students, least of which is the ability to cover more material faster. Working in a study group makes it possible to research and learn about various topics quickly. Each member is assigned a topic and then provides a summary to the group.
- **Get exercise. Eat right. Get plenty of sleep.** Yeah, you've heard this before, but let us say it again. Get exercise, eat right and get plenty of sleep. If you're not at your peak, you won't be able to focus or concentrate, nor will you have the energy or stamina to get your studies completed efficiently. Going to bed an hour early, can make all the difference the next day in your ability to make the best use of your time.
- **Be flexible.** You can't plan for everything. Unforeseen obstacles are bound to pop up, so plan accordingly and be flexible. Just want sure to get back on track as soon as possible and maintain your monthly, weekly and daily schedule.