

Managing Your Time

*The quality of your life will depend upon
how you use your time.*

All activities require time. Your first responsibility as a college student is to be a student, but you will also need to allow time for food, exercise, fun, and rest. Your time must be managed if you are to have room for all these things.

There are 168 hours in a week. Here's how a successful student might use them:

- Studies = 45 (12 hours in class, 33 hours outside class)
- Sleep = 56
- Meals = 21
- Other = 46 (exercise, work, social life, unstructured fun)

Do you feel there isn't nearly enough time for all you have to do? If you take charge of your life, you'll find you have time to spare.

Avoid Distractions and Lack of Focus

Time is precious. Yet many students waste time by getting stuck in one or more of the following habits:

Procrastination – putting off important work.

Crises Management – being overwhelmed by the current crisis. No time for routine matters, such as reading and studying.

Switching and Floundering – lack of concentration and focus on one task.

Television, Telephone, and Friends – these are all ways of avoiding doing what is necessary.

Emotional Blocks – boredom, daydreaming, stress, guilt, anger and frustration reduce concentration.

Sickness – getting sick and blowing your schedule.

In all of these cases, the first step is to recognize the problem and resolve to improve. Use priority lists to focus attention (weekly calendar, daily, monthly or long-term). Try positive self-talk. To avoid distractions, find a quiet place to study. Let calls go to voicemail.

Manage Your Time and Define Your Priorities Using the 3-List Method

All time management begins with planning. Use lists to set priorities, plan activities and measure progress.

#1 -The Weekly Calendar.

- **Purchase a daily planner** and record in it your “fixed commitments” for the entire quarter: eating, sleeping, exercise, class times, work times, etc. Block these out. Make sure to allow enough time for eating, sleeping and exercise.
- **Block out special activities** on the days they will occur. Assume that Friday and Saturday nights will fill up by them-selves, even if you haven’t special plans.
- **Block out the remaining time for study**, in as regular a pattern as you can from week to week. Remember to allow 2 hours of study for every hour of class. Mark out specific time blocks for study in specific classes, as the timing of your study is important. Also, record due dates for major projects and tests.

Keep your calendar handy and refer to it often. Be flexible, adapt your schedule to changing needs. If it doesn’t work, change it!

#2 - The Daily “Things To Do” List.

Write down all the things that you want to do today. Note homework due or tests or subject you want to emphasize. Include shopping and personal calls, etc.

This list is a reminder. Use it to set daily priorities and to reduce decision-making and worry. If time is tight, move items to your “long term” list

Rewrite this list each morning. Use visualization to help you focus on what to do. This list is also a measure of your day-to-day success. Check off items as you finish them and praise yourself for each accomplishment.

#3 - Goals and Other Things.

This can be one or two lists, a monthly list and/or a long-term list. Put down your goals and things you have to do. What do you want to accomplish over the next month or year? What do you need to buy?

Use this list to keep track of all your commitments. If you are worried about something, put it on this list. The purpose of this list is to develop long-term goals and to free your mind to concentrate on today.