

Time Management Tips

Know your priorities

- What is most important to you?
- What do you need to accomplish today?
- What can wait until tomorrow? Next week?
- Should you choose going to a movie over writing a paper?

Keep track of your time usage for a week

- Indicate what activities you are doing and for what length of time.
- A time log will help you find patterns of how much time you need to spend on various activities.
- Once you know the amount of time you need, you can plan your time usage more effectively.

Set goals on a regular basis

- Write down your goals and the priorities for each goal on a regular basis, such as every evening sitting down and goal-setting and prioritizing for the next day.

Utilize peak energy and effectiveness

- When are you most effective? Most energetic? Sluggish?
- Complete high priority tasks and difficult tasks at times of peak energy and effectiveness.
- Complete difficult tasks FIRST - don't keep pushing them off!

Schedule study times close to class time

- In doing so, you will be reinforcing class materials close to the time that you will have discussed them, and can re-copy or organize notes when the class is still fresh in your mind.

Schedule specific tasks

- On your daily "to do list," indicate tasks such as "review biology notes," rather than indicating "study biology".

Establish a regular study pattern

- This will get you into a routine and mentally prepped to be working on a given subject at a given time.

Study in small chunks

- Study one subject for 45 minutes or so, and then change to a different subject.
- This will also help to keep your mind alert.

Get enough sleep and eat well

- You will not be efficient in your studying or classes if your body is not in optimal condition.

Take breaks

- A 10 or 15 minute break is a good idea every 45 minutes or so. This will allow you time to refresh your mind. It is also a great reward for sticking to your schedule!

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Be prepared to complete tasks anytime or anywhere

- Bring notes or a book with you if you are going to meet a professor. That way, if another student is talking to the instructor, you can get in some extra reading or a review of notes.

Find a study partner

- This can be motivating to some people, but very distracting to others. Determine whether or not this works for you. If it does not, discontinue studying with that person.

Find a location that works best for you

- A residence hall room, the library, a floor lounge, a restaurant, or outdoors can be both good and bad places to study. You need to find the place that enables you to concentrate, to not be interrupted frequently, and where you stay alert. The library is great for some people, but entirely too distracting for others!

Reward yourself

- Find a reward for completing your study (or other tasks). The reward could be a break, setting aside money to buy something for yourself, etc.

Schedule fun time

- Don't neglect the fact that you are an individual and will want to engage in particular leisure activities. Make time for the activities that you love!

Keep track of your long-term schedule

- Know when assignments are due and make sure that you build adequate time into your schedule in order to complete them. Look ahead to test dates, and make extra study time if needed.

Be prepared for the unexpected

- It can happen. Be flexible enough in your schedule to accommodate for circumstances beyond your control.

SOURCE: Starke, Mary C. (1990). Survival skills for college. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.



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