



Timely Tips



Managing Time

- Create a term calendar for the semester or quarter. Write in your important dates (i.e. tests, papers, etc.). Keep a spare copy in case you lose one.
- Do weekly plans. Develop your weekly plan at the end of the preceding week. List your goals and priorities on your weekly plan.
- Make sure you schedule enough time for studying and doing homework.
- Know your biological rhythms; whether you are a “morning” person or an “evening” person. Use this awareness to plan your most important classes or study at the times when you are at your best.
- Balance your work, family/partner, and college obligations. Try not to work more than 10-20 hours per week. Try to work on campus rather than off.
- If you commute, use this time effectively. For example, tape your instructors’ lectures if they will let you. Play them back on the way home or to school.
- Do not procrastinate. Tackle the tasks that you need to complete. If you are a procrastinator, set deadlines, meet them, and don’t make excuses. Become a better organizer.

Four Steps to Setting Priorities

1. Make your to-do list before you go to bed at night, or do the list first thing the next morning. Set priorities. Estimate how much time it will take to complete each task.
2. Identify the top-priority tasks and try to do them first. Do them in the morning, if possible.
3. Raise your time consciousness. Periodically look at or think about your list. Maybe you have a few items that take only a little time. Take care of these when you have a few minutes, but make sure you get your important tasks done before it’s too late in the day.
4. Toward the end of the day, examine your list. Challenge yourself to finish the few remaining high-priority items.

Tips for Commuters

- Save time by making and consistently using to-do lists and weekly plans.
- Record lectures, if allowed, and play them back on your commute.
- If you carpool with classmates, use the commuting time to discuss class material with them.
- Use a backpack or briefcase to carry the books and papers you use each day. Organize the materials you plan to use the next day at school the night before, and then put them in your bag.
- Exchange phone numbers with classmates early in the semester. Call them if you need to discuss class issues. You will also be able to contact them if you miss class and need notes.
- Register early to ensure the most convenient schedule.

Overcoming Procrastination

- Set a deadline and write it down. This creates a sense of urgency where none previously existed.
- Become better organized. Some procrastinators don’t organize things effectively. Develop a strategy for tackling work.
- Make a game of it. This is an effective plan for turning something you dread into something more enjoyable.
- Divide the task into smaller jobs. Sometimes we procrastinate because the task seems so complex and overwhelming. Set sub-goals of finishing smaller parts of the job individually. This strategy can turn an unmanageable task into a doable one. For example, imagine that today is Thursday and you have 15 math problems due Monday. Set a goal of doing 5 by Friday evening, 5 by Saturday evening, and 5 by Sunday evening.
- Reward yourself. This gives you an incentive to complete all or part of the task. For example, treat yourself to a movie if you get all of your math problems done.

