



## Time Management Checklist

Complete the following steps and you will be well on your way to successfully managing all that you need to accomplish. Check off each point once it is complete.

### Before you can get started . . .

- Purchase a **day-timer** that has specific time slots down the side of the page. Alternatively, you can photocopy blank schedules; however, you risk losing them and having things feel more chaotic than they already do. A day-timer is a worthwhile investment.
- Purchase, print, or photocopy a **monthly calendar** that you can post up in your room.
- Have a pencil and highlighter ready to go. Scheduling in pencil allows you to keep things flexible.

### Now, you are ready to begin . . .

- Look through each of your course calendars and record ALL of your essay, quiz, presentation, exam dates on your monthly calendar. Be sure to include not just the assignment, but what percentage it is worth, so you can allocate time appropriately. Also record all other important dates: birthdays, concert, dentist appointment, job interview, etc. All major due dates should be on your monthly calendar; do this for the rest of the semester (i.e. Sept-Dec, Jan-May). This part can be done in pen if you like. Use highlighters if you are a visual person!
- Post your monthly calendars up where you can see them (at least two months up at a time). The purpose of doing this is to allow yourself to quickly see what is coming up for you.
- Record all of the above dates in your day-timer. Block off the actual time that you will be busy with the particular task, not just a general note on the day.
- Open your day-timer to this week. Get your pencil ready . . .
- Block off all of your lectures, tutorials, labs, etc. Also, block off time for a job, extra-curricular commitments, etc.
- Block off time for tasks that are going to give you the energy to stay focused: breakfast/lunch/dinner, exercise (at least 2 x 30 minutes per week), bedtime, etc. Consider adding something SMALL to your schedule to recharge your batteries in any/all of the following

domains: **Physical** (e.g. exercise), **Emotional** (e.g. time with a good friend, watching a “feel-good” movie), **Mental** (e.g. doing something creative), and **Spiritual** (e.g. yoga, reading an inspirational book, listening to music, etc.)

- Look at the time that is left. Notice all of the big chunks of time AND small chunks of time.
- Consider each of your courses and look at the readings/assignments that you are responsible for that week. Block off time for each task, recording specifically what you are going to work on in that time (e.g. Tuesday 3-4 pm, read ch.3 for psychology, or complete 8 math problems). For each time slot remember that you want to build in time to review what you have done at the end—this is part of being an active learner. **Ask more about this if you are unclear!**
- Complete this for each class for the week.
  - FYI: You should be thinking about budgeting AT LEAST 1 hour of work time for every 1 hour of class time. This is the bare minimum and won't be enough during crunch time. If you can start now by trying to block off 1.5 to 2 hours for each hour of class you will be in good shape. Being a full-time student is like having a full-time job. If you have 15 hours of class a week and you give yourself 2 hours for every 1 hour of class, that means you have at least a 45-hour school week—and this will increase during crunch time. So, the better you get at planning AND using your time now, the more success you will have.
- Look at your monthly calendar and see what is coming up in the next few weeks. **Break that big project and due date into smaller chunks.** E.g. if you have an essay due in a month, break it down into choosing a topic, reading to come up with a thesis, developing your outline, writing the paper, editing, etc. Once you have done that, schedule in something for this week. Remember to keep your eye on these specific steps so that you can continually be working on preparing for papers, exams, etc.
- Be aware of when your brain is most alert and when you find it easiest to focus. As much as possible, try to schedule your “mind-intensive” work in those time slots.
- Take regular breaks. Try working for 25 minutes and taking a 5-minute break. This will help you stay motivated and focused, as well as increase your memory capacity.
- Also, consider creating a routine for your week. This can include time you go to bed/wake up, eat meals, read, write, check email, etc. Routines can be valuable for building momentum, preventing procrastination, and bolstering concentration.
- Now, get started. Remember, your schedule is just a framework for you to know what to do next . . . it can always be changed if necessary (hence doing it in pencil).
- At the end of each day, take 10 minutes to reflect on what you accomplished and what didn't get done. Look to see if you want to make any changes to the following day. Look ahead to the next day to see what you can expect. It is a good idea to prepare for the following day (e.g.

make your lunch, gather your books, etc) so that in the morning you can just wake up and get started.

- Have fun with this. Working through your course material step by step will helpfully prevent your feeling overwhelmed and stressed, and will give you the greatest change of actually LEARNING something. This is why you are here after all, isn't it?
- If you feel stuck or want support or feedback, don't hesitate to book an appointment with a learning skills counsellor and/or stop by during Drop-In hours.

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