

Time Management

Top Ten Tips for Student Leaders

1. Time management is all about **achieving your own goals**. Write out long-term, mid-term, and short-term goals, then check your progress often. Are you getting all you had hoped to out of college? Are academics getting as much attention as social life, job, or extracurricular organizations? Set goals to take full advantage of your academic and other opportunities and abilities.
2. On a **calendar**, enter all key days and events – tests, due dates, social events, projects for your organization. Divide big jobs (research papers, group projects, Homecoming) into small steps that are easier to approach. Work backwards from due dates to set target dates for starting and finishing each step. Carry your calendar with you to make it work for you!
3. Make a **weekly schedule**, beginning with time already committed to classes, labs, work, meetings. Then choose times for meals, sleep, exercise, errands, socializing, projects, and study. A schedule is an ideal; when unexpected events occur, a schedule helps you shift key tasks, rather than omitting them. A realistic schedule is a stress reliever.
4. Establish a **regular study schedule**, planning time for each course. College is your full-time job; to your 15 to 18 hours a week in class, add 15 to 25 hours of study time, in blocks of no more than an hour or two at a time on one course. Most adults work a 40-hour week, between 9am and 5pm, weekdays. Most students could attend all classes and do all studying during the same hours, leaving evening and weekends free for extracurricular activities, socializing, or part-time employment. You can do it all!
5. Schedule brief **study times before and after class** time for efficient preparation and review. Have an hour between classes? Don't go back to your residence hall or apartment! Edit the lecture notes from your last class, review the chapter to be discussed in your next class, start researching that paper topic.
6. Schedule your most difficult tasks at times when **your energy is at a peak**. Daytime study time is especially valuable, you're likely to be much more tired by evening. Also, consider location. Where do you concentrate best? Study your hardest course there.
7. **Work with someone else** – a serious study partner, an LEC tutor, your professor, a TA – to increase motivation and involvement. You'll learn more in less time.
8. Take regular **breaks**, maybe 5 minutes every half hour or 10-15 minutes after an hour of concentrated study. Move around, get something to eat or drink, make a short phone call, check your email.
9. **Reward yourself** when you stick to studying – a nap, a snack, some TV, a magazine!
10. Make daily **to-do lists** of all you want to accomplish. Do you tend to procrastinate? Then this is very important! Daily, list tasks, prioritize, estimate time needed, check off completed tasks. Shift those not done to tomorrow's list. This is how to do it all!

Adapted from the Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center

How to Beat Procrastination

- Do the most unpleasant task in your day or weekend first
- If you work better under the pressure of a deadline, impose one on your most dreaded task
- Divide large tasks into small pieces
- Remember that you don't always need large, uninterrupted blocks of time to work on a project
- Do what you can for the day, and don't be hard on yourself when the low-priority items are incomplete

Adapted from How to Overcome Procrastination (Sandra Davis)

The Pitfalls of Poor Planning

- Being unrealistic about what you can accomplish each day
- Failing to have your calendar with you all day
- Forgetting to allow time between appointments
- Not allowing at least 1.5 hours each day for the unexpected
- Not having an effective system for capturing and retrieving information
- Retaining unnecessary information
- Not allowing time for advanced planning

Adapted from Franklin Covey