

# Time Management Tips That Work

Time management is the ability to use one's time effectively. It is incredibly important to students as it helps in completing more in shorter time periods. Additionally, better time management is related to increased attention, motivation and overall academic success. Follow along with this mural to learn more.

## What do studies say?

### Make helpful choices to improve your time management skills

Better time management comes from incorporating a number of lifestyle and academic choices into a student's schedule. This could include,

- Balancing school tasks
- A healthy diet
- Daily exercise
- Adequate sleep

Adams, R. V., & Blair, E. (2019), Study of Impact of Time Management on Academic Performance of College Students, Impact of Time Management Behaviors on Undergraduate Engineering Students' Performance. SAGE Open. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018824506>

### Multitasking is not the answer for bettering time management.

- It can actually be more of a distraction compared to focusing on one task at a time.
- Switching between tasks (multitasking) can lead to a decrease in productivity with an increase in fatigue and feelings of stress.
- These are some ways to help avoid and stop multitasking.
  - Give yourself time to adapt and focus on single tasks.
  - Avoid any distractions (turn off phone, find quiet study space, etc.).
  - Set specific goals at the start of study sessions with realistic deadlines.

Bowman, L. L., Levine, L. E., Waite, B. M., & Gendron, M. (2010), Can students really multitask? An experimental study of instant messaging while reading, Can students really multitask? An experimental study of instant messaging while reading. *Computers & Education*, 54(4), 927–931. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2009.09.024>

## What are some diet apps and websites I can use?

### Pomofocus.io ([pomofocus.io](https://pomofocus.io))

- Laptop friendly study timer that follows the Pomodoro technique which is a great tool for time management.
- Has an adjustable timer with short or long breaks in between.
- Includes a to do task list to accompany study times.

## Focus-To-Do ([www.focustodo.cn](http://www.focustodo.cn))

- Use the Pomodoro method to help with time management and avoid burnout.
- Combines the timer and running to list in one convenient place.
- Great for setting and planning out tasks and using a timer to complete them.

## Google calendar ([calendar.google.com/calendar](https://calendar.google.com/calendar))

- This app can be used on phones, tablets and laptops interchangeably through any Gmail accounts.
- Students can block out their time and keep track of any tasks/assignments and set to do lists all in one place.
- Very easy to use and can be further organized with colour coordination etc.
- Can also choose to view their time by the month, week or day so it is very customizable.

## Daily task planner (<https://uoft.me/taskplanner>)

- Complete a weekly schedule and write down your task for the day under the 'planned tasks' column
- Review your list of planned tasks every morning
- Check the 'actual tasks' you completed
- Consider what got in the way and if there is anything you can do to improve productivity

## What are some strategies/resources I can use?

### Create semester and weekly schedules

#### How to create semester schedule

1. Write down important deadlines (assignment, exams etc.)
2. Add any special events, meetings, workshops
3. Add any holidays or birthdays
4. Schedule in any personal appointments

#### How to create weekly schedule

1. Add fixed activities (lectures, work shifts)
2. Add fixed study blocks for each course (2-3 hours for each lecture hour of course)
3. Add 1-2 hours of buffer study blocks for catching up
4. Add any personal tasks
5. Schedule social and personal time (use tools detailed in apps and websites)

### Follow Pomodoro Technique

#### [www.focusboosterapp.com/pomodoro-technique-planning](http://www.focusboosterapp.com/pomodoro-technique-planning)

The Pomodoro method is a technique using a timer to break down work into intervals (25 minutes of study with 5-minute breaks in between studying). Here are some benefits of this strategy:

- Decrease mental fatigue and burnout
- Increase motivation
- Manage distractions and control time better
- Increases focus and attention

## Sample schedule

- Choose a task
- Focus on set task
- Work (25 minutes)
- Short break (5 minutes)
- Repeat
- After 4<sup>th</sup> session break for 20 minutes

## Make a plan

For assignments try out the Assignment Calculator (<https://ctl.utsc.utoronto.ca/assignmentcal/>)

- Choose your start date, end date, and assignment type.
- Get step-by-step breakdown of how and when to complete tasks for assignments along with helpful resources to complete assignment.
- Download and save plan as PDF or you can always go back to edit plan to give yourself more time.

## Additionally try...

- Make plans or share goals with friends to keep yourself accountable and motivated.
- If wanting one-to-one help on time management, make an appointment with an [AA&CC peer coach](#).
- Make it fun whether trying a more creative time management tool (bullet journaling etc.) Time management doesn't need to be a chore.

Resource developed by Shayna Britto (Study skill peer coach)

