

# Managing Time

The Easy Way



COUNSELING & CAREER DEVELOPMENT



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Don't say you don't have enough time.  
You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were  
given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa,  
Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein.

--H. Jackson Brown

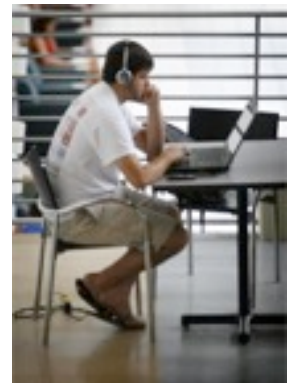
# Do You...

YES NO

Feel there's just not enough time in a day?	_____	_____
Go to study for a test or work on a project and discover it's going to take a lot longer than you thought?	_____	_____
Feel like you rush from one thing to another yet accomplish very little?	_____	_____
Over extend yourself socially and/or academically and/or volunteer-wise?	_____	_____
End up cramming the night before a test?	_____	_____
Know you have a million things to do but can't seem to get any of them done during the day?	_____	_____
Feel constantly time pressured?	_____	_____
Set goals and then rarely achieve them?	_____	_____
Put off difficult or disliked assignments until the last minute?	_____	_____
Spend a lot of time doing things you don't enjoy?	_____	_____
Feel tired or stressed most of the time?	_____	_____
Skip classes to work on other classes?	_____	_____
Miss dead lines or due dates?	_____	_____
Have a hard time keeping your priorities?	_____	_____
Get the grades you want?	_____	_____
Know you need to spend more time studying but just can't seem to find it?	_____	_____
Turn assignments in late?	_____	_____

To see if you are in control of time or if it's in control of you, total the number of "yeses" and compare with the following.

- 0 GREAT! YOU'RE HIGHLY ORGANIZED, KNOW YOUR LIMITS AND PLAN ACCORDINGLY. WELL DONE!
- 1-5 YOU'RE DOING PRETTY WELL, BUT MAY BE SLIPPING UP IN SOME AREAS. YOU USUALLY PLAN WELL, BUT MAY OVER-EXTEND YOURSELF. POLISH YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT SKILL TO FEEL EVEN MORE IN CONTROL OF YOUR TIME.
- 6-13 WATCH OUT! YOUR TIME IS SLIPPING AWAY FROM YOU! YOU MANAGE YOUR TIME SPORADICALLY AND LET THINGS PILE UP ON YOU. YOU DEFINITELY NEED TO ORGANIZE YOUR TIME MORE CAREFULLY.
- 14-17 UH-OH!! YOU'RE THE TYPICAL "WHERE DID ALL MY TIME GO?" CANDIDATE. YOU FEEL OVERWHELMED AND OUT OF CONTROL WITH YOUR LIFE. IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GET CONTROL OF YOUR TIME. DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE. START NOW!



# DID YOU KNOW?

**There are 168 hours in a week**

Most students spend about:

- 15 hours in class ( $168-15=153$ )
- 49 hours sleeping ( $7 \times 7$ ) ( $153-49=104$ )
- 7 hours getting ready ( $1 \times 7$ ) ( $104-7=97$ )
- 18 hours eating ( $2.5 \times 7$ ) ( $97-18=79$ )
- 7 hours doing errands ( $79-7=72$ )
- 28 hours "hanging out" ( $4 \times 7$ ) ( $72-28=44$ )
- Other?

So, here you are in college. You're in class only 15 out of 168 hours a week, you can stay up as late as you want, stay out as late as you want, sleep when you want, eat when you want, and no one is here to tell you when you have to do practically anything. You've probably noticed by now that all this freedom can be hard to manage. One of the biggest challenges for any new student (and many not-new students) is organizing their time so all the work and studying gets done while still having lots of time for fun, friends, food and sleep.



Time marches on, with or without you, whether you like it or not. The trick is **managing yourself** to keep pace with the non-stop movement of time. There are no mysterious secrets about how to do this, but there are some things you can do so you won't find yourself overly stressed, missing assignments and sleep, skipping classes to catch up in other classes or missing out on the fun things college life has to offer.

**Do yourself a favor, and read through this booklet completely.** Try applying the suggestions and using the worksheets. Try this consistently and conscientiously for 2 weeks as an experiment. You might be surprised at what a difference it makes. If you apply these suggestions, it's guaranteed you'll feel more in charge of life. You will feel that you are accomplishing more of what's important to you by setting priorities that will help you attain your goals, and feel less stressed and have more time to have fun. Not a bad deal!

# Time Tips

## **Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions.**

You'll learn more, remember more, and experience less stress if you spread your studying skills throughout the day. Try studying for about an hour at a time, then take a break. If you plan on studying more after your break, make sure you put a limit on how long your break is going to be.

## **Set clear starting and stopping times for studying.**

This will help keep you focused on the task at hand. Don't overdo the studying, but don't under-do it either. Pace yourself!

## **Set a goal to accomplish for each study period.**

Set a clear goal about what it is you will accomplish every time you sit down to study. Knowing what to focus on will make the time go by faster, give you a sense that you are really accomplishing something, and make learning more effective. Be realistic with your goals. Don't plan on reading an entire chapter in one hour! Most students find it actually takes longer to complete a study goal than they first thought. If you complete your goal before your scheduled stopping time, take an extra break or reward yourself.



## **Studying is *always* a priority.**

Students who do well in college study, it's plain and simple. To be one of these students, you will need to study AT LEAST 3-4 hours daily. Build this time into your daily routine and do not compromise your studies. Keep in mind that all the fun things and great friends you experience in college happen because you are a student at The University of West Georgia. Staying a student means you must study!

## **Balance your time.**

Make sure you have a variety of activities throughout your day. Include exercise and fun, time to relax, time to study, time for yourself, time with friends, etc. All work and no play makes for a very dull and frustrating college life! But again, keep studying and doing well in classes as your number one priority.

## **Study when you are alert.**

To study effectively and really learn something takes energy and effort. If you are worn out or half asleep, staying focused and involved is very difficult. Find times during the day and early evening to study when you are alert and feeling awake. Do not study into the wee hours of the morning. Studying with a dull mind does very little to help you meet your goals. And don't study in bed!

### **Plan for the unplanned.**

Give yourself enough flexibility in your day to attend to things as they pop up. Don't forget to ask yourself if whatever it is that came up requires your immediate attention, if it can be effectively handled during your free time, if it fits in your priorities, or if it can be left unattended. Keep your priorities straight, but don't panic if something occasionally messes up.

### **Put a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your door.**

Another struggle for many students is saying "NO" to friends. It may be more fun to go out for pizza, shoot some hoops at the Campus Center or watch a movie, but those are not priorities. Learning to say, "No, I can't right now," is a primary survival skill that successful college students must master.



Let others know when you are studying and encourage them not to bother you during that time. If you can get your roommate or others who live near you on a similar schedule, you can use each other for support to keep studying a priority.

If it's too noisy where you live, if your roommate is uncooperative, or if you can't avoid distractions, **try the Ingram Library.**



### **Try to maintain a "normal" schedule.**

Do your best to keep your life as normal and sane as possible. Don't stay up all night and sleep all day. Try to get up in the morning at about the same time. Don't sleep too much or too little. You need 7 hours of sleep at least 3 nights a weeks to keep your brain functioning well. A continued lack of sleep, a crazy schedule and growing frustration lead to getting sick. Remember to eat well and exercise, too!



# Reality Check

Most people have little idea of what happens to their time. The first step in finding out where your time goes is to monitor it. The goal is to become conscious of how you spend your time. Once you know how your time is spent, you can find ways to manage it so you won't waste time on things that are not important to you.

For a week, keep a copy of this page with you and periodically throughout the day, jot down how you spent your time. If you want to, you can make a plan and then see if you actually accomplished what you set out to do. This is a great way to begin organizing your day. Write down everything; time spent in class, riding the bus (or waiting for it), walking to class, traveling from home, watching T.V., eating, sleeping, lounging, working out, and of course, studying...write down everything! You might be surprised where your time actually goes. Don't forget to make copies of this page before you start writing on it. You'll want to do this for at least a week and then take a hard look at how you spent your time. Don't be too critical of yourself, but be wise enough to make some changes if your priorities aren't being met.



	Planned	Actually Did
6:00		
7:00		
8:00		
9:00		
10:00		
11:00		
12:00		
1:00		
2:00		
3:00		
4:00		
5:00		
6:00		
7:00		
8:00		
9:00		
10:00		
11:00		
12:00		
1:00		
2:00		

	Planned	Actually Did
6:00		
7:00		
8:00		
9:00		
10:00		
11:00		
12:00		
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3:00		
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9:00		
10:00		
11:00		
12:00		
1:00		
2:00		

# On Using Schedules

If you plan to use the blank schedules in this booklet, follow these guidelines to get the most of them.



## 1. **Make copies of the blank schedules before you start.**

It usually takes a few weeks of trial and error before you find a schedule that consistently works well. Keep making changes until it feels right. Just keep in mind tips throughout this booklet when you make changes and be sure to make studying a priority. Keep with it until you've got it down!

## 2. **Schedule fixed blocks of time first.**

This includes things that you know will happen on a regular basis; classes, work, favorite T.V. show, club meetings, etc. Work the rest of your schedule around these fixed items.

## 3. **Schedule study time next.**

Remember to find times throughout the day when you are most alert and able to think clearly. Schedule at least 3-4 hours Monday-Friday and some time on the weekend. Sundays make a great day to review and prepare for the week.

## 4. **Schedule free time, fun time and exercise time.**

Keeping a balance between your needs, others' needs, school needs and other things that are important to you is a necessity.

## 5. **Use the schedules.**

Keep a copy with you to refer to throughout the day. Put a copy above your desk and tape a copy on the back of your bedroom door. That way, when you leave, you'll have to check your schedule.



# For List Lovers

If you like making lists and find them helpful in keeping you on track, then you probably already have a system that works for you. If you don't, try this one; it's an easy way to help you set priorities. Of course, you can create a variation you want as long as it works for you.



On one page (or a 3x5 index card) create 3 columns and label them to reflect the priority of each task. This is known as the “Must-Should-Could Method”. Things in the “Must” column require immediate attention. Items in the “Should” column need attention soon. The things in the “Could” column have the least importance at the time, but could move up on the list as time passes. These items are usually the most fun on the list, so be careful not to give in to temptation. Just remember the old phrase, “must before should, and never after could.”

MUST	SHOULD	COULD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Type final draft due tomorrow</li><li>• Tutor - 3:00 p.m.</li><li>• Mail Mom's B-day card</li><li>• Frisbee championship 4:30 p.m.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do Laundry</li><li>• Start research - POLS paper; due next Tues.</li><li>• Get oil changed</li><li>• Call home (\$)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Movie 8:00 w/Bob</li><li>• Start looking for job</li><li>• Check out Judo club</li></ul>
Do it today	Do it soon	Not priority yet

# Example Schedule

10/3- 10/7

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
6:00					
7:00	Get up!		Get Up!		Get Up!
8:00	Math 1101	Get up!	Math 1101	Get up!	Math 1101
9:00	Pscy 1030				
10:00	Math Homework				
11:00	Lunch				
12:00	XIDS 2100				
1:00	Work				
2:00					
3:00					
4:00					
5:00	Free				
6:00	Eat				
7:00	Study				
8:00	Study				
9:00	T.V.				
10:00	Study/Review				
11:00	Free				
12:00	Free	Bed		Bed	
1:00	Bed		Bed		
2:00					

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	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
6:00					
7:00					
8:00					
9:00					
10:00					
11:00					
12:00					
1:00					
2:00					
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# For List Haters

Many people despise lists, and that's O.K. Lists and schedules are simply tools to help manage and organize time. Some people use lists very effectively and efficiently. But some people make lists just to stay busy; they schedule everything and may feel pressured and hassled throughout the day just trying to check things off their list. If making detailed lists and schedules is not your style, try some of the following tips. **Remember, the goal of managing time is to accomplish things that are important to you.**

Knowing what's important to you is the key to organizing your time. You'll find it helpful to be clear about your goals, both short term and long term. Try using a variation of the "must-should-could" method. Everyday, identify 3 or 4 goals to accomplish that day. Think also about the rest of the week, the semester, and after graduation. Stay focused on the desired outcome rather than the means used to get there.

Stop a few times throughout the day and ask yourself, "is what I'm doing contributing to the things that are important to me?" This will help you stay focused on your goals, both short term and long term. If you're regularly meeting your goals and leading a fulfilled life, there's no need to feel guilty about taking some time to relax and blow off some steam.

Create a picture of your desired outcome. Make a vivid picture in your head of your completed goal, then picture the steps you need to take to get you there. You might think backwards, from the completed goal to where you are now to help you set some priorities.

Do less; eliminate activities with a low payoff. There's no need to spend precious time on worthless activities that provide little or no reward. You might try making a "not-to Do" list for fun and identify the notorious time wasters in your day.

Take care of it now. "I'll deal with it later," or "I'll think about it and get back to you," almost always leads to postponing decisions and procrastination. If you can handle it once, instead of several times, you'll get more accomplished and feel better about yourself. Remember the OHIO principle: Only Handle It Once!