

Tell us what you think!



IMPROVE YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT

Check out the evidence!

Do you often find you don't have enough time to do everything you need to do?
Do you feel overwhelmed by tasks that are piling up?

View the Time Management assessment!

➡ The good news is that there are lots of brief and simple strategies you can try to better manage your time and energy!

BENEFITS OF TIME MANAGEMENT

Research shows that implementing effective time management techniques can have the following benefits:



KEEP A TIME LOG

It's important to **figure out where and how you spend your time and energy** in a week.³

For 1 week, record how much time you spend on each task (including breaks!) during your day.

Try **Clockify**, a free app to record time spent on tasks, or, use an hourly planner

Ask yourself:

- Did I do the *most important* tasks when I had the *most energy* in a day?
- Was I *distracted easily* because I felt *overwhelmed*?
- Did I *prioritize my work* and make meaningful decisions about how to tackle my workload?
- Did I *underestimate how much time* was needed for some tasks?

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING YOUR TIME & ENERGY

Look for the clock icon to better manage your time & look for the energy icon to better manage your energy.

USE SMART GOALS

As students, it's easy to feel like we are working hard, but we aren't getting where we want to be. Using SMART goals not only helps us plan and track our goals but also helps us to be motivated to achieve our goals.

Visit the **SMART goals** resource to learn more about goal setting!

TIP: Write down your goals using the SMART goals' structure to make them clear and achievable.⁸

S

Specific

Make your goal **clear and specific**.



"I will work on the introduction section (1 page) on Wednesday and will work on the methods section (2 pages) on Friday."

M

Measurable

Define **how you will measure** your progress at any point.



"I will track the time I spend writing and the part I write every day."

A

Achievable

Consider whether you can achieve your goals with your **focus, energy, time, and resources**.



"Creating a draft of the final assignment by the next week is an attainable goal."

R

Relevant

Ensure your goals **matter to you** and whether they align with **your values**.



"I enjoy working on this subject and I want to get a good mark in this assignment."

T

Time-Bound

Set a **realistic deadline** to achieve your goals.



"The deadline is the end of this month, so I will aim to have it done one week before the deadline."

START A TASK WITH THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Sometimes, starting a task is the hardest part. **Once you start a task, your motivation actually increases.**¹¹

If there's a task you're avoiding, tell yourself you'll work on it just for five minutes. After five minutes, you're free to decide to continue or stop! Just see how you feel!



TIP: When you find yourself procrastinating, try setting a timer to 5 minutes. This strategy also works well along with "Break it Down" below.

MAKE REALISTIC PLANS

We tend to underestimate the time it takes to complete a task, and to overestimate how much time we have left to finish a task. Keeping a time log can help you figure out how long things take so that you can make realistic plans.

TIP: Double the amount of time you think something will take. For example, if you think that you will need an hour to finish the task, give yourself 2 hours for the task.

BREAK IT DOWN

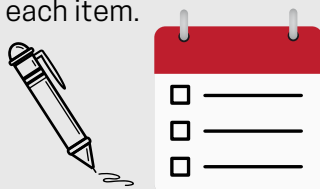
It can be difficult or overwhelming to start an assignment when the task is too large or abstract. **Break the task into smaller steps** so that they are **easier to complete** and you can **focus on one thing at a time**.^{3, 5}



TIP: First, reflect on where you are now and what you have done/started so far. Then, **list all the small actionable steps you need to complete this task** (regardless of how minimal they seem). Finally, set up a plan for how and when you will work on each of these steps to accomplish your task.

MAKE TO-DO LISTS

Make a to-do list, prioritize the items on it, and determine the length of time for each task.¹ Remember to make realistic plans. Allocate time in your calendar for each item.



FOLLOW YOUR CALENDAR

Don't wait to be in the mood to start a task. Enter the task on your calendar ahead of time and follow your calendar.³ Schedule time for **having breaks, meals, and open time** to deal with tasks that suddenly pop up. For example, you can get an urgent email that you need to reply to. If you use that open time, you will not interfere with other plans.

TIP: Just enter the task on your calendar. "Monday, 3:00-4:00, Review Chapter 1 for the exam".

PRIOTIZE YOUR TASKS

Figure out what needs to be done first within your time and energy so that you can increase efficiency.

Get the Hardest Stuff Done First

Research shows that peak performance time differs depending on whether you are a morning or an evening person.¹²



When you can, do the most important and most demanding work first during the time you are most productive.³



Time Management Matrix

Write down a list of tasks and rank tasks considering their importance and urgency, then allocate time and resources.

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	1 Do first e.g., deadline driven assignments	2 Do later e.g., relationship building
Not Important	3 Delegate e.g., some calls, emails, and meetings	4 Eliminate e.g., time wasters

TIP: Use the time management matrix and get **the highest priority task (important + urgent)** at your hand.⁹

ABC Method

The ABC method consists of assigning a priority status of A, B, or C to each of the task on your to-do list.¹⁶

A Must Do	High priority Tasks that are important and urgent. e.g., assignments due soon
B Should Do	Medium priority Tasks that are important but not urgent. e.g., long term project
C Nice to Do	Low priority Tasks that have low or no consequences if left undone. e.g., cleaning out my inbox

TIP: If you have more than one A task, you can prioritize these tasks by writing **A1, A2, A3**, and so on. However, avoid putting all your tasks in category **A** and reflect on whether this task is a high priority.

DECREASE DISTRACTIONS

Any distractions can **hinder** your productivity, no matter how small. For example, research shows that **repeated interruptions**, even as short as **60 seconds**, can significantly **decrease** the quality of students' essays.^{13, 18}




Before turning on *Do Not Disturb mode*, make sure to **inform family or friends** so that they do not worry about not reaching you during the time.

 **TIP: Limit distractions by putting your phone on Do Not Disturb.**

• If you keep checking your phone even without notification, you can try using an application that locks your phone or putting your phone physically away from you.

STOP MULTITASKING


Contrary to popular belief, **multitasking doesn't increase productivity**. Attention is a limited resource, and research shows that doing more than one task at a time, even briefly, can cost as much as 40% of our productivity.^{2, 17}

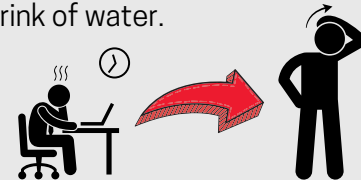
 **TIP: Assign time limits to tasks** so you can focus your attention on only one task at a time.



PAUSE AND RENEW

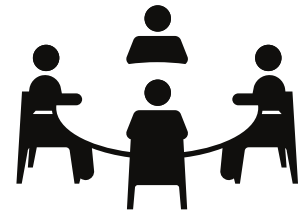
Give yourself a break. Working nonstop may seem efficient but can result in **less productivity** than taking a break.^{3, 4, 14} Even if it's just a quick 5-minute-break, you will feel a lot more productive afterward!

 **TIP: While taking a break, disconnect yourself from work.** You can stand up and walk around the room, stretch your legs, or have a drink of water.



ENLIST COMPANY

Just **having a friend physically nearby** can push you toward productivity even if your friend isn't coaching or assisting you.³ So, when you are doing a task that you find boring or difficult, **ask a friend to keep you company**. If it is hard to keep your friend physically nearby, how about having a virtual meeting with a friend while you are doing a task?




 [View our **Enhancing Performance** page for the **Motivation** resource!](#)

CELEBRATE SMALL SUCCESSES

Celebrate your small successes.³

Making progress is incredibly motivating, and this recharges your emotional batteries.

 **TIP: Every time you finish one assignment, take 10 seconds, close your eyes, and tell yourself what a great job you are doing.**



FEEDBACK & CONTACT INFORMATION

