



Time Management Tips

Once you have set goals for yourself and understand how you currently use your time, you will be able to select time management tips that will be particularly useful to you. Some people will swear by particular strategies; however, everyone selects time savers that fit their goals, their values, and their personality. You should do the same.

1. **Keep an appointment book.** (Find one broken down into hours if you have a lot of things to keep track of every day.)
2. **Write a “to do” list every day.**
3. **Ask yourself what things do NOT need to be done.** Then don't do them.
4. **Break down tasks into 15 or 30 minutes segments.** That way you can use the little times in your day.
5. **Control interruptions.** Close your door and post a “Do Not Disturb” sign. Don't answer the phone. Then after an hour or two, poke your head out for a break or call people back.
6. **Spend more time in planning.** The time you spend planning *how* you do something may make it possible to spend less time *doing* it.
7. **Listen well.** Make certain you understand the directions. There is nothing more time wasting than doing something wrong so that it has to be done again.
8. **Monitor or schedule your TV viewing and computer time.** Even if you only watch two hours of TV a day, that is fourteen additional hours you have each week to accomplish your goals.
9. **Enjoy what you are doing right now.** If you have decided to go out with friends, don't spend your time worrying about the studying you could be doing. Enjoy being with your friends.
10. If you need to meet regularly with someone, **schedule an appointment.** There is nothing more time wasting like trying to track someone down.
11. **Don't be afraid to make mistakes.** Remember that to achieve success means you have to take some risks.
12. If you find it difficult to get any “quiet time,” try to **get up before anyone else** to gain uninterrupted time for planning and other tasks.
13. **If you are always “putting out fires,” ask yourself** after each crisis: **(a)** Why did it occur? **(b)** What can be done to prevent its recurrence? **(c)** If it does recur, how can I handle it better next time?
14. **Don't be afraid to give yourself time frequently to relax, to meditate, or even to “goof off.”** But do so as a result of a conscious decision so that you can relax completely. Don't drift into periods of dawdling, when you are half-working, half-resting.
15. **Develop a desire to manage your time effectively.** Without the motivation to organize time, most of the suggestions listed will never be used.
16. **Maintain good health by eating properly, getting enough sleep and exercising regularly.** These seem to be correlated with good time management.



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17. **Expand your horizons.** Try to do something new and different to maintain variety in your schedule. It increases adaptability and flexibility.
18. **Set goals and establish priorities.** Once long and short term goals are decided and priorities set, allocate time accordingly.
19. **Delegate whatever possible.** Be careful not to take *all* the responsibility *all* the time.
20. **Consider all waiting time a “gift of time.”** Use unexpected waiting time to your own advantage: relax, plan, read, etc.
21. **Control the flow of paper.** Handle a piece of paper only once. When in doubt, throw it away. For information that needs to be kept, develop an organized filing system.
22. **Use driving and walking time to review or practice something.**
23. **Decide which things in life are worth perfectionism** and let yourself do less than perfect on things which aren't.
24. **Learn to say no to others** when appropriate.
25. **Post signs and notes to yourself** to remind you of your goals.
26. **Get an early start** on major projects.
27. Often ask yourself: **What is the best use of my time right now?**
28. **Make changes in your schedule whenever necessary.** Your schedule will need to be revised, and at times broken. A time schedule should be a flexible system or plan that provides guidance and a general structure. It should not be an inflexible road map that rules, governs, and controls. When unexpected events arise, decide immediately how to adjust your weekly schedule.
29. **Be realistic.** You may become discouraged in your time management attempts, particularly in the beginning. It is, however, vitally important that you keep applying your schedule until it becomes a habit.
30. **Plan your time at the beginning of each week.** Weekly changes or adaptations to the schedule should be made at that time.
31. **Good time management** is not merely the display of amazing will power and self-control, but rather it is a persistent habitual pattern developed over time. A habit, once developed, will operate without frequent reminders, obsessive thought, and constant effort.

*Provided by Student Counseling Services at Illinois State University.
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