Study Smart Instead of Long: Tips to Manage Your Study Time

1. Set up **regular study times and study in the same place**. This will establish a routine and save you time that might otherwise be wasted in making decisions. Avoid distractions in your study area.

2. **Study in blocks of time** and take a brief break after each hour of study.

3. **Review notes as soon as possible** after a lecture class. You will retain more in one hour than you could with several hours effort later on.

4. College courses are designed to have up to **3 hours of study and for each credit hour**. So a 3 hour course may take 9 hours of preparation and study per week. Multiply the number of credit hours you are taking by 3 to get an estimate of the study time you may need.

5. **Plan ahead for tests, papers and large assignments**. Set your own goals about getting projects accomplished early so that you can (a) stop worrying about them, (b) have plenty of back-up time in case there is a computer problem, or library materials are missing, (c) take more control of your time, and (d) avoid procrastination.

6. **Make weekends count**. These can be some of the most productive study times because there are no classes to break up the day.

7. Be prepared to **make schedule trades** when something unexpected happens. You won’t always be able to maintain a rigid study schedule, but when you borrow study time for something else, be planful about where and how you intend to pay that time back.

8. **Don’t wait to get started** with classes. School begins the very first day of classes and it’s time to dive in. It’s much easier to keep up than to wait for 2 or 3 weeks and then find that those 3 chapters a week in one of your courses has now exploded into being 9 chapters behind! Do it now.

9. Use little **small chunks of time** productively between classes or appointments to review, pick up library books, type up an assignment, or begin homework.

10. Step back and **examine your study habits** after a few weeks. Where are you wasting time? Make changes where necessary.

*Provided by Student Counseling Services at Illinois State University.*

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