



Time management is one of the most important life skills college students can develop. Learning effective time management takes patience, perseverance, practice, and planning, but developing this skill now will make you more productive and efficient in the future, and it will help you achieve a better work-life balance.

## Top 5 Ways to Manage Your Time Effectively

1. Think big picture. Complete a deadline calendar for the entire semester.
2. Break large tasks into smaller ones.
3. Plan your week.
4. Make a daily to-do list.
5. Hold yourself accountable.

*The SSC has calendars, charts, and grids to help you with each of these tasks.*

## Sub-Skills Inventory

In which of the following time management sub-skills could you improve?

- Using planning structures to track deadlines.
- Using self-knowledge to my advantage (when and where I work best).
- Listing things I need to do.
- Prioritizing tasks.
- Breaking large tasks into small parts.
- Thinking realistically about how long things take.
- Making time for self-care (sleep, exercise, eating, etc.).
- Making time to plan.
- Planning “buffer time” for emergencies.

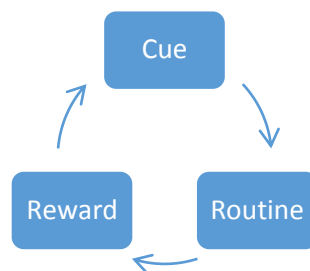
## Time Saving Tips & Strategies

### 1. **Prioritize.**

Divide your to-do list into activities that are 1) urgent and important, 2) urgent and not important, 3) not urgent and important, and 4) not urgent and not important. The more “important and not urgent” activities completed, the less undue stress you introduce and the better your work will be.

### 2. **Create Good Habits.**

Begin reinforcing good study habits on the first day of the semester. It’s easier to create a good habit than to break a bad one.



*The Habit Loop*

From Charles Duhigg’s  
*The Power of Habit*

The cue triggers your brain as to which routine to choose. The routine is your physical, mental, or emotional response to the cue. The reward is what you receive for choosing that routine. An example of a study habit loop would be getting out of class (cue), going immediately to the library to revise your notes and do your homework (response), and then getting some reward (a candy bar, a half hour playing video games, a feeling of self-accomplishment, etc.) for completing the cycle.

### 3. **Avoid Procrastinating.**

Start with the most difficult part of a project or the hardest tasks on your to-do list. Then either the worst is done or you may find you don’t have to do all the other small tasks.

### 4. **Short on Time? Try the Pomodoro Technique.**

The Pomodoro technique is a time-management strategy that consists of breaking your tasks up into 25-minute segments of real, productive work. ([pomodorotechnique.com](http://pomodorotechnique.com))

# Plan Your Week

Day:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
7:00 am				
7:30 am		Gym ↓		Gym ↓
8:00 am	EH 101 ↓		EH 101 ↓	
8:30 am				
9:00 am	BYS 119 ↓		BYS 119 ↓	
9:30 am		HY 103 ↓		HY103 ↓
10:00 am	STUDY ↓		STUDY ↓	
10:30 am				
11:00 am		STUDY ↓		STUDY ↓
11:30 am				
12:00 pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30 pm	Work ↓	MA 112 ↓	EH 119L ↓	MA 112 ↓
1:00 pm				
1:30 pm				

## Weekly Planning Tip

Color code your schedule and plan fixed activities first.

### Fixed Activities

Tasks that have a set time, such as class, work, or club meetings.

### Flex Activities

Time devoted to studying, grocery shopping, eating, chores, errands, etc.

### Free Time

Time for whatever you please!

## Things to Consider When Creating Your Weekly Schedule

### 1. Schedule fixed activities first.

Once you've scheduled fixed blocks of time, then you can see what you have left; how you use that available time should be a matter of careful thought and planning. Also, note that optimum efficiency is often reached by planning in blocks of one hour: fifty minutes to study and ten minutes for a break, for example.

### 2. Discover how long to study for each course.

Start by allowing two hours for every hour in class, but adjust the hours according to your experience. Also, begin tracking how long it takes to do particular kinds of studying. How long does it take to read ten pages of your biology book? To answer ten math problems? To read a twenty-page short story for literature?

### 3. Use daylight hours effectively.

Research shows that many students do not make effective use of daytime hours. Instead, they save their work for the evening, when they are least likely to do it or when they are most susceptible to procrastination.

### 4. Allow larger blocks of time for learning new material, but avoid scheduling marathon study sessions.

Research shows that distributed study (over a period of days) is far more effective than massed study (cramming). When learning complicated material, try working in 90 minute blocks. And don't forget breaks!

### 5. Make use of small blocks of time, particularly for review.

Have fifteen minutes between classes? Review key terms, rewrite lecture notes, or do some self-quizzing.

### 6. Schedule study periods for difficult courses for times when you are most alert and can concentrate best.

Keep track of when you feel you are at your mental best and reserve that time for studying.