

Academic Time Management

From:

<http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk/academic/exams/timemanagement.html>

<http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/selfhelp/leaflets/exams>

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General Guidelines

- The **work habits** of people who have achieved outstanding **success** invariably show a well-designed pattern or schedule.
When a person has several duties confronting him simultaneously he often will **fail** to do any of them.
- The purpose of scheduling is **not to make a slave** of the student, **but to free him** from the inefficiency and anxiety that is, at least partially, a function **of wasted time, inadequate planning, hasty, last minute study, etc.**
- The most successful system for most students is to **combine long-range and short-range planning**. Thus, a student can make a general schedule for an entire quarter and then prepare a more specific plan for two or three days a week at a time.

Principles

1. PLAN ENOUGH TIME FOR STUDY.

The University expects a student to average about **two hours in studying** (including library work, term papers, themes, etc.) **for each hour spent in the classroom.**

This is an appropriate and realistic **guideline.**

A genuinely high ability student may get by adequately with less. However, many students would do well to plan for somewhat more than the **two-for-one ratio.**

2. STUDY AT THE SAME TIME EVERY WEEK DAY.

In so far as possible, a student should schedule certain hours which are used for studying almost every day in a habitual, **systematic way.**

Having regular hours at least five days a week will make it easier to habitually follow the schedule and to maintain an active approach to study.

3. PLAN STUDY PERIODS TO FOLLOW CLASS PERIODS.

This should be done **whenever possible**.

The next best procedure is to schedule the period for study **immediately preceding the class**.

4. MAKE USE OF THE FREE HOURS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.

The hours between classes are perhaps a student's most valuable study time yet, ironically, **the most frequently misused**.

A student may effectively utilize these hours **reviewing the material and editing the notes** of the preceding class and/or studying the material to be discussed in the following class.

5. SPACE STUDY PERIODS.

Fifty to ninety minutes of study at a time for each course works best. Relaxation periods of **ten or fifteen minutes** should be scheduled between study periods.

It is more efficient to study hard for a definite period of time, and then stop for a few minutes, than attempt to study on indefinitely.

6. PLAN FOR WEEKLY REVIEWS.

At least **one hour each week for each class** (distinct from study time) should be scheduled.

The weekend is a good time for review.

7. LEAVE SOME UNSCHEDULED TIME FOR FLEXIBILITY.

This is important!

Lack of flexibility is the major reason **why schedules fail**.

Students tend to over-schedule themselves.

8. ALLOT TIME FOR PLANNED RECREATION, CAMPUS AND CHURCH ACTIVITIES., etc.

Other Suggestions

When a student plans his schedule, he should begin by listing the activities that come at fixed hours and cannot be changed.

Classes and laboratories, eating in the dorm dining hall, sleep, and work for money are examples of time uses which the student typically cannot alter.

Next, he can schedule his flexible time commitments. These hours can be interchanged with other hours if he finds that his schedule must be changed during the week.

Recreational activities are planned last.

When forced to deviate from his planned schedule (and that will invariably occur), the student should **trade time rather than steal it** from his schedule. Thus, if he has an unexpected visitor at a time he has reserved for study, he can substitute an equal amount of study time for the period he had set aside for recreation.

Organising your Space

Most people preparing for exams know they should organise their time, but fewer people know that it helps to organise their space too.

Think about **where** you work. See if you can **separate** out the places where you work from the places where you relax. Even if this all happens within one small room, create a '**working place**' (around a desk/table?) which contains your papers, books, etc. and **everything you need for your work.**

Organising your Space (Cont'd)

Move all **distractions out of your work area** — pictures, music, TV, internet(?) — and put these into your ‘**relaxation areas**’. Similarly, keep work out of the latter, so that when you are relaxing or sleeping your working is not intruding into this space. (Don't work in or on your bed; keep bed for relaxation and sleep!)

Get used to working when you are in your work area, and ‘switching off’ when you get up from this place. Creating a **physical separation** of this kind will help you to do the same mentally.

Other Topics at

<http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/selfhelp/leaflets/exams>

- Alcohol
- Anger
- Anxiety & Panic
- Assertiveness
- Bereavement
- Concentration
- Conflict with others
- Depression
- Drugs
- Eating Disorders
- Exams
- Freshers Guide
- Homesickness
- Insomnia
- Loneliness
- Mindfulness
- Parental separation
- Perfectionism
- Phobias
- Post traumatic stress
- Procrastination
- Relaxation
- Self-esteem
- Self harm
- Work-block
- Worry

Thank you!