

Enhanced Learning Educational Services "the study skills specialist"

Time Management Techniques

Level 5

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Enhanced Learning Educational Services Profile

Our Organisation:

Enhanced Learning Educational Services (ELES) is the leading provider of study skills resources in Australia. Since 2001 over 500,000 students across Australia have benefited from our study skills worksheets and workbooks. An Australian business based in Sydney, our clients extend throughout Australia and to international schools overseas. We are committed to helping all students improve their ability to learn and study by providing study skills seminars and resources on the topics students need.

Our Mission:

To provide a worthwhile and effective service to teachers, students and parents, enhancing students' learning skills and abilities through dynamic programs, resources and strategies to unlock the power of the mind and enable greater success at school and in life.

Our Commitment:

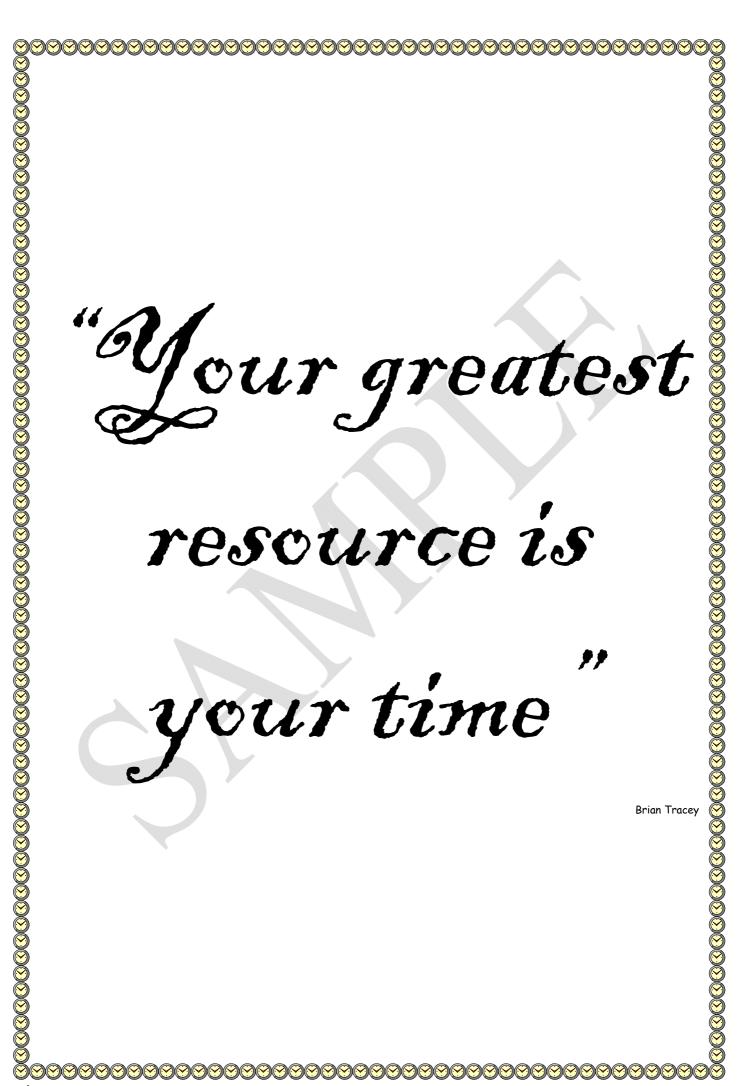
As part of ELES' commitment to education, 5% of all gross income is donated to charities that help and assist children.

Our Staff:

The majority of our resources are created by Prue Salter (B.A., B.Math., Dip.Ed., M.Acc., M.Ed.), founder and director of ELES. Prue has over 20 years' experience in the Education Industry in Australia. With a strong background in teaching and pastoral care, Prue was frustrated by the absence of high quality resources available to help students develop and maintain effective study skills. A committed scholar, passionate about learning, Prue combined her natural organisational and time management abilities with her research in how students learn to develop a series of resource kits designed to address the gaps and to present them in a format that is entertaining, as well as simple and effective.

For further information about ELES or our products or contact details: info@enhanced-learning.net

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SECTION 1 - 1A

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Introduction to Time Management

Let's consider what 'time management' actually means.

In business, Time Management generally refers to tools that increase productivity and efficiency. The popularity of personal organisers like PDAs demonstrates how so many people are seeking to find ways to manage their time more effectively.

As students enter this phase of high school, they often find that the workload and expectations have increased dramatically from the previous year. Many students start to become 'timeaholics' - never having enough time at the end of the day, never completing everything that needs to be done.

Time management is not a quick and easy fix to this solution. No time management system will work if you don't use it consistently.

The first point to grasp is the concept that each and every person has the same amount of time to work with, and for every person that time is limited. Unfortunately we cannot magically morph time to create more hours in the day. The first step in managing your time is accepting the reality that we have only limited hours to work with in the day.

Everyone has a different idea of what time management entails. Some suggestions are listed below. See if you can add a few more to the list.

Time Management is:

- Deciding priorities
- Translating periods of time into action
- Scheduling work into available time slots
- Working smarter not harder
- Finding ways to minimise distractions
- •
- •
- •

Definition of Time Management:

Recognising that your most valuable asset is the time given to you and finding systematic and strategic ways to maximise your productivity and minimise your diversions.

If you already know how you should be managing your time, but you still don't do it, don't give up. Everyone has these difficulties when attempting to become more efficient. Many of the strategies we will deal with in this resource will help you fight your own personal blockers. Surprisingly a number of time management skills reside in the mind, not in schedules on a piece of paper.

THINKING ABOUT TIME

When did the third millennium officially begin?

Where were you New Year's Eve 1999?

This is when most people celebrated the millennium, as time ticked over to January 1 2000. You would think everything about time is straightforward but many people debated whether that was actually the start of the new millennium. Instead, they argued that the next thousand years officially began on January 1 2001.

This argument rests on the start date of the modern calendar. Evidence indicates that the first calendar was created by a sixth-century monk named Dionysius Exiguus (Dennis the Short) who was commissioned by Pope St. John I to create a chronology of time. Dionysius renumbered the years beginning with the year of Christ's birth as Year 1 A.D. (A.D. stands for 'anno Domini' or 'the year of our Lord'). It sounds weird, but they didn't even have the concept of 'zero' at that point in time. So if the first year was Year 1, the first year is not over till the end of that year, the first 1000 years not over till the end of the first 1000 years, and the first 2000 years not over till the end of the new millennium started January 1, 2001.

The other side of the coin seems more in tune with our own lives. We celebrate our first birthday after we've lived for one year. So when our world turned 2000, it would have 'lived' for 2000 years and it was time to celebrate its birthday. Regardless of pesky facts about when the calendar started, this did become the popular view. Most of the world celebrated the dawn of the new millennium New Year's Eve 1999.

And despite all fears, the millennium bug did not turn the world into a chaotic mess where elevators froze and computers blew up. In fact, most people had already long fixed the millennium computer bug they were facing.

The millennium bug was simply the realisation that when people were originally programming computers, they were not looking far enough into the future. They decided not to include the unnecessary '19' century digits before every year date. To be fair, back then this saved a lot of unnecessary computer memory space and allowed technology to progress much more quickly. The Y2K problem created was that when the clocks ticked over to 2000, the computer would not be able to differentiate between 1900 and 2000 as it only read the last two digits which could end up causing lots of confusion. Luckily programmers were clever enough to fix the computer code and life went on as normal.

Enough time trivia! Let's find out how you use your time.

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Time Self-Analysis

· · ·	own activi							
Amount of time you spend:	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN	TOTAL
Sleeping								
At school								
Part-time job								
Watching TV								
Homework / Study								
Eating at home			\frown					
Showering / Dressing								
Playing sport								
Outside lessons								
Hobbies								
With friends (outside school)								
Activities with family								
Looking after siblings								
On the phone/mobile								
On the Internet								
Doing nothing much								

It could be interesting to check for a week if your estimates match reality. Sometimes the amount of time you think you spend on things is very different, perhaps much more or much less, from what it actually is.

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Have you ever had any of the following thoughts?

1. There is just not enough time in the day.	YES / NO
2. Everything always takes longer than you think.	YES / NO
3. The more time you have, the less you get done.	YES / NO
4. Time flies when you are having fun.	YES / NO
5. Time drags when you are doing something you don't like.	YES / NO
6. There's not enough time to do everything you want.	YES / NO
7. If I only had another hour	YES / NO
8. I wish I had more time to finish this.	YES / NO
9. I shouldn't have left this until the last minute.	YES / NO
10. I can't believe a whole week has gone already.	YES / NO

If you have experienced these thoughts before, welcome to the vast majority of students. Everyone, no matter how efficient and skilled they are in time management techniques, experiences feelings like this at some point. As human beings, we try to cram as much as we can into our lives and sometimes the things we have to do come in conflict with the things we want to do.

Once we are more aware of where we are spending our time, we can analyse whether we are spending it wisely. It is like money, unless you keep track of what you are using it for, it can slip away all too quickly.

A definition of time management could be:

"Skills for learning how to use one's time more effectively to accomplish one's goals."

In the space below, write your own personal definition of time management:

SNSNS

Time Management Outcome Checklist

What areas do you need to work on?					
Although ELES produces 'Time Management Techniques' for each below is included in every Time Management resource regardless o that students across all levels share common problems in managin problems may change from year to year. Indeed, you could ask your out with respect to work instead of school and you would find the similar challenges. In completing the list, don't feel discouraged 'NONE's. Instead, pat yourself on the back for the things you are c areas they can improve on, and that is what working through these v	f the y g their parent it they l if you loing wa	ear le time s to f too a u are ell. Ev	vel. I but t ill this re of tickin eryon	t is a hat t chec chec ten fo ng lot e will	fact hese klist acin <u>c</u> s of
For each of the following statements tick either: ALL of the time, MOST of the time, SOME of the time,A BIT of the	time or	NONE	e of th	e time	
For You To Do:	ALL	MOST	SOME	A BIT	NONE
1. I keep up-to-date with my schoolwork without many problems.					
2. I start working on assignments well before they are due.					
3. I don't end up leaving work till the last minute.					
4. I finish assignments on time.					
5. I hand in all schoolwork on time.					
6. I don't ask for extensions.					
7. I don't feel stressed about the work I need to do for school.					
8. I plan when I am going to do work.					
9. I use my time in the classroom efficiently.					
10. I use my time at home efficiently.					

	ALL	MOST	SOME	A BIT	NON
11. I can estimate pretty well how long something will take.					
12. I have time to do all the things I WANT to do.					
13. When I sit down to do work I get lots done.					
14. I am not easily distracted.					
15. I am self-disciplined and can make myself do what I need to do.					
16. I know at the start of the day what I want to get done that day.		Ň			
17. I feel in control of my time.					
18. I am able to juggle commitments to family and friends.					
19. I can find extra time to do things if I need to.					
20.I am able to reschedule activities if necessary.					
21. I have ways to make myself do things I have been putting off.					
22.I am able to prioritise things to do what is most important.					
23.I am aware when I am wasting time and can stop myself doing it.					
24.I use self rewards to help motivate myself to do things.					
25.I am able to set goals as to what I want to do and work to them.					
Now look back through the list at some of the statements for which of these bothers you the most? Which causes you the most stress? do something about? Which ones do you know you really should try below, describe the areas of time management that you think you mo	Whick and ir	n do y nprov	ou mo e? In	st wa the s	nt to

Core Time Management Skills

Let's examine the essential time management techniques.

There are some fundamental or core techniques for effective time management. Even if you have worked through the next four pages in a previous year, it is worthwhile reviewing them again before progressing to the section on new techniques in order to ensure you are still on track. If this is the first time you have used one of the ELES Time Management Techniques resources, you need to be comfortable with these techniques before progressing to the next section.

The true secret to Time Management is:

YOU CAN'T ACTUALLY MANAGE TIME. YOU MUST MANAGE YOURSELF.

To improve the way you manage yourself, the following first 3 steps are essential:

For You To De	0:				
	_	STEP	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
How often do you currently	1	Set your goals.			
do these steps? Put a tick in one of the boxes for	2	Prioritise.			
each of the steps.	3	Schedule your time.			

STEP 1: SET YOUR GOALS

Why set goals? Unless you know what you are aiming for you can't hit it! Imagine a boat without any particular destination in mind. It would float aimlessly among the seas and if it made it to land it would be due to luck rather than any other factor. By creating a goal, you have created something you can work towards. Goal setting helps increase your efforts and motivate you by giving you a direction towards which you can work.

Many students are put off by the words 'goal setting'. They have read information before detailing setting long-term, medium-term and short-term goals and have found the whole process overwhelming and unworkable.

"A GOAL IS JUST A LIST OF THINGS YOU EITHER HAVE TO DO OR WANT TO DO."

If you think of goals in this way, you'll find them much less daunting and more workable.

The most effective goals are WRITTEN DOWN and are 'SMART':

Specific	Make sure your goals explain exactly what you want to achieve.
Measurable	Make sure you are able to easily see when you have achieved your goals.
Action oriented	Put specific action steps into your goals rather than just 'airy-fairy' ideas. If you want to improve in a subject, decide on some specific steps you can do.
Realistic	Don't make unrealistic goals like 'I will read 28 chapters of my History textbook tonight'. All this will do is discourage you so make goals achievable.
Timebound	Put a timeframe on your goals - when do you want to achieve them by?

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Examples of Effective Goals	Examples of Less Effective Goals
I will finish my History Assignment tonight.	I will keep up with my work.
I will do 15 minutes each day on French vocab.	I will improve in French.
I will beat my last exam result in Maths.	I will get better in Maths.

For You To Do: A good way to start your goal setting is to take a piece of paper and think of absolutely EVERYTHING you need to do. Make it a complete and total list of everything to be done and everything you'd like to do. It can seem daunting, but once you have listed everything in black and white then you can start to deal with it. Try this now.

STEP 2: PRIORITISE

It is a fact of life that everything always takes longer than you think it will. And it is often an impossible task to achieve absolutely everything you want to achieve in the time available. Ideally you'd like to get everything done, but if you can't, look objectively at the things to do from your goal list and prioritise everything into the three categories below.

For You To Do: On a piece of paper, draw up and fill in the table below for your current workload using your list of work from Step 1.

Things I need to do urgently:	Other things to be done:	Things that can be postponed:
Include here everything that	Include here other work that	This would be work that you
is overdue, or very important	is currently due, due soon or	really should do but that you
or that will have serious	should at least be started	won't get in trouble or affect
consequences if you don't	soon.	your marks if you leave it till
complete it urgently.		later - like the next holidays.

You may not be able to get everything done but you can focus on what is really important. Many students prioritise in a way that is simply not efficient. Instead of doing the most important things first and the least important things next, they do the things they LIKE first - regardless of whether there are things that are more important that they should be doing. Remember:

MOST IMPORTANT tasks <u>FIRST</u> (not the things you *like most* first) *LEAST IMPORTANT* tasks <u>LAST</u> (not things you *like least* last)

STEP 3: SCHEDULE YOUR TIME

"Timetables? They don't work for me. I can't make a study timetable, I just don't stick to it."

Sound familiar? So many students just switch off when they see the words STUDY TIME-TABLE. Some of the reasons why timetables may not have worked for you in the past:

- O You made an unrealistic and unachievable timetable, so became discouraged when you couldn't achieve it.
- O You tried to schedule too far ahead and so when you had to readjust things it was too big a task to adjust the whole timetable.
- O You made a timetable of what you thought you SHOULD get done (even if you knew there was no way it would happen), not what you knew you could do.
- O You didn't play to your strengths, you didn't think about when you work best, how long you can work for and what was the best way for you to work.
- O You were not prepared to be flexible or experiment to find out what works best for you. For example, maybe you work best working on one thing solidly for a time, or maybe you work better if you break it up by working on a variety of things for shorter periods of time.
- O You were too rigid with your timetable and expected to be able to stick to it exactly and gave up when you couldn't.

For You To Do: Put a tick next to any of the above reasons that have applied to you in the past.

<u>So what can you do?</u>

- 1. Look first at the big picture. What do you want to achieve over the next week?
- 2. Plan out the next week by first putting in all of your commitments and seeing how much time is available, then taking the things you want to get done that week and slotting them into the available time.

RULES FOR DOING THIS:

- Don't make it so tight there is no spare time at all - you will need extra time for rescheduling.

- Be realistic about how long things will take. You'll get better at this with practice.
- Ensure you schedule in the higher priorities first.
- 3. Once you have a plan for the week, take each day 'day-by-day' and really focus on what you need to do that day.
- 4. If you don't get everything done, and you probably won't, then don't stress or give up or see it as failure. Instead, reschedule it to another time in the week and when you get to that day, deal with it then.

EXAMPLE: Let's take an example. You wrote your list of things you wanted to get done, then put it into the priority table. This is something you could do every Friday night to look in general at the weeks ahead and to help you plan specifically for the coming week and what you need to do that weekend. It would only take a few minutes and would mean you have taken your first big step towards managing time by managing yourself. Try it!

Thinking of the weeks ahead, you came up with this list: Things I need to do urgently: Other things to be done: Things that can be postponed: - Science homework overdue - History Assign. next week Make summaries for - French vocab guiz Tues - Maths test week after Geography (leave till holidays) Your first overall plan or schedule might look like this, drawn up by hand on a bit of paper: - First put the major dates for big pieces of work that are due or things you want to focus on. Also put in any time commitments or extra-curricular or social activities so you can see how much time you actually have available to you. Mon Wed Sat Sun Tues Thurs Fri BASKETBALL TRAINING BASKETBALL BASKETBALL History GAME TRAINING Assignment

Now think just about this week:

MUM'S

BIRTHDAY

- Start with the things you need to do urgently and schedule time in for them.
- Look then at the other things to be done like the History Assignment and Maths Test and allocate some time in the week to doing something specific to start these tasks - many students just do immediate homework only. Scheduling time for these tasks is much better than just letting the time slip by and leaving the task till the last minute.

Maths Test

BASKETBALL

TRAINING

Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
study French find books	nomework done vocab test at library for story	review French vocab	start research for History	BASKETBALL TRAINING	redo hard exercises in Maths chapter.	brainstorm ideas for History assignment

For You To Do: Follow the steps outlined above to schedule your prioritised work into the coming weeks.

SUMMARY

- 1. Write down absolutely EVERYTHING you need to get done.
- 2. Take everything on the list and put it in one of three columns:
 - a) Things I need to do urgently
 - b) Other things to be done
 - c) Things that can be postponed
- 3. Look 3 or 4 weeks ahead to see what you need to do and how much free time you have.
- 4. Focus on the coming week and schedule in your work from the Priority Table.

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Time Management Technique 1

'The Razor's Edge'

Quick Quiz

For You To Do:

Answer YES or NO to the following questions:

1. Do you ever spend time doing things you know are not the best use of your time but are easier or less unpleasant than other tasks you need to do? Y / N

2. Do you take the time before you start work in the afternoon to think about all the work you need to do, how long the tasks will take, and what are the most important and relevant tasks for you to complete? Y/N

3. Do you ever spend hours working on tasks for school only to get to the end of the evening and find that you still haven't completed the most important task? Y/N

"The líne that separates winning from losing is as fine as The Razor's Edge."

How to use 'The Razor's Edge':

- Prioritising! You simply cannot do without this skill this year. 'The Razor's Edge' is a technique to help you prioritise as effectively as possible.
- In the business world successful people strive to implement the Razor's Edge. The technique is based on the assumption that there is not a big difference between the people who achieve things and those who don't, just a difference in what they accomplish. One person 'almost' starts a project and the other starts it. One 'almost' finishes something while the other one finishes it. You have the potential to be just as successful as anyone else at school- you just need to work out what the Razor's Edge is for you.
- To find what will make the Razor's Edge difference for you work out what are the one or two things that, if you did these, it would make a huge difference for you. You can use this to help you decide what you need to work on first.
- Develop a list of all the tasks you need to do then use the questions below to help you re-determine which of the tasks are Razor's Edge activities for you. Once you have a clear list of priorities, finish the first thing on the list completely before you move to the next.

This technique is also called 'The Vital Few'.

Special points of interest:

For each task you need to do ask 'WIIFM': 'What's In It For Me'? Will this task take me towards my goals?

> "If you want to make good use of your time, you've got to know what's most important and then give it all you've got. "

> > Lee lacocca

'THE RAZOR'S EDGE' GRID

- 1. List all of the tasks you have outstanding or need to complete.
- 2. Prioritise each task (1 most important) by using the questions below to determine what are Razor's Edge activities for you tonight.
- 3. Once you have determined which of the tasks will make a difference for you don't be tempted to stray from your list of priorities. Complete the first priority completely before moving to the next.
- 4. Highlight each task as you finish it. The next day, look through your list of tasks again and redetermine your priorities. You may want to stick to pencil or create a template similar to the one below on the computer and make multiple copies of it so you can start fresh each day.

List all of the tasks you have outstanding or need to complete.	Priority:

Questions to ask yourself when determining priorities:

a) What is absolutely due tomorrow and absolutely essential to finish? (You have no choice, these must come first and may be homework, assignments or test preparation.)

For the rest of your tasks ask:

- b) Is this task going to help you improve your understanding of the subject or is it 'busy' work?
- c) Does the amount of time required for this task make it worthwhile to do right now?
- d) Which of these tasks will help you best understand the subject and improve your results?
- e) Is this the best time to work on this task or should you leave it for another time?
- f) What could you work on now that would take away some of the stress later on?
- g) Forget about what you like doing, what would be best to do?
- h) Forget about how boring, difficult or unpleasant the task may be, what is it best for you to work on?

Time Management Technique 2

'Avoiding Over Commitment'

Quick Quiz

For You To Do:

Answer YES or NO to the following questions: "Consider tíme as a 1. Do you play sport or have training more than twice a week? Y/Nprecious and scarce 2. Do you have a part-time job where you work more than once a week? Y/N resource and you will 3. Do you have outside extra-curricular activities like manage it music lessons, drama, extra tuition? Y/N much more wisely." 4. Do you find yourself struggling to meet all your commitments in your private life as well as everything you need to do for school? **Y / N**

How to 'Avoid Over Commitment':

Special points of interest:

It is a good idea to set up clear parameters with your parents at the start of the year as to what you both agree to be a fair amount of socialising for you to do.

It is much easier to justify going out with your friends if you can demonstrate to your parents that you are doing a solid amount of schoolwork

- Take a good long look at your involvement levels this year in outside commitments. Things like sport, music, hobbies and part-time jobs are very important to keep balance in your life.
- But it is also important to be realistic about what you can do in the time you have. Don't over-schedule yourself this year as it will simply cause you stress. Allow some flexible time to deal with crises and interruptions that will occur in daily life.
- The table on the next page will help you analyse your level of commitment. The key to being able to still do everything you want to do as well as manage your schoolwork is the following:
 - a) accept that in order to be able to still do all the things you want, you will need to make the effort to use any spare time available as wisely as possible
 - b) be disciplined in your use of time allocated to schoolwork and reward yourself with the things you want to do
 - c) re-assess regularly whether you can still handle your current level of involvement in outside activities as well as your schoolwork.

'AVOIDING OVER COMMITMENT' GRID

So what is a fair and realistic amount of time each week to spend on your activities? There is no easy answer. It depends on how well you use your spare time. A student might have absolutely no other activities and oodles of spare time but still do less than half an hour a night of schoolwork. Another student might have huge amounts of extra-curricular activities but manage their time well and easily do 1.5 hours of homework and work for school a day. In fact, if you have lots of time spare you are often less productive in that time. But if you are busy in your life it forces you to be more productive in the time that is available. So what is the answer? You need to physically have around 2 hours available to you each day - but that is only the first step. The second step is to make the decision to use this time productively so you can enjoy the things you want to do guilt free.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4-4.30					
4.30-5					
5-5.30					
5.30-6					
6-6.30					
6.30-7					
7-7.30					
7.30-8					
8-8.30					
8.30-9					
9-9.30					
9.30-10					
10-10.30					

- 1. Fill in all your commitments for the week (eg sporting activities, travel time, dinner, shower, music lessons, meeting up with friends).
- 2. Go through and write SCHOOLWORK into 4 of the half hour slots for each day. If you don't have 4 half hour slots on a day then this is an indication that you are overcommitted. The average amount of time a student at your level should spend each evening on their schoolwork is around 1.5 to 2 hours. Work on your homework first, then assignments and test preparation, then with the remainder of the time organise your notes and work on study notes for your subjects.

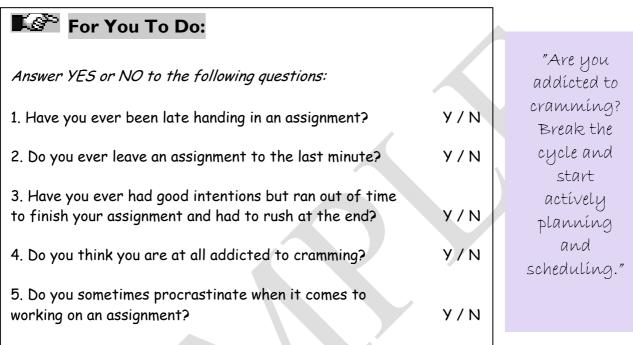
The Weekend

What about the weekend? The amount of time you spend on your schoolwork on the weekend will depend on your current workload. Most students will need to spend at least 4 hours on the weekend on schoolwork. So what about going out? How does that fit in with time management? There is nothing wrong with going out Saturday nights with friends provided you make yourself do some work on Saturday morning or Sunday (or both) and provided you don't have too late a night - otherwise you will not be able to work very effectively the next day.

Time Management Technique 3

'Assignment Planner'

Quick Quiz



How to use the 'Assignment Planner':

Special points of interest:

"Just trying to do work on an ad-hoc basis can make you feel like a swimmer struggling against the current. You need a plan!"

Fail to Plan and you Plan to Fail

- Ensure you are clear about the requirements of the task if you are not, see your teacher for clarification as soon as possible.
- The day you are given the assignment, that night find a quiet space and time and brainstorm every thought that comes into your head about the assignment. Think about what would be required to complete the task, what sorts of research you will need to do, what steps are involved to finish the task and any ideas you have about the task. Record absolutely every thought that comes into your head to start with – let your creativity roll and don't discount any ideas. Try and jot down all your initial ideas for about 10-15 minutes.
- Use the grid over the page to organise and structure your thoughts.
- Estimate the time it will take for each section of the task. Err on the side of overestimation rather than underestimation.
- Decide when you will schedule each step of the assignment. Your initial plan may change due to other work commitments, but it is important to have a framework towards which you work. Write a reminder for each step into your homework diary.

'ASSIGNMENT PLANNER' GRID

Time Management Technique 3

Place the assignment planner in a prominent position above your desk but also write the scheduled steps into your diary as homework for those days. Reschedule when necessary but try and stay close to your schedule. Be aware of how much 'slack' you have in your schedule and when you are just going to have to knuckle down and complete those steps.

Other brainstormed ideas	Assignment steps to complete:	Length of time required	Time scheduled to
and thoughts about the assignment:		to complete step:	complete step:
	Steps related to preliminary planning and working out what needs to be done:	siep.	siep.
	Steps related to research and gathering information:		
	Steps relating to organising the material you collect:		
	Steps relating to writing drafts of the assignment:		
	Steps relating to completing the assignment and working on final presentation elements:		

This resource continues for another 23 pages

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