

STUDY @ HOME

MANAGING YOUR TIME WHILE STUDYING FROM HOME



Adapting to studying from home can challenge you in ways you don't expect. You might think this opportunity opens up more time and more possibilities to take on new projects, stay focused and handle fewer distractions while you study. In fact, the opposite might be true! In these circumstances, managing your time includes how to add structure to your days; and how to build in time for course work, studying and everything else it takes to succeed as a student and have a well-balanced life.

ADDING STRUCTURE TO YOUR DAY

Studying from home can feel unstructured and unsettling. Establishing routines can give you more of a sense of control and also encourage positive habit-forming. Consider building your own routines for key times of the day:

MORNING WAKE-UP ROUTINE

Try to wake every week day at the same time and build into your morning routine things that have worked well for you in the past: breakfast, self care, perhaps meditation or exercise; once they become part of your daily routine, any or all of these can help energize you and set you up positively for the day ahead.

BREAKS AND MEAL TIMES

Adding meal times and breaks will help you sustain your attention, revive flagging energy, move around a bit and switch your "studying mind" off for a little while. Breaks can actually make you more productive.

RELAXATION/EXERCISE/CREATIVITY/FUN

Every day should include times to escape from commitments; give yourself permission to do things that you like. A ten minute walk or an hour playing the guitar can help you refocus, de-stress and enjoy the moment. Build what makes you happy into each day.

TIME FOR THINKING AND SELF-REFLECTION

Taking time out to reflect what you're learning, and taking stock of how you're feeling mentally, physically and emotionally, can stimulate creativity, cognition and overall wellbeing.

“SHUT DOWN” ROUTINE AND BED TIME

End your study time by shutting off technology (computer, laptop, tablet, etc.); this helps to create a boundary between study time and other time. Similarly, winding down before bed (by doing calming activities and avoiding caffeine, late night snacks or hyper-busy media/gaming/screen time) and establishing a regular bed-time routine will encourage sleepiness and work against insomnia.

MANAGING YOUR STUDY TIME

Managing your time means anticipating what you have to do, scheduling time to do it, and following through on your plans.

ANTICIPATING YOUR WORKLOAD AND PLANNING AHEAD:

A **semester planner** will enable you to see your semester in view, predict the busy times, plan for extra-curricular commitments and get ready for midterms and finals. You can [download one from the Student Learning Services](#) site to print out and use it to:

- Write all academic deadlines and due dates on your planner
- Plan start and end dates for projects
- Break up writing assignments like essays or thesis-writing over several weeks

A **study time grid** will help you choose good times to study in your week. [Download one to print out](#) and use it to:

- Set study times for times of day when you are most alert
- Study in blocks of time: perhaps one-hour blocks separated by a short break, with a longer break after two hours.
- Create several study times, spread out over the week, for each course; returning to the same subject builds familiarity with the content and helps you to retain information better.
- Be sure to also build in daily relaxation, exercise and fun time.

BUILDING COURSE WORK INTO YOUR PLANNING:

- Create and update a weekly “to do” list for each course, even when no assignment is due that week.
- Block off sufficient study time to work through and understand the course concepts (for example, listen and take notes during a recorded lecture) and also time to work with the course concepts: write about them, do assignments, practice problem solving, and self-test to make sure you have grasped the main ideas.
- If you have synchronous (live) class sessions, make them a priority in your schedule because these sessions will help you work with your professor and classmates and feel more connected with the class.
- Keep on top of things daily: log into your course portal each morning to check for course communications.

WHAT ABOUT PROCRASTINATION?

Practically everyone procrastinates, so don't get too critical of yourself when you do. Instead, work out why it's happening and use a strategy to get moving:

- Not sure how to begin something? Try committing to working on it for 10 minutes; it's amazing how this can build the momentum to keep going! And, if you are really not feeling it, you then stop and try again later.
- Task seems too large or too difficult? Break it down into smaller steps and feel good when you accomplish one step. Also, reach out for help from friends, family, your TA, your professor or online resources.



- Not motivated? Don't wait to start until you "feel like" doing so—this rarely happens! Keep the aim of what you're doing in mind; remind yourself that you **want** to get this done, and make your intentions override your feelings. Once you start, things often get easier. Reward yourself for small steps.

SELF CARE AND SELF-COMPASSION

In times of uncertainty and when adapting to new situations, it's common to feel anxious sometimes. Explore helpful ways to handle worry; meditation, prayer, exercise, talking to someone, can all help. If you feel down or overwhelmed, it would be a good idea to reach out to Personal and Psychological Counselling Services (part of Campus Wellness and Support Services) or the Student Success Centre as an important first step to getting advice and support. Take a look at their websites to see the wide ranges of services there for you, or call the receptionist at either location for more information.

[Personal and Psychological Counselling Services](#) 514-848-2424, ext. 3545

[Student Success Centre](#) 514-848 2424 ext. 3921