

Creating a Study Schedule

When we manage our time effectively, we can lead balanced lives. One way to do this is to develop a study plan to keep track of your time.

The RAC Method

Record Your Daily Activities

Before starting your study plan, determine how you are spending your time. Record all your activities for one day and the time you required to complete each task. Include everything you do in the day, i.e. the time you woke up, how long it took you to get ready, the commute to school, meal times, class times, etc.

Analyze Your Time Schedule

After you have recorded how you spend your time, consider if you are using your time effectively. Highlight time that you did not use productively. Be honest with yourself to identify any time wasted.

Change

Get time back by prioritizing and making changes.

How to Create a Study Schedule

1. Create a weekly time schedule using Microsoft Word or Excel to record your daily activities, or look online to find a template, such as vertex42.com. You may also choose to use an electronic calendar such as Outlook or Google.
2. Record all your daily activities (class lectures, labs and tutorials, work hours, meal times, recreation, etc.).
3. Set study periods for each course. Schedule time after each lecture to review your notes and add any missing information. Set time before each class to review the previous lecture notes.

Rule of Thumb: For every one hour of class lecture, schedule one to three hours to study and work on assignments.

4. Make sure to allow for breaks and do not study for more than two to three hours periods.
5. Add colour to your calendar to distinguish different courses and activities.



Tips for Creating your Study Schedule

Be Realistic

Be realistic about how much time each task will take so that you don't set yourself up for disappointment. Refer to the RAC method to evaluate how you are spending your time.

Set Clear Goals

Establish clear goals to help motivate you. When you know what you are working toward, you will inevitably work harder to achieve it.

Start Early

When you start early, you give yourself a chance to do your best work, setting yourself up for success. If you start the night before, there is a very good chance that you won't get the results you desire.

Plan for Work and Play

Balance your hard work by rewarding your accomplishments. All work and no play is not a sustainable lifestyle. Find out what you love to do, and make time to do it. Set aside time to enjoy yourself and stay in good health.

Identify Negotiable and Non-Negotiable Tasks

Understand which tasks can be compromised and which cannot. Order your essential tasks to help you set your priorities within your schedule.

Learn to Say "No"

If you take on too much, it will be impossible to do a good job of everything. Remember to say "no" when you know you don't have time to take on more responsibility.

Be Patient

Schedules are not set in stone. It will take trial, error, and revision to find a schedule that works for you. Don't be frustrated. If at first your schedule doesn't work out, be patient; success will come.

Plan and Prioritize!

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