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*for tomorrow*

# **HOW2 MANAGE YOUR TIME**

**(LSD1)**

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## TIME MANAGEMENT

### Survey

Complete the following survey and add up your score.

R=rarely; S=Sometimes; F = Frequently; A= Almost Always

	R	S	F	A
1. I study for hours on end and don't seem to accomplish much.	3	2	1	0
2. I have enough time to study thoroughly for tests and exams.	0	1	2	3
3. I battle to fit in time for studying as I am involved in too many extramural activities (schedule too full).	3	2	1	0
4. I use a study time table/ schedule as a guideline for organising my time	0	1	2	3
5. My study plans are determined mainly by my moods or what I feel like studying that day.	3	2	1	0
6. I plan what I am going to study and how much I intend to cover do during each study session.	0	1	2	3
7. I produce work of a lesser quality because I of having to work under time pressure.	3	2	1	0
8. I study in a place which is free from interruptions, distractions and noise	0	1	2	3
9. I procrastinate/ put off studying subjects I find boring or difficult.	3	2	1	0
10. I set aside enough time for studying for tests and exams.	0	1	2	3

My Score	Range	Interpretation
	26 - 30	You are on the right track – Keep it up!
	20 – 25	Risky
	19 and less	Dangerous

**Add up your score:**

Enter your score in the appropriate block.

Now you know to what extent you are able to manage your time effectively. Look at those items where you scored 1 or 0. Set some goals in terms of increasing your score on those items. Read on for further hints on optimising the way in which you manage your time.

Time is precious. To waste your time is to waste your life. Managing your time successfully is the secret to accomplishing those things that you must do and also those things that you want to do. Studying at university is very different from studying at school. You have to take much greater responsibility for organising your own time.

Attending lectures and taking in what is said in class can save you a great deal of effort and time when studying at home. However, you will need to use non-lecture time for additional course work, assignments and preparation. How you manage this available time is very important. *Many students fail due to misusing their free time.*

## PLANNING YOUR TIME

- Make use of your diary to plan for the **year**. Enter main events such as due dates for assignments, test dates, exams, sporting fixtures, etc.
- You will need to plan your time every **week**. Make entries in your diary that are very specific about what you need to do e.g. Business Management: make notes and do homework exercise; Marketing: summarise Chapters 2 & 3 from textbook.
- Enter your **daily lecture timetable** onto a card or in your diary. In addition, enter your **own detailed daily programme** (See example on pg. 7.) You will then be able to slot in your study times.

## GENERAL ORGANISATION

In order to study effectively and ensure that you do not waste time, make sure that you:

- **Have a suitable study spot.** Select a place that is quiet and as far as possible, free from distractions at home, in residence, in the library or Study Centre. Try to use the same study area each time. In this way your body and mind will become 'programmed' for study and you will concentrate better. Ideally don't perform any other activities in your study area.
- **Have time-saving stationary and accessories close at hand** e.g. dictionary, ring-binders, paper, pens, kokis, files etc.
- **Make certain you have easy access to study material needed in a particular study session.** e.g. textbooks, journals, videos, lecture notes etc.

## TIPS TO HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR TIME EFFECTIVELY

- 1 **Study difficult or boring subjects first.** This will prevent you from spending too much time on your 'favourite' subjects.
- 2 **Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions.** For example, two 3-hour sessions are far more productive for most people than one long 6-hour session. When you are engaged in study over a relatively long period, **take a break after every 40 minutes to 60 minutes.**

If you are studying in a large block of time, work on several different subjects and avoid studying similar subjects back-to-back. This will help you to avoid confusion.

- 3 **Leave some unscheduled time for flexibility and for recreational activities**

This is very important. Lack of flexibility is the major reason why study time-tables fail. When planning your schedule, begin by listing the activities that come at fixed hours and that cannot be changed.

Next schedule flexible time commitments. These hours can be swapped with other blocks of time if your schedule needs to be changed during the week. Therefore if you are forced to deviate from your planned schedule you can substitute an equal amount of study time for the period you originally set aside for study.

- 4 **Be aware of your best time of day.** Observe yourself and schedule study time for your most demanding studies at times when you are most alert and wide awake.
- 5 **Make good use of free hours during the university day.** Have short study tasks to do for e.g. when waiting for transport, during free periods between lectures.

- 6 **Don't get too comfortable.** Avoid studying in bed. Easy chairs and sofas are dangerous places to study. Your body gets the wrong signal such as: "time to relax/sleep".

## **HANDLING TIME-WASTERS AND INTERRUPTIONS**

Time wasters and interruptions can make it difficult for you to implement your best plans and intentions to study. Safeguarding blocks of study time is essential. You need to protect your time by saying 'no' to various interruptions, activities, requests or persons. Some interruptions can be avoided by keeping in mind the following:

- **Make agreements with live-in mates about study time.** Set clear rules - even written contracts. Be sure to follow them yourself!
- **Avoid noise and visual distractions.** Don't study in front of the T.V. Some students have reported good results with carefully selected and controlled music, but most research indicates that silence is preferable.
- **Notice how others misuse your time.** Ask yourself if there are certain people who consistently interrupt your study time. Be assertive. Firmly request that others respect your study times.
- **Get off the phone: don't be a telephone victim.** Use a simple 'I can't talk now, I'm studying'. Return telephone calls when it's more convenient for you. Other alternatives are to simply unplug the landline or turn off your cell-phone or study in the library or study centre where you can't receive calls.

- **Learn to say no.** You are not required to agree to all requests. Saying no can be done politely and firmly, e.g. to an invitation to out during your scheduled study time.
- **Close your door.** Open it selectively. A DO NOT DISTURB sign can be helpful.

## **QUESTION'S YOU CAN ASK YOURSELF IN ORDER TO AVOID WASTING TIME**

- What is the one task I can accomplish toward my goal? Pick one small accomplishment that you can complete in  $\pm 5$  minutes
- Am I being perfectionistic? If you can complete a job 95% perfect in two hours and 100% perfect in four hours, ask yourself whether the additional 5% improvement is worth doubling the amount of time you spend.
- How did I waste time? Notice when time passes and you haven't accomplished what you planned. Take a minute to review your actions and note the specific way you wasted time. Noting what you waste your time on may help you. (Refer to pamphlet SS3: *How2 improve your concentration.*) observing the things you do to fill your time may help you to catch yourself in the act next time.
- Would I pay myself for what I'm doing right now?
- Can I do just one more thing? Get into the habit of working until you are done, then doing one more thing, you are likely to vastly increase your productivity.



# PRELIMINARY TIME RECORD

**Directions:**

Use the blank table below for the preliminary time record. During the first week keep a detailed record of the way you spend your time. Account for all your activities - class attendance, recreation, sleeping, commuting, exercise, meals etc. Pay particular attention to the study time you require for each of the courses for which you are registered.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tues</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thurs</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>Sun</b>
<b>Total no. of study hours</b>							

## TIME TABLE

Then, work out a time table which you can use as a guide for planning your time.

Time	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Sat	Sun
<b>Total no. of study hours</b>							

# WEEKLY PLANNER

Use this to plan your weekly activities.

			Total no. of study hours
<b>MON</b>			
<b>TUES</b>			
<b>WED</b>			
<b>THURS</b>			
<b>FRI</b>			
<b>SAT</b>			
<b>SUN</b>			

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