



Managing your time

Managing your time effectively helps you to feel confident and prepared both in your personal life and in your teaching practice.

We have provided some tips to help you, and a personal planner to remind you on a daily basis of how to manage and use your time effectively.

Tips on organisational skills

- **A place for everything and everything in its place!** Too much time is wasted looking for items that seem to have disappeared. Designate a place for your paperwork - such as bills, budgets and so on - and keep it where it belongs.
- **Learn to say no!** Recognise your physical and mental limitations by knowing when and how to say no.
- **Deadlines.** Use a master calendar, daily planner or a mind map to give you a comprehensive picture of the events in your life. You should write down all the important dates and things you must do, including any social events.
- **Resources.** Learn what resources are available to help you complete what you need to get done. Learn where they are, and when you can use them.
- **Planning.** Learn to make outlines of projects, papers, proposals and so forth. Use a plan such as: introduction, development, conclusions...
- **Filing.** File all correspondence, both incoming and outgoing, to refer to when you need to contact someone. Try to deal only once with all the letters and papers that cross your desk.
- **Phone calls.** Learn when the people you need to contact by phone are available. Also, tell others where you are or when you can be reached.
- **Emails.** Reading and responding to emails can feel like a full-time job. If emails are a source of stress in your life, then delete all forwarded emails to save time for those that are really important.



- **Mobile phones.** Make a habit to limit mobile phone use to practical hours, and to turn your phone off when at the cinema, in a restaurant or at other inappropriate places.
- **Internet.** Monitor your usage of the Internet. If it exceeds two to three hours a day (outside of work) consider limiting it to a more reasonable amount of time.

More time-management tips

- **Watch less television.** TV is definitely a time robber. You may intend to watch a half-hour show and end up wasting the whole evening in front of the TV.
- **Clean your desk once a week.** Things accumulate quickly in the course of a week. By making a habit of clearing your work space regularly, you not only spend less time searching for things, but you start the cleansing process in your mind to focus on your work.
- **Have a good sleep every night.** Denying ourselves adequate sleep not only affects the quality of the work we do the next day, but ultimately affects the quality of our health. Aim for six to eight hours a night.
- **Create personal boundaries and honour them.** Boundaries are those invisible lines we draw around ourselves to keep our identity and give structure to our lives. They include knowing when to leave work, social events and so on. By honouring your boundaries, you will maintain a sense of personal integrity.
- **Do one activity at a time.** In this day and age, it is easy to get caught up doing many things at once - to be lured into multi-tasking. Dividing your attention between two or more activities wastes time and results in poor quality work.
- **Learn and practice the art of decision-making.** We are constantly faced with choices in both our personal and professional lives. Decision-making requires a good sense of judgment and a sense of compassion. It is important that we avoid being overwhelmed by learning to limit our choices. More choices mean more decisions.



Personal planning

Sometimes we don't manage our own time as effectively as we would like to. To help you to organise your time more effectively, it would be a good idea to work out your own personal timetable.

This involves you in thinking about your week - all seven days, and what you do with your time. Fill in the boxes HONESTLY - if you are a TV soap fan, put down as many time slots as you will use in a day to watch television. If you have to cook and clean at home, make sure you allow time for that.

Your aim is to build in study time, and to make that time realistic and meaningful, which might mean letting some other activities go. However, you might find that you replace them with much more worthwhile ones!

Complete the first time planner with what you do now. Then reflect on what you have entered and re-do your week. You will hopefully change some boxes to allow for activities such as study, reading, keeping fit, family time and so on. The idea is for you to focus your thinking and recognise exactly what you spend your time doing, which may come as a bit of a surprise!

Put your re-worked plan on the wall to remind you on a daily basis of your new use of time.

Overleaf, we have provided a partially filled plan to give you an idea of how to start. You can customise this plan for your own use.



Times	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
am							
7.30			Put out rubbish			Lie-in	
9.30			Organise breakfasts and packed lunches			Music lessons	
11			Work			Music lessons	
pm							
12.30			Lunch and shopping			Family lunch	
2			Work			Grocery shopping	
4			Work			Social time	
6			Supper			Watching TV	
8			Pilates class			Social time	
10			Reading and preparing for next day			Social time	
12			Sleep			Social time	