



Time Management Tips

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Ask any junior or senior, they will usually say that time management was the biggest challenge in their first year at USD.

These tips are designed to help you get off to a good start so it doesn't have to be such a big problem.

Opportunity & Challenge

The great thing about college is you have lots of freedom. A major challenge for most students coming straight out of high school is managing all the new freedom – parents aren't around and professors aren't on top of you all the time so it's up to you.

Easy Stuff – “Make the Plan”

This one is a **no-brainer**, but it's worth reminding – write down the stuff you need to do. Yes we know that you already knew that. It's one thing to know it and another thing to **actually do it!**

- **Use to-do lists, daily/weekly/monthly planners, bulletin boards** – whatever you like, just use something to write things down that you need to get done. Be creative – use colors, draw pictures, etc.
- **Prioritize your lists.** Identify what is most important to get done by color-coding, using asterisks (**), highlighting “must do” items, letter-coding (A=Most Important, B=Important, C=Least Important). Remember that not everything is important (don't highlight all events!)
- **Best advice!** Break things down into smaller parts. For example, if you have a reading assignment of 100 pages, break it down into chunks of 20 pages and put it in your calendar . . .

Example:

Tuesday – morning read pages 1-20, afternoon pages 21-40

Wednesday – evening read pages 41-60

Thursday – morning read pages 61-80, evening pages 81-100

Friday – come to class prepared!

The same approach works for writing assignments (break down steps of preparing outline, writing introduction, writing body, writing conclusion, and revising), preparing for tests (break down initial review, preparing study notes, intensive study, and group study), and any other academic task that has a deadline/due date.

Hard Stuff – “Do the Do”

Making plans is easy, it's the actual “doing” part that is tough. It's especially tough in college with lots of distractions – roommates, noise, fun things going on, “IMing,” video games, etc. – and no one (aka Mom and Dad) looking over your shoulder.

3 Keys to Managing Procrastination – Getting things done!

- **Environment!! Avoid or Minimize Distractions.** You won't be distracted by what's not there so make your environment distraction free.
 - When trying to work go somewhere where you won't be interrupted by friends and room/hall mates.
 - Turn off your cell phone when studying, also turn off your computer if reading.

- Leave your room if you can't focus there – go to the library, fountain, residence hall study lounge near, Legal Research Center, study space in a building (Science and Technology, University Center, Serra Hall, etc.)
- Don't study with the TV on; it slows you down and actually affects the way information is stored in your brain.
- **Do It Now!** Don't think yourself out of doing work, just sit down and get started. The more you delay, the more your mind can play tricks on you to justify procrastinating.
- **Reward Yourself!** Don't rely on will power alone. Give yourself incentives to get things done.
 - Small tasks = small rewards (e.g. 10 minute study break, snack, etc.)
 - Big tasks = big rewards (go to a movie, night out with friends, etc.)
 - Schedule fun events at the end of an assignment

Create Your Own "Time Management Master Plan" using the plan below.

Time Management Master Plan

What gets in the way/What keeps me from getting things done?:

What works/What time management techniques should I keep?:

Major recommendations from others on how to improve my time management:

The Plan:

What I will do to improve my time management TODAY?:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

USD Resources that can help:

- First Year Experience (FYE) Workshops program. Attend a session on time management. Visit website for schedule: <http://www.sandiego.edu/sli/FYEWshops.php>
- Counseling Center for academic consultation. Call x4655, or visit Serra Hall 300 for an appointment. Visit website for more information: <http://www.sandiego.edu/usdcc/>
- Office of Student Learning Initiatives for peer advising and academic assistance planning. Call x5995, or visit University Center 102 for an appointment. Visit website for more information: <http://www.sandiego.edu/sli/>
- Talk to your preceptor, preceptorial assistant, or resident assistant for suggestions.
- Visit other university websites with time management/academic skills tips:
 - Dartmouth University: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/time.html>
 - Virginia Tech University: <http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stdyhlp.html>

**Time Management; Make the Plan,
Do the Do!**

FOR MORE FYE ONLINE RESOURCES VISIT: <http://www.sandiego.edu/sli/FYEOnlineResources.php>