Time Management Tips for College Students

College life can be exciting, but it also comes with a lot of responsibilities. Between classes, assignments, part-time jobs, the Fraternity and social life, managing your time effectively is key to success. Here are some practical tips to help you stay on top of your schedule and reduce stress.

USE A PLANNER OR DIGITAL CALENDAR
- Why it helps: it keeps all your deadlines, classes, and events in one place.
- You can try the following tools: Google Calendar, a physical planner (often available in campus stores) and/or creating checklists.
- Plot the amount of time you expect each task to take.
- It is helpful to have a semester calendar and break things out week by week. Use your syllabus to write deadlines on your calendar.
- At the end of every day, write a note about what you need to complete the next day.
- Pro tip: color-code your tasks (e.g., blue for classes, red for exams).

BREAK TASKS INTO SMALLER STEPS
Large projects can feel overwhelming. Break them into manageable chunks.
- Choose topic
- Research sources
- Create outline
- Write draft
- Edit and submit

Remember that any task or project can be completed. Take it one step at a time. You may also challenge yourself to complete what you consider the most difficult task first. That is an approach that may help limit procrastination. For example, if you are nervous about going to a professor's office hours, do that first rather than avoiding it and worrying about going for days.

PRIORITIZE WITH THE EISENHOWER MATRIX
- Urgent and Important: Do now
- Important, Not Urgent: Schedule it
- Urgent, Not Important: Delegate if possible
- Not Urgent, Not Important: Eliminate or limit

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS
- Turn off notifications during study time.
- Use specialized apps or place your phone on Do Not Disturb, airplane mode or out of your reach while working on a task or project.
- Find a quiet, dedicated study space.
- Create a routine. Our bodies respond to routine. Waking and sleeping at similar times each day, studying in a place that is only used for studying and working on school assignments at certain times of the day are all positive steps to help generate a comfortable routine.
- Allow for routine changes. While routines are positive, you can also stimulate your brain by switching from one class to another when doing assignments if you need a break from a subject. Take a moment to have a snack or step outside into the sunshine

for a quick boost while studying. The "novelty rule" says you can feel recharged and more present if you approach familiar habits in unfamiliar ways.

USE TIME BLOCKS
- Allocate specific blocks of time for studying, breaks, meals and relaxation.
- Try the Pomodoro Technique: 25 minutes of focused work plus a five-minute break.

DON'T SACRIFICE SLEEP
- Aim for seven to nine hours of sleep. Sleep improves memory, focus and mood.
- Avoid all-nighters; they reduce productivity and increase stress.

REFLECT AND ADJUST WEEKLY
- At the end of each week, review what worked and what didn't.
- Adjust your schedule and habits accordingly.

ASK FOR HELP WHEN NEEDED
- Use campus resources: tutoring centers, academic advisors and mental health services.
- Don't hesitate to reach out to professors or classmates.
- If it works for you, study with a friend. This can provide an accountability partner.

BONUS TIP: CELEBRATE SMALL WINS
- Reward yourself for completing tasks. Watch a show, grab a treat or take a walk.
- Positive reinforcement builds motivation and momentum.

Microsoft Copilot, response to "Time Management Tips for College Students," OpenAI, July 17, 2025.