The Pocket Guide for Students: Time Management Guide

## Apps

There are lots of organisation and time management apps around, if you like apps and find they help you stay focused, stop you procrastinating and help you get thing done, then you should find one that works for you and use it.

Some popular ones I recommend are:

* MLO – MyLifeOrganised
  + This deals with scheduling and organising all elements of your life. You can store to-do lists, connect with your email and calendar, add life goals and so on. This is a very flexible app that caters to a wide variety of organisational strategies.
* Trello
  + This is the app for those who like a list. This is a great app for planning research projects and assignments, as well as organising your schedule and to-do list. You can also log in on your computer from the web, so that you can access the information while working in a larger screen format.
* Forest
  + This is a great study focus aid for helping you concentrate on the tasks you need to be doing. Forest is a ‘study timer’ where a digital tree is planted at the start of your allotted study time, and over the time you study it grows. If you leave the app before the time is up (i.e., before you have finished your allotted study time) then the tree is killed. The goal is to create your own virtual forest, this app takes a game-based approach to supporting you in your motivation to study.

## Calendar Options

All smartphones have inbuilt calendars that you can add your classes, deadlines, study schedule, work shifts/schedule, family plans/events, and so on to, plus there is the option to link up with email and get notifications as reminders.

You may find that your emails, both your personal one and your university one, are compatible with your smartphone calendar, and I would advise linking them up. Seeing everything in one place is incredibly useful, and it can help you stay organised and on top of things.

There are also different apps available that you can use as calendars, most of which can link up with other apps and emails. Whatever your preference, make sure that you learn to use it and refer to it often.

## Weekly Planner

Some students still love a planner they can write on and/or print out (or complete digitally in the case of this book). Here are a series that will be useful for you.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Weekly Timetable** | **University Classes** | **University work to do outside of class** | **Deadlines** | **Home** | **Work Shifts** | **Chill out time** |
| Monday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Term-time Planner

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Lectures** | **Seminars/ Workshops** | **Deadlines** | **Home** | **Work Shifts** | **Chill out time** |
| Term |  | | | | | |
| Monday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Term |  | | | | | |
| Monday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Term |  | | | | | |
| Monday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Exam Revision Timetable

Remember to schedule time off, you should aim for at least one complete day off during your exam revision time. Don’t forget to add in any work shifts, or family appointments before you start: block out that time so you can create a realistic timetable for your revision.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date of Exam** | **Subject to revise** | **Module/ Subject** | **Home Events** | **Work Shifts** | **Chill out time** |
| Monday morning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Monday afternoon |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Monday  evening |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday morning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday afternoon |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday  evening |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday morning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday afternoon |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday  evening |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday morning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday afternoon |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday  evening |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday morning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday afternoon |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday  evening |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday morning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday afternoon |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday  evening |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday morning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday afternoon |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday  evening |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Time management tips

* Put your life events, such as school drop-offs, dates, exercise classes and work shifts into your calendar as well, if you just focus on academic work, it will look like you have more time than you do, and you’ll inevitably fall behind.
* Write out your deadlines and put them on the wall – the more you see them the more you will remember when they are.
* Put all your deadlines into your calendar – be that paper-based or your smartphone.
  + And don’t forget to add notification reminders!
* Schedule your assignments and work out when you will start working on them – plan ahead so that you are done a couple of days before the deadline. This gives you space to make changes and adds flexibility to your schedule so that you can deal with anything urgent that appears at the last minute.
* Break down tasks into what you need to do and what you want to do. Schedule in the necessary tasks first, then add the rest.
* Be realistic with what you hope to accomplish – Rome wasn’t built in a day, and you can’t do all your work in one either.
* Create a schedule for each week and stick to it. Remember to schedule in breaks.
* Include preparation for class in your schedule, the more you ensure you prepare, the more you will benefit from class, and this will have a positive impact on your learning – making the rest of your academic work that little bit easier.
* If you don’t understand something from class, ask right away, either in class or send an email. Don’t sit on not understanding until it’s too late to do anything about it.
* If you’re not sure where all your time is going, keep a diary for a few days and jot down everything you do.
  + Check your phone usage with the screen time information your smartphone records.
* Don’t assume you’ll remember everything. Write down all the things you need to do, be than on your smartphone, on post-it notes for your wall, a list in a notebook, whichever system you prefer. This way you will have an accurate picture of how much you need to do.
* Turn off notifications for all but your phone, immediate messages, and calendar alerts. Everything else, such as social media, can wait until you have time. Remember, if it’s actually an emergency, they will call you!
  + Alongside this, mute any group chats you’re in, this way you won’t be bombarded by endless streams of notifications.
  + If you are concerned about your social media use, delete the apps from your phone and just access it through your computer or tablet. It will make you more conscious about how often you use it.
* When you need to study, put your phone on silent or turn it off if you can, or put it in a different room where you can still hear if someone is calling you. Putting some physical distance between you and your phone will help you focus on the work you need to get done.
* Remove additional distractions from where you’re studying – that includes TVs, magazines, etc. You want your focus to be just work.
* Make sure you have a clock visible where you study, this way you won’t lose track of time and disrupt your schedule.
* Don’t put off quick tasks. If it’s not going to take you longer than 5-10 minutes, get it done right away.
* Vary your study environment if you can. Home, library, the local café, change it up a bit so you don’t get bored of the same four walls.
* Treat university work like a job, if possible, make sure you have blocks of time in the week to relax and enjoy being with friends and family, or engage in activities you enjoy.
* Get enough sleep! We can do so much when we are well-rested, and sleep deprivation is known to cause problems for thinking and learning. Get a good night’s sleep and you’ll get more done each day.
* Learn to say no! You can only do so much, be realistic about what you have time to do. Anything you don’t have time for, say no. If that is difficult for you, now is the time to practice. You are one person, and you cannot do all things.
* Don’t spend as much time with people who are not motivated to study like you are.
* Leave being a perfectionist to one side, there is rarely a perfect assignment and if you are scared to start then you will end up being late. Plus, first drafts are always rubbish, but you can’t edit a blank page.