

Managing your time in college

1. Calendar schedule

Organizing class times, work shifts, and other commitments

Tools: Google calendar, or other calendar+reminder app

2. Routine schedule

Outline of how you balance parts of the day: study, jobs, extra-curriculars, personal time

Tool: a written routine that you can post up somewhere

3. To-do lists

On a real-time basis, you create a list after consulting your **calendar** and **routine** schedules
It's best to make sure that difficult tasks are at the top

Tools: whiteboard, a tablet on the fridge, or memo app

Developing routines

A daily routine can be unique to each day of the week, or you can aim for consistency.

- Classes
- Jobs
- Extra-curricular commitments
- Relationships and romance
- Household duties
- Exercise
- Personal enrichment (books, films, culture, etc.)
- Self care; indulgent enjoyments
- Adequate sleep

Breaking up study time

Rule of thumb: for a single course, devote smaller portions of each day

It's helpful to get the homework done right after the course meeting, while all the material is fresh!

Pomodoro technique:

- 1 “pomodoro”: 25-minute work sprint, and then a 5-minute break
- After the 4th pomodoro, extend the break to 15-30 minutes

Be prepared to change subjects after 1-2 hours.

Large-scale projects

These can be intimidating when you think about them as a single task

Break these down into smaller tasks, and **write these tasks into your schedule** ahead-of-time.

Ex: a research report with a hefty page-minimum

Steps, in smaller blocks of time:

- Day 1-2: Research gathering
- Day 3: Outline
- Day 4: Draft writing
- Day 5: Rewrite
- Day 6: After sleeping on it, reread and revise

Overcoming distractions

Focus and discipline are professional skills that require practice!

You will get better over time (like going to the gym).

During study time, either turn off phones or make use of social-media-blocking apps.

Turn audible notifications off.

Use the things that distract you as a **reward system**.

Audio:

If you need sound to help you focus, consider:

- Music you are already thoroughly familiar with – no need for active attention
- White-noise or environmental sound recordings – these are easily found online

More advice here:

[UNC Learning Center: Take Charge of Distractions](#)