

# Online Students

## Keys to Success #2: Beat the Clock

### Time Management

Managing your time well is an essential skill that can help you to get organised, avoid procrastination and do well academically. It is not just about doing more but about doing the right things at the right time. This guide provides strategies to help students optimize their workflow and achieve their goals.

**Self-Reflection** Think about how you manage time in your everyday life. Being aware of your habits (both good and bad), preferences, strengths and weaknesses helps you to identify strategies to make the most of your time and stay motivated.

First, think about your current approach. Ask yourself:

- *Do I generally plan my time?*
- *Do I like to be on time and have things done on time?*
- *Do I find it relatively easy to juggle competing tasks?*
- *Am I able to prioritise tasks?*
- *Do I use tools to plan my time?*

If you answered yes to most of these, you may already be quite the time manager! This resource will still give you some fresh tips and strategies. If you answered *no* to most of these, that's OK, you're being honest with yourself. You will benefit from the tips and strategies in this resource.

Next is all about strategies!

### Strategies


#### 1. Identify demands on your time

Complete this inventory to work out where your time goes: [CDU Time inventory](#)

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*“Until we manage time, we can manage nothing else” – Peter Drucker*

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The most successful students are those who have balanced lives. That means they make time each week for activities like studying and working on assignments, as well as paid work, caring duties, sleeping, exercising, enjoying hobbies, and spending time with family and friends.

Start by making a list of all your:

- University commitments: keeping up with weekly readings and content, study time, assessments, discussion forums, webinars etc.
- Other fixed commitments: paid work, home commitments, sport, clubs
- Free time activities: how much free time do you have? Is it enough to stay healthy?

## 2. Learn to Prioritise

Decide what important task is to be done first. The use of a weekly planner can help remind you of your short-term goals such as reviewing lectures and studying for exams. The planner can also help organise your non-academic tasks so you can have a clear picture of what your day/week is going to be like. Use this weekly planner to schedule your activities: [CDU Weekly Planner](#).

## 3. Task Management

- Break down tasks
- Use task management tools
- Set realistic deadlines

It can sometimes be difficult to get started on larger tasks as the amount of work required can seem overwhelming. Set realistic deadlines more manageable, try breaking tasks down into smaller, more achievable goals.

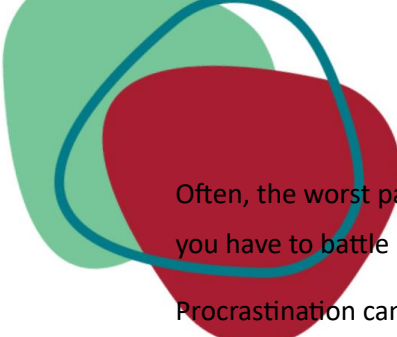
## 4. Eliminate Distractions

- Minimize interruptions
- Dedicated workspace

Distractions can significantly impact productivity and creativity. Minimize interruptions by turning off notifications, silencing your phone and informing colleagues of your focused work periods. Establish a dedicated workspace free from clutter and distractions.

## Final tips

### Minimise procrastination

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Often, the worst part about having a lot to do is not the work itself but the worry associated with it. If you have to battle procrastination, it may be that you have not worked out a way of managing a task.

Procrastination can be your way of saying, "I don't know how to start". It may not be laziness – it might be more about prioritising.

### **Ask for help when you need it**

Let family and friends know your study schedule and don't hesitate to seek help. If they understand and support your academic goals, tackling college life will be easier for you.

### **Don't be afraid to say "No"**

Saying "no" is sometimes difficult to do. However, if you need to study for an exam or finish an assignment, you have to learn how to say "no". Decline politely and be clear with your reason. Negotiate a time when you are free to comply with the request or to socialise with your friends.

**"Time is what we want most, but what we use worst." - William Penn**

## **Useful Links**

Here are some useful tools and techniques that can aid in effective time management:

- **Pomodoro Technique:** Work in focused 25-minute intervals with short breaks in between. Link [here](#).
- **Calendar Management:** Utilize Outlook Calendar to schedule tasks and set reminders.
- **Time management calculator** Use this interactive time management tool to see a breakdown of your hours per week available for study and everyday activities.

Access the [time management calculator](#).

- **Assignment scheduler** Enter the date your assignment is due to get a plan for the time you have available. Access the [assignment scheduler](#).