



Strategies for More Effective Time Management

Good time management skills aren't developed overnight, they require a lot of patience and reflection. With this in mind, how you are feeling about your workload is very important.

Effective time management can help you:

- ***Reduce stress levels***
- ***Increase productivity***
- ***Create more room for other opportunities***

How to get started

Try asking yourself these 4 questions:

1. How much time do I normally spend on assignments?
2. What tools or skills do I currently use to manage my time?
3. In what ways have my current methods benefitted me?
4. Where are some areas for improvement?

Long term and Short term goals

One important and simple thing you can do is begin planning **long term goals**. Some examples of long term goals:

- Achieve a 3.0 GPA by the end of the school year.
- Improve my mental and physical health by the end of the school year (this could mean incorporate more physical activity or change diet, for example)
- Incorporate a passion project into one of your classes and complete it by the end of the term.

While these goals may seem daunting at first, they can be broken down into manageable timelines using the SMART goals method.

SFU also has a great tool on breaking up your long term goals into manageable short term ones: (<https://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/branches-depts/slc/learning/calculator>).



Source: [pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)

Breaking down big goals into smaller ones.

If, for example, you were assigned an essay on October 30th and given 1 month to write it, your **long term** goal could look like this:

Complete an essay on time and achieve a grade of at least 75%.

Your **short term goals** to achieve the long term one could look like this:

1. Review the assignment outline and ask the instructor any questions you have by November 2nd.
2. By November 6th, do your research
3. By November 9th write your outline,
4. By November 13th, write your first draft.
5. By November 16th have a peer at the writing centre review your draft
6. By November 20th, implement any pertinent feedback
7. By November 26th, proofread the essay and finish references list
8. On November 27th, submit the essay!

- This is of course only one example and each plan will look different based on learning styles and assignment requirements but **it can be applied to almost any assignment type!**



Source: [pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)

Some main points to keep in mind

Check in with yourself!

- Remember to schedule time for yourself. You will need time to decompress in between commitments, so plan ahead and put that time into your schedule!
- Maintain an awareness of your energy levels. Try to do difficult tasks when you feel most energetic
- Try the Pomodoro technique to help avoid procrastination.
- Try considering your effort and time proportional to the assignment weight, using the Eisenhower Matrix.
- Try to think about best case/worst case scenarios when you outline possible outcomes of your plans.

Use your resources!

- There are many tools and people available to help you succeed in your studies.
- You can use a Calendar app such as Google Calendar to keep track of your deadlines.
- As soon as you receive all of your course outlines in the first week of classes, write in your quizzes, midterms, exams, presentations, and assignment and project due dates. Write in holidays, personal commitments, travel, and other events that will impact your available study time during the semester.
- Try not to clutter your calendar with other obligations such as class times or regular work shifts. Focus on the big picture and keeping track of deadlines.
- Use a to do list and cross out completed tasks when they are finished (even small ones!)
- Communicate with your instructors with any questions you may have, they are there to help you!
- Carefully read your assignment outline, sometimes you can save a lot of time if you notice some instructions you previously missed.