



Managing your study time

One of the challenges of studying at university is managing your time. There are, however, many things you can do to ensure you use your time effectively.

1. Plan and schedule your time



Plan the semester/trimester

Consult your unit outlines for due dates of all your assignments and record them in a semester/trimester calendar or planner. Make a note of any particularly busy periods.

Plan your week

Use a digital or hardcopy weekly planner to allocate your time during each week.

Importantly, your weekly planner should include:

- all of your classes, e.g., lectures, labs, tutorials
- all other activities, including family time, social commitments, hobbies/sports, medical appointments, etc.
- independent study time where you will work on assignments, do readings, and study for tests/exams.

Work backwards from your assignment due dates.

Plan when you will:

1. Finish your initial research.
2. Complete the outline for your essay, report, etc.
3. Finish your first and second drafts.

Plan your day

Aim to have a **specific set of tasks or goals for each day** rather than just a vague idea that you will study.

Daily and weekly to-do lists are useful because they help to relieve some of the mental load of remembering everything you need to do.

Make sure you break your to-do list items down into small, manageable tasks. If the goal is specific and has a clear end point, then you can tick it off when it's finished.

When writing to-do lists, make the goals specific. For example, "work on report" is vague, however "read and annotate two readings for report" is a specific goal.

2. Prioritise

Your to-do list should be relevant and prioritised. Try sorting your tasks into low, medium and high priority.

3. Create a study routine

It's good to make plans, but carrying them out is the hard part. One way to make sure you follow through is to turn your study plans into a routine so they become automatic behaviours.

Using reminders

- Have a consistent cue for starting your study sessions.
- Set reminders on your phone.
- Try to study at the same place and time each week to establish a routine.

Examples

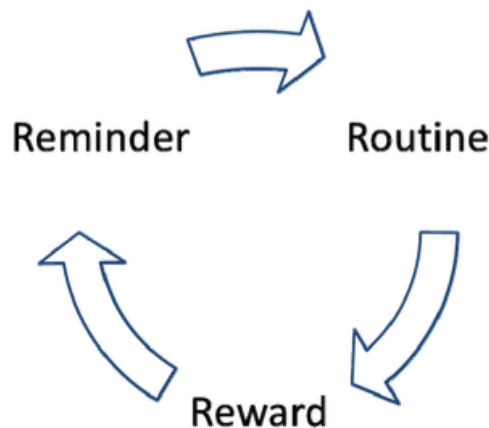
- "After I attend my CITQ1003 lecture each week, I'll head to the Library to study."

- "Before I attend my ACCQ1100 tutorial each week, I'll complete my tutorial questions."
- "After I finish having dinner, I'll review STAQ1520 concepts that I did not understand."

Rewards

Rewarding yourself helps to reinforce your study routine.

For example, after your study session, you might like to treat yourself to a coffee, catch up with a friend or go for a walk along the river.



4. Staying motivated

Eliminate digital distractions

- Close irrelevant web browsers while you study.
- It's best to put your phone away while you study – having it on the table next to you can be distracting.

Try the Pomodoro technique

Work in short distraction-free blocks of time and take regular breaks (e.g. 25 minutes of focused study, 5-minute break, then repeat the process).

Have a clear end goal for each study session

Write it down at the top of the page when you sit down to study.

Find a balance

- Striking a healthy balance between study and leisure will help you to avoid burnout.
- Make time for things like:
 - exercising
 - socialising
 - relaxing.

5. Be flexible

Your planning tools should help you to accomplish your goals rather than make you feel more stressed out.

If you find yourself setting unrealistic goals, be open to changing them.

Sometimes plans will need to be changed because important life events come up. That's okay!