

6 WAYS TO TAKE BACK YOUR TIME!

Time cannot be managed. Everyone gets the same amount – 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 525,600 minutes per year. What **can** be managed is YOU – how you behave, how you spend that time. Here are some things to try. Pick one right away, do it until it becomes a habit, and then pick another one, until you are mastering yourself!

1. DO IT NOW

Postponing or procrastinating creates a lot of stress. The alternative is to take care of it now. Make the phone call as soon as it occurs to you. Start the paper today. Also, use your WAIT time – 10 minutes between classes, 30 minutes waiting for your laundry to finish, 10 minutes in line at a restaurant – anywhere you can snatch a few minutes. Keep short study tasks with you to do during this time, such as index cards with facts, formulas, or definitions.

2. SAY NO

We sometimes are asked to do things we don't want to do. Other times we are asked to do things we really cannot fit into our schedules. Learn to say "no" graciously up front – it will save you much time. It is not rude if it is done in a polite and courteous way. Tell the person that you are busy educating yourself – they will most likely understand. Also, say no to interruptions from texts, emails, and social media. It's really OK to turn your phone and iPad off for a while as you get things done.

3. USE A CALENDAR/PLANNER

This will remind you of commitments that take place on a certain date/time – classes, meetings, appointments, etc. Schedule due dates for assignments and tests, as well as other events. Experiment with both electronic and paper calendars to see which works better for you.

You should expect to study at least TWO HOURS FOR EVERY ONE HOUR YOU ARE IN CLASS. If you are taking 15 credit hours, you should study for about 30 hours, which means your total time per week spent on academics is 45 hours. This is like a job! Treat it that way.

Schedule short study times rather than marathon sessions. Try to build in open time on your calendar, to rest, relax, or make up for something that may go wrong.

4. WRITE REMINDERS

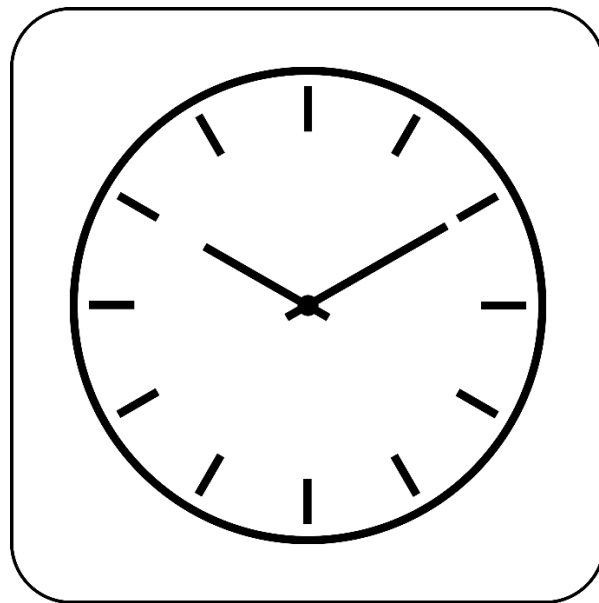
Make a list of specific things you need to do, both academic and personal. As you accomplish each one, check it off (or scratch it off, or delete it, if this is an electronic list).

5. DISCOVER YOUR PERSONAL RHYTHMS

Many people study better (more efficiently) during daylight hours. If that is true for you, do your best to schedule as much study time, especially for difficult subjects, during daytime hours. If you find yourself in a time crunch, try getting up 15 minutes earlier or stay up 15 minutes later. It doesn't seem like much, but over the course of a year, either choice gives you an extra 91 hours of waking activity.

6. GO FOR THE LONG TERM

Experiment with long-term planning. Think beyond today and this week, so that you can see how your activities today relate to your longer-range goals. On your calendar/planner, include dates for any key event for the upcoming semester or year, be they academic, career, or family events. This will help you see life more as a whole and understand how today's actions may impact tomorrow's dreams.



From Oscar Velasquez, *BAMS: The essential Guide to Becoming a Master Student*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2010.