



Managing Your Time

University life

At university, you will spend most of your time engaged in independent study, in which you will read and conduct research, complete assignments, and revise for any exams you may have. However, there are risks associated with independent study:

- Feeling there is more time available than there is
- Missing lectures and assignment deadlines



Finding the time

So, how do you find the hours that you need? Some things have to go, but it's also important that you find a balance; there's no point having 'all work and no play'.

A good place to start is to draw up a chart of your activities in a typical week. Once you have made a chart, save it and make new charts whenever you want to re-plan.

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							
Total							

Tip! Think about how many hours a week you are planning to study, and how many hours a week of study your course requires

Now that your chart is complete, you need to think about what you will cut back on to make way for your study time. A good way to do this is to work out the following:

Which of these activities are 'Upkeep Time'?

- ▶ The time you spend doing things that are necessary to keep you going, such as sleeping, eating, washing, etc.

Which of these activities are 'Necessary Time'?

- ▶ These could include travelling to university, paid work, childcare, or other responsibilities



Which of these activities are 'Flexible Time'?

- ▶ You can be flexible with the leftover time and use it for optional activities that you might cut back on to make way for study time

Planning your time

- Make a list of the things you need to do, and prioritise what needs doing into:
 - A** – This needs to be done now – important and urgent
 - B** – You'd better do this soon – important but not urgent
 - C** – Do it when/if you have the time – not important, not urgent
- Break down your workload into **specific targets**
 - ▶ This will make big projects seem less daunting and give you a sense of achievement
- Estimate **how long** each task will take
 - ▶ You can then set a realistic amount of time for each activity
- Set yourself **early deadlines** and build in **extra time** in case the work takes longer than expected
 - ▶ You will feel less pressured
- Keep your diary and list **up-to-date**, ticking off completed work and amending your timings as necessary
 - ▶ Keep a list of any smaller tasks that you may have, so you can get them out of the way when you have gaps in your timetable

Do it now

- **Do the difficult subjects first!** Putting things off only delays the inevitable, leaving it looming in the background
- **Break the task into small sections** and congratulate yourself when you complete one
- Keep going: **don't get distracted** by television or social media. Take regular short breaks to keep yourself focused
- When you have achieved one of the targets you have set, **take a short break** and give yourself a treat. Don't forget to tick it off your list of activities!

Consider your own study preferences

- **When** do you study?
 - ▶ Some people work best in the morning, others at night
 - ▶ Identify when you are at your best and plan your study routine around that time
- **Where** do you study?
 - ▶ Some people work best in silence, others in busy environments
 - ▶ Make sure the environment is suitable for you, with minimal distractions

