



### Set goals

Motivation is key to successful time management. Your short-term motivation may stem from the satisfaction of checking off to-do list items and rewarding yourself for finishing your work. But having long-term goals helps to prevent burnout. Keep in mind why you are doing what you do.



### Prioritize

Get the most difficult and urgent tasks out of the way first. If you are having trouble tackling a particularly difficult task, that may be a sign to break it down into smaller, more manageable steps.



### Choose your weapon(s)

There are a lot of options for time management tools. Find the one(s) that work for you, whether that be a planner, a bullet journal, a digital calendar, or a combination. Don't be afraid to try out new methods, and don't be afraid to drop methods that are distracting rather than helping you. Your perfect time management tool should lighten your mental load, not add to it.



### Avoid burnout

One of the challenges of remote work/school is knowing when to close the door on work—so eliminate the guesswork! When you're planning your day, include time for hobbies and socializing. Set clear boundaries by either following a set workday or blocking in free time.



### Make time for time management

Set aside time to plan. Make a list of action items for the week on Sunday, and spend ten minutes every morning building a to-do list. Keep your plans close so you can update them throughout the day as you finish tasks and new ones crop up.

# TIME MANAGEMENT

## TECHNIQUES TO TRY

### To-do Lists

To-do lists are the quintessential planning building block. You can jot these down in a journal, on a sticky note, or digitally. You can either make these in the morning for the upcoming day, or start them the night before to offload any to-dos that are floating around in your brain. The main goal of a to-do list is to make you stop thinking about the future so you can focus on the present.

### Pomodoro Technique

Pull up a timer and break your day down into pomodoros: work for 25 minutes, break for 5 minutes. Every four pomodoros, take a longer break (15 minutes). Working in spurts keeps you focused, and taking frequent breaks lets you recharge. During your pomodoros, get rid of all distractions and concentrate fully on one task. Put your phone on silent (and preferably out of reach). If you find yourself wandering onto unrelated websites, block them with add-ons like StayFocusd for Chrome, LeechBlock for Firefox, and WasteNoTime on Safari.

### Limit

Limit is a Chrome extension that helps you manage time-wasting habits. A YouTube video or two won't hurt, but it's all too easy to lose track of time on some sites we visit daily. Set a time limit for your time-suck sites and once your daily allotment is up, Limit will let you know and replace your distraction with a calming green screen.

### Ambience

If you're easily distracted by noises or you work best in a coffee shop, you might be more productive with the right soundtrack. Use the ambient noise apps Noisli or Rainy Mood, or search "ambient noise" or "ambience" on YouTube to be transported anywhere from a coffee shop to the Hogwarts library.

### Bullet Journaling

Bullet journaling can be a fantastic planning system for anyone who finds they remember things better when they put them down on paper. The basic guidelines for bullet journaling involve a key, an index, and different types of spreads. All you need to start your own is a journal and a pen. You can make your journal super simple, or integrate highlighters, washi tape, and stickers. Here's a quick guide to get your bullet journal set up: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fm15cmYU0IM>

### Brain Dumping

Brain dumping is a trick for those days when your brain is on overdrive. Take a paper and simply write down everything that comes to mind. Once it's written down, it's no longer a floating thought, hiding among all the other thoughts. You have caught it and pinned it down. Give yourself a good 10 minutes to empty your brain onto the paper. You might only fill half a paper and then draw blanks, or you might need

two or three papers. That's okay. Once you're done, you can put the paper aside and go back to work, with the knowledge that you can refer back to it if necessary. Or you can review it right away, moving any budding tasks to your to-do list and acknowledging the many things that just happened to be camping out in your brain.

### Study Buddies

Hop on Zoom with some friends or classmates for a shared virtual workspace! Treat it as a library or coffee shop hangout where you each bring whatever work you're chewing on, whether that be exam prep, a personal project, or a collaborative effort. You can keep each other accountable for staying on task simply by being focused together. Having a study date will also help you keep to a schedule. Signing on and off a call adds clear dividers between one task and another, and when working alone from home erodes our sense of time, anything to add back structure helps.

### Passion Projects

Google encourages employees to spend 70% of their time on primary projects, 20% on adjacent projects, and 10% on transformational projects. They want employees to devote time to passion projects not only because they could dig up the next big thing, but also because the creative process keeps brains alive. You can apply this idea to your time by investing in your own passion projects. These could be related to your academic pursuits, like working on a portfolio project, or completely unrelated, like learning a new skill.