

STUDYING AT HOME

Self-assess. Check (✓) strategies and skills that you currently use. Star (*) new ones to try out.

1. Track Your Progress—Plan Time to Plan Time!

- a) Keep a long-range view of the semester. Write important deadlines, events and responsibilities on a wall calendar. Separate and post the semester months (e.g., on the wall near your desk).
- b) Assess your progress at the end of each week and set priorities for the next.
- c) Every day make a list of your priorities (e.g., top, medium, low; A, B, C). Revise as often as needed.
- d) When your load is lighter, get ahead for busy weeks (e.g., read and highlight chapters).
- e) Schedule “overtime” periods—tasks often take longer than expected.
- f) Use small blocks of time (e.g., review notes while waiting)—they add up!
- g) Start small! Break down large academic goals into subgoals and tasks. Schedule time for specific tasks (e.g., read 20 pages/evening for 10 days) and reward their completion (e.g., call a friend).
- h) Estimate the total time required by timing completion of subgoals(e.g., summarize 10 pages).
- i) Reduce activities that interfere with your priorities (e.g., talking on the phone).
- j) Tell family members about your priorities and schedule for the week. Let them know when you are not available and also when you are.
- k) Discuss household responsibilities with family members. If possible, reduce or delegate chores.
- l) Cook ahead. Double recipes and freeze dishes for when you are too busy to cook.
- m) Are you more energized in the morning, afternoon or evening? Study difficult subjects at peak times when you are most alert.
- n) Improve recall and save time in the future by applying memory strategies and skills (e.g., acronyms, visual associations, highlighting) throughout the semester when reading and note taking.
- o) Monitor and deal with internal distractions (e.g., worries) and external distraction (e.g., phone calls).
- p) Keep clear your priorities and limits. As needed, respectfully ask others for assistance and say “No.”
- q) Maintain a sense of a balance in your life (e.g., relaxation, nutrition, relationships, creativity).

2. Studying with Children (Ellis, 2000)

- a) Let your children know that you need to study and ask for their cooperation.
- b) Develop a weekly routine with studying as a priority and family activity that you do together.
- c) Plan 10-minute breaks each hour to spend time with your children.
- d) Organize projects, crafts and hobbies for your children to do while you study.
- e) Arrange for your children to watch age-appropriate programs (TV shows, videos, DVDs).
- f) Help your children find playmates to invite over or visit.
- g) Hire a sitter or exchange sitting services with another parent.
- h) Contact a nearby recreation or community center about programs of interest to your children.
- i) Carpool with other parents.
- j) Teach your children how to be organized, responsible and cooperative.
- k) Schedule time with your children.

Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now. ~ Alan Lakein

References

- Ellis, Dave. Becoming a Master Student. Canadian 3rd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.
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- Van Blerkom, Dianna L. College Study Skills: Becoming a Strategic Learner. 3rd ed. Belmont: Wadsworth, 2000.