

Organising your time



Learner guide

Ready for work

Pre-employment skills

Organising your time

Version 1.2



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Why organising your time is important

Organising your time can be hard. However, you need to manage your time so you can fit everything you need to do into your day. There are 24 hours in every day in which you need to sleep, eat, work and do all your other daily tasks.

Many people say they don't have enough time to do the things they need or want to do. There usually is enough time; you just need to know how to plan well and manage your time. If you manage your time well, you can fit many things into your day.

Managing your time is very important when you get a job. Employers expect their workers to be able to arrive at work on time, get their work done on time and know how much time a job will take.

Even if you don't work, there are many reasons to know how to manage your time. If you learn how to do so, it's amazing how many more things you can do in a day, week or year.

Think about how you spend your time by doing the following activity.



Activity 1

Think about how you spend your time. Then answer these questions.

1. Think about what you did from the time you woke up yesterday morning until now. Write down everything you can remember.

2. Now work out how much time each activity took. For example, how long did you spend sleeping, eating, travelling, studying, working, minding children, talking on the phone and so on?

3. Are you surprised at how much or how little time you spent doing some activities? If so, what are they?

4. Complete this table.

I think I spend too much time on ...
I would like to spend more time on ...
I think I waste time by ...
I need more time to ...

[Click to complete Activity 1](#)

Why is time hard to manage?

Many people find it hard to manage their time. Often there are many things we need or want to do at the same time. To be able to do this, you need to manage your time well.

Here are some things that may make it hard for you to manage your time.

What it is	What it means
<p>Not having a plan for the day</p> 	<p>Do you know what you are going to do for the day? Are there things you must do? Are there things you would like to do? Do you know what you will do first and what you will do later?</p> <p>If you don't plan, you may not get everything done.</p>
<p>Not having enough sleep</p> 	<p>Most people need at least eight hours' sleep every night. Do you get enough sleep?</p> <p>If you are tired, you can't concentrate properly on what you are doing, or you may take longer to get things done.</p> <p>People who are tired at work often make mistakes. If they are doing something dangerous, like working with tools, they may have an accident.</p>

What it is

Not having a healthy diet



Not having a tidy work space



What it means

Making time to eat is important. Many young people get up late and rush off to school or work without having breakfast. They think they are saving time. However, without a good breakfast to start the day, they will work or study more slowly and may be very tired throughout the day.

Not having breakfast is actually a waste of time. It is also important to eat healthy meals and snacks, to keep your energy and concentration up. Avoid foods high in saturated fat, salt and sugar.

Keep your work space clean and tidy. Having things all over the place is distracting and you will waste time trying to find things.

If you are a student, you may not have a desk or room of your own. If this is the case, try to find a space somewhere that you can clear and keep tidy, so you can concentrate on your study.

When you have a job you should keep your work area tidy. It may be a workbench with tools or an office desk. If everything is neat, you will be able to find exactly what you need, and your employer will be pleased. You will be able to get your work done on time.

What it is

Not knowing what is important



What it means

Every day you probably have some things to do that are more important than other things. These things are your priority. It is easy to waste time doing things that are not important, like watching television, and then running out of time for the important things, like completing an assignment. This is part of learning how to plan.

Not getting enough exercise



Whether you are at home, school or work, you need to exercise. You may think exercise will make you tired. However, not getting enough physical exercise can actually make you feel more tired.

If you are fit and healthy you have the energy to do more. If you are not fit you'll get more tired and work more slowly. So take the time to do some exercise – walking, running or playing a sport. 30 minutes a day is all you need.

Activity 2

1. Which of the things you have just read about have ever stopped you from managing your time?

2. Can you suggest any ways you can improve the situation?

[Click to complete Activity 2](#)

Ways to manage your time

To manage your time well, break your time down into days and weeks. You can then set yourself goals to achieve within this time.

You can:

- plan for each day
- be organised
- keep a diary
- make long-term plans.



Plan for each day

Each night you should think about what you will do the next day. This is one way to plan your time and will help you get organised. Think about where you need to be and when you need to be there. Plan your time. When you don't plan, it's hard to get everything done.

Every day you have goals (things to achieve). Some are short-term goals, like finishing a work task in a day. Some are long-term goals, like working hard to get a promotion. These goals form part of your plans for the day. But how do you do the planning?

A great way of planning every day is to make a list of all the things you:

- must do
- want to do.

Now think about the order in which you will do things. Should some tasks be done in the morning or in the afternoon? Do some things need to be done urgently? The things you must do should be done first. Some activities may have to be done at a particular time; for example, getting to work at 8.30 am.



Be organised

Being organised also helps to manage your time. Here is an example of how to be organised so you can get to work early in the morning.



Set your alarm clock. This will make sure you give yourself enough time to get ready and get to work.



Make your lunch the night before, to save time in the morning.



Lay out the clothes you will wear the night before, to save time in the morning.

Keep a diary

Sometimes you may need to plan a whole week or month in advance. This can be hard to do if you are not organised. You can use a diary to help organise your time. Write any important dates and times in a diary. This will help you to remember things you must do.

For example, you may write:

- when you have a job interview
- when and where you have to meet someone
- when you have a sports training session
- when you have a meeting at work.

All these things can go in your diary. But remember: if you keep a diary, you have to look at it often. That way you won't miss anything.



Story

Sonya has a busy week ahead. On Monday she has a TAFE class from 8.30 am to 11.30 am. She needs to bring her two course books.

On Tuesday at 3.00 pm Sonya has a job interview at a restaurant called Oranges. The address for Oranges is 34 High Road, Grovedale. She needs to bring her resumé.

On Wednesday evening she plays tennis at 7.00 pm.

On Thursday at 8.00 am Sonya has a doctor's appointment at 12 Creek Road, Halltown.

Every Friday evening Sonya delivers pizzas on her motor scooter. She needs to be at work at 5.30 pm and finishes at 11.00 pm.

On Saturday Sonya is going to the country to visit her mother. She will take the 9.00 am bus from outside her house. She will come back on the 4.45 pm Sunday afternoon bus.

On Sunday night Sonya has to make plans for the following week.

Activity 3

Use the information from Sonya's story to fill in the diary below for Sonya's week. Make sure you include all the details about each appointment. Sunday had been filled in as an example.

September	
5 Monday	
6 Tuesday	
7 Wednesday	
8 Thursday	
9 Friday	
10 Saturday	11 Sunday 4.45 pm bus home Write in my diary for next week, tonight.

[Click to complete Activity 3](#)

Make long-term plans

Sometimes you may need to make long-term plans; for example, a month or year ahead. It depends on what you need to do, or what your goal is.

Is there something you want to do by the end of the month or year? There may even be something you want to achieve in three years' time, like completing a course.

Set aside time to achieve your goals no matter how far away they are. You can make monthly or yearly plans to help you work out how much time you have available. The better you plan in the early stages, the more likely you are to achieve your goals. You can use a digital calendar or yearly planner to help you plan, as Cilla does in the following story.

Story

Cilla wants to learn to drive. She buys a yearly planner from the newsagent to help her. In June Cilla marks in the weeks that she should study for her learner's permit. She makes an appointment to sit the permit test in early July and writes that on her plan.

She also writes in the appointments she makes to have the eye test and have her photo taken. Cilla hopes to pass the driving test the first time, so she books weekly lessons with a driving school from July to October. She marks in the day and time of each lesson.

On her plan she also marks a date to go for the P-plate driving test. Of course this date depends on whether Cilla has logged enough driving hours by then. She may have to change this date on her plan.



Stick to your plan

It's important to stick to the plan you've made to manage your time.

Things to avoid

When you are trying to manage your time, make sure your plans are realistic. Don't try to do too much. If you find you don't have enough time to do what you have planned, you may need to change your plan.

Is there something you can cut out of your plan? Can you do something more quickly? Can you ask someone else to help you? Is it okay to leave something for another day?

There are some things you should avoid if you want to follow your plan and manage your time well. For example, you shouldn't watch a movie if you had planned to study. This doesn't mean you should never do these things. In fact, it is very important to have spare time for enjoyable activities. However, you shouldn't do these things when you have planned to do something else.

Here are some things to avoid when you are trying to concentrate on a job or your studies:

- The television
- Your mobile phone
- The internet
- Video games

Remember to include these things in your daily plan, but at a suitable time and after you have done the more important things on your list.



Allow time for delays

A delay is when something slows you down. For example, if a bus or train is late you may be delayed. When you organise your time, you need to plan for potential delays.

Do you catch public transport? If you do, then you know that buses and trains are often late. Sometimes you miss them or they are too full and you have to wait for the next one.

If you drive a car you can be delayed by traffic or if you get lost.

When you have an appointment, you should leave home with lots of time to spare. This way, even if you are delayed you will still be on time.

It is a good idea to work out how long it will take you to get to your appointment. Then add 20 minutes or more, to allow time for delays.

Story

Kate has an appointment at 2.00 pm in the city. The bus leaves from near her house at 1.20 pm. It will get into the city at 1.50 pm.

Kate does not know where the appointment is. She has the address but will have to find the place. She knows that the bus may be late, and that it may take more than 10 minutes to find the place.

Kate decides to get the earlier bus, which is at 1.10 pm. This way she leaves plenty of time for any delays.



Organising your time at work

You must organise your time at work. Your employer expects you to get things done in a set time. For example, your employer may want you to finish cleaning a room in half an hour, or type a letter in 20 minutes.

Sometimes you have many things to do at once. You need to decide which task is most important and which is least important. Your boss can help you do this. Make sure you do the most important things first.

It can be a good idea to make a list of your jobs and tick them off as you complete them. Write the most urgent jobs at the top and put a date showing when the jobs must be finished. Put your list on the wall or on a whiteboard. You will feel good when you tick off each job.

If you have lots of important jobs that must be finished in one day, you must plan your day well. Leave time for each job. Spread out your time evenly and make sure you don't spend all your time on one of the jobs.

Activity 4

You probably needed to get assignments done in a set time at school or TAFE. Think about how you got them done in time.

1. Did you space the work out or did you do it all at the last minute?

2. Why do you think it's better to spread out the work?

3. Was it hard to find time to finish all the work? Explain why or why not.

4. If you have a job, do you always arrive at work on time?

[Click to complete Activity 4](#)

Work life and home life

Some people work a little and others work a lot. Work is important but doing other things is important too. You need to plan time where you can do things that you find relaxing. For example, you may like to visit friends, cook, exercise or play a sport.

You must organise all your time, including your free time. Doing things you like is important for you to be happy.

Story

Cassie's grandmother is sick in hospital. She wants to visit her to take her some flowers. Cassie goes to the shopping centre to buy flowers before she goes to the hospital. While she there she looks at some clothing shops too. When she gets to the hospital she is not allowed to see her grandmother. It is too late and she has missed visiting hours. Cassie knows she shouldn't have gone into the clothes shops. If she had been on time she would have seen her grandmother in visiting hours.

Cassie did not organise her time well at all.

What you have learnt

Put a ✓ in the box when you have learnt these things.

- Organising your time can be hard. You need to manage your time to fit everything you need to do into your day.
- Managing your time is very important when you get a job.
- To be productive you will need to:
 - plan for the day
 - get enough sleep
 - have a healthy diet
 - have a tidy work space
 - know what is important
 - exercise.
- To manage your time you can:
 - plan for each day
 - be organised
 - keep a diary
 - make long-term plans.
- After you have made a plan to be organised, you must stick to it.
- You should leave time for delays when you have an appointment.
- You should plan your work and do the most important jobs first.
- You need to organise your free time too.

Check your learning

Task 1

1. Make a plan for a week in your life. Make it next week if possible. Write down everything you know you are going to be doing.

Use the following diary. Write down this information in the columns:

- The date
- What you are going to do
- The time
- The place
- Who the appointment or task is with

Date	What you are doing	Time	Place	Who it is with
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				

Saturday				
Sunday				

2. How will you make sure you aren't late for anything you plan to do?

Task 2

At the end of the week you have planned, answer these questions.

1. Were you able to stick to your weekly plan? Why or why not?

2. Were you delayed at all when getting to any of your appointments?
If yes, what happened?

3. How well do you think you managed your time?

[Click to complete](#)

Answers

Answers to activities

Activity 1

Answer to Question 1

Answers will vary greatly but may include work, study, visiting friends, watching a movie, exercising.

Answer to Question 2

Answers will vary greatly depending on the person.

Answer to Question 3

Answers will vary greatly depending on the person.

Answer to Question 4

Here are example answers.

I think I spend too much time on ... <i>Watching television</i>
I would like to spend more time on ... <i>Doing exercise</i>
I think I waste time by ... <i>Not planning my day</i>
I need more time to ... <i>Exercise, read and study</i>

Activity 2

Answer to Question 1

Answers will vary, but may include not having enough sleep, or not planning for the day.

Answer to Question 2

Answers will vary. For example, try to go to bed at the same time each night to get enough sleep. Plan for the day ahead each morning.

Activity 3

Here are example answers.

September	
5 Monday TAFE 8.30-11.30 am - bring course books	
6 Tuesday 3.00 pm job interview at Oranges, 34 High Road, Grovedale - bring resumé	
7 Wednesday 7.00 pm tennis	
8 Thursday 8.00 am doctor appointment at 12 Creek Road, Halltown	
9 Friday Work 5.30-11.00 pm	
10 Saturday 9.00 am bus to Mum's house	11 Sunday 4.45 pm bus home Write in my diary for next week, tonight.

Activity 4

Answer to Question 1

Answers will depend on the person.

Answer to Question 2

So you have time to do it properly and not rush it at the last minute.

Answer to Question 3

Answers will depend on the person.

Answer to Question 4

Answers will depend on the person.

Answers to check your learning

Task 1

Answer to Question 1

Here is an example answer.

Date	What you are doing	Time	Place	Who it is with
Monday	TAFE	8.30-2.30 pm	Springville	-
	Finish assignment	5.00 pm -	Home	-
Tuesday	Work	12.00-5.00 pm	Café 101	-
Wednesday	TAFE	8.30 am- 2.30 pm	Springville	

Thursday	TAFE	2.30- 6.00 pm	Springville	-
	Netball	8.00-9.30 pm	Wood St Rec. Centre	My team
Friday	Work	8.30 am- 2.00 pm	Café 101	
	Dentist	3.00 pm	Wood Street	Dr Singh
Saturday	Work	8.30 am- 2.00 pm	Café 101	
	Dinner out	7.00 pm	Babble Bar	Friends
Sunday	No plans!			

Answer to Question 2

Here is an example answer.

I'll look at my calendar each morning to remind myself what I have on. I will also stick to my plan and allow for delays, like public transport delays.

Task 2

Answer to Question 1

Here is an example answer.

Yes, I was able to mostly stick to my plan. It only changed on Sunday, when I was called in to work at 9.00 am.

Answer to Question 2

Here is an example answer.

I was 30 minutes late to my dinner out on Saturday, as my train was cancelled.

Answer to Question 3

Here is an example answer.

I think I managed it as best I could. The cancelled train was beyond my control. I had allowed time for a delay, but it was longer than I expected.