



Strategies for Studying, Learning, and Researching
By David Alderoty © 2014

Chapter 15) Time Management and Your Studies
3,035 words

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To Access Additional Information with Hyperlinks

After I complete a writing task, I select a number of websites from other authors, to provide additional information, alternative points of view, and to support the material I wrote. These websites contain articles, videos, and other useful material. The websites can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlinks, which are the **blue underlined words**, presented at the end of some of the sections, subsections, and paragraphs.

If a link fails, use the blue underlined words as a search phrase, with www.Google.com or www.Bing.com. The search will usually bring up the original website, or one or more good alternatives.

Time Management, and How to Save Time

Time Management, is Similar to Money Management

How you manage your time, is very important for academic success. This is because success in college and graduate school is primarily determined by the amount of time you invest in homework. Ideally, for each hour you spend in the classroom, you should spend at least two or three hours studying. This requires an effective time management strategy.

A good time management strategy is more or less similar to money management, from a mathematical perspective. With money, you start with your weekly earnings. Then you calculate your total weekly expenses. Finally, you subtract your expenses from your weekly earnings. If the expenses are greater than your earnings, you will end up with a minus number, which means you will have to reduce your expenses. Exactly the same idea applies to time management, which is explained below.

(The ideas in the following paragraph are illustrated in an excellent [YouTube video on Organizing Your Study Time](#))

Unlike money, everyone has the same amount of time, which is 24 hours a day, or 168 hours a week. The following numbers are based on a typical student. For most people, approximately 12 hours a day are spent on sleeping, bathing, dressing, eating, and traveling, which totals to $12 \times 7 = 84$ hours a week. This means there are $(168 - 84) = 84$ hours remaining in

the week. Generally, for each credit you take, you should expect to spend at least one hour in class, and two hours studying, each week. If you are taking 12 credits, you should expect to spend 12 hours in class, and 24 hours doing homework each week, which totals to 36 hours. This means you still have $(84-36) = 48$ hours remaining in the week.

However, if you are taking difficult courses, lack experience in efficient study skills, or want to earn high grades, you might have to invest 36 hours a week in homework, for 12 credits. With the class time, this totals $(12+36)$ to 48 hours a week. However you still will have $(84-48) = 36$ hours remaining in the week.

Based on the above, most people will have adequate time to do well in their college and graduate school studies. However, most people attending school are involved with other activities. This can involve recreational activities, an active social life, family responsibilities, and/or employment. This may result in a problem, if these additional activities, brings your weekly total to over 168 hours. If this is the case, you have to reduce the amount of time you are spending each week. How to do this is explained under the following subheadings.

For additional information from other authors see the following websites: **1)** [Time Management Calculator, from Baruch College](#), **2)** [Time Management Calculator for College Students](#), **3)** [Discover Time Management Tools That Can Help You](#),

4) [MANAGE YOUR TIME](#), 5) [HOW TO MANAGE YOUR TIME EFFECTIVELY](#), 6) [Time Management Handouts](#), 7) [Student Learning Commons: Study Schedules](#).

If Necessary, Consider Reducing Your Course Load, For Better Time Management

The easiest way to reduce your weekly expenditure of time is to cut the number of credits you are taking. Most colleges and graduate schools will allow students to take as low as six credits, without forfeiting scholarships and financial aid. If you are in a hurry to complete college or graduate studies, you can partly, or totally, compensate for this cut by taking courses in the summer.

How Much Time Do You Really Need for Your Studies? Is it Sensible to Reduce Study Time

Some students start with the question how much study time do you really need. The answer is most colleges and graduate schools present more information in a course than can be grasped by even the best student. Generally, the more time you can invest in your studies, the more you will learn, and the higher your grades will be. You will probably find the course material more **understandable, meaningful, relevant, and useful**, if you invest more time in your studies.

When students do not invest adequate time in their studies, they **may not grasp the significance of the course material**,

even if they get passing grades. As a result, they may conclude that they are **studying irrelevant or useless ideas**. This is a common complaint, and the above is probably one of the primary causes.

Some students try to save time by doing less homework, this will usually lower their grades, and it might lead to academic failure. However, if the student is not taking difficult courses, has experienced with efficient study techniques, and is not concerned about high grades, a small reduction in homework time might be feasible. This can involve for each credit you take, one hour and a half of study per week, instead of the recommended two hours. Some students may want to cut their homework time to one hour for each hour they spent in class. This is risky, and may lead to failing grades.

The ideas to keep in mind, it is not uncommon for students to flunk out of college, because they did not invest enough time in their studies. What you actually learning college, and graduate school, is determined by the time you invest in your studies. The same applies to your grade point average. A low grade point average can make it difficult to find employment, or to continue your education, after you graduate.

Try to Reduce Traveling Time

Many people spend hours each week traveling. This can involve traveling to and from school or work, as well as traveling to make

purchases, and to visit friends and family. You may be able to reduce your traveling time, by eliminating unnecessary trips, and using the telephone instead of face-to-face meetings. If you cannot reduce your traveling time, the alternative is to study while you are traveling. This is feasible if you are not driving, and if you do not get distracted by noise or other passengers.

Try to Reduce the Time You Spent On Dressing and Physical Appearance

Some people are very concerned with their physical appearance and style of dress. This is important, but you should determine how much time you spend each day, in this regard. If it is over 30 minutes, you should try to figure out ways of reducing the time you spend on appearance.

Try to Reduce the Time You Spent Shopping

Making purchases can consume a great deal of time. Most people can probably reduce the amount of time they spend shopping. This can be done by purchasing all the items you need, from a specific store, in a single trip. Avoid, or minimize window-shopping. Another strategy is to use the Internet to make some of your purchases.

Try to Reduce the Time You Spend on Preparing Meals, and on Housekeeping

Most people can probably reduce the time they spend on preparing meals, and on housekeeping. Buying meals that are already prepared, or cooking meals that require little preparation time, can result in more time for your studies. You may be able to save time with your housekeeping by timing yourself, as you clean your living quarters. This should be coupled with your own strategies, to speed up, simplify, and reduce your housekeeping activities.

Another strategy, which can be combined with the above, is to prepare meals, and do your housekeeping chores, **during brief study breaks**. This can involve 15-minute study breaks every hour. These breaks may also help you relieve the physiological stress, and eyestrain associated with studying. They can serve the function of an exercise break if you do your housekeeping chores quickly.

Another alternative is to hire people to prepare your meals and do your housekeeping chores. This might cost anywhere from \$100 to over \$300 a week, depending on your situation. This is practical, if you can afford it, and if you spend over one hour a day cooking and performing housekeeping chores.

Indirect Ways of Saving Time, by Avoiding Problems, Organizing, and Related Strategies

Avoiding Problems, to Save Time and Energy

Problems can consume hours of your time each day, and they can distract you from your studies. Many of the problems we face in life, can be prevented, minimized, or quickly solved, with some careful thinking and appropriate action. Some common problems and timesaving solutions are presented below.

Many problems in life are the result of conflict with others. Conflict can usually be prevented or reduced by communicating in a highly respectable, friendly, and kind way. This usually works well, even if the person you are talking to is very hostile or unreasonable. Apologizing is always helpful, in reducing conflict, even if you believe you are in the right. However, if you believe, you are not at fault, you do not have to pretend that you made a mistake. If you did make a mistake, it is usually best to acknowledge that you made an error, and try to resolve the issue. Resolving the conflict in the other person's favor, is often a good way to save your time and energy.

Some people inadvertently create problems for themselves, by breaking rules or laws. This usually leads to time-consuming problems. Difficulties of this nature are easily avoided, by learning about the rules and laws that apply to you, and following them.

Medical problems can interfere with your studies, and they can consume a great deal of time. Medical difficulties can be reduced by living a healthy lifestyle, and by avoiding accidents. This includes good nutrition, regular exercise, and avoiding or

minimizing alcoholic consumption. Accidents can be reduced by avoiding any activity that might be hazardous while you are tired, nervous, upset, intoxicated, or distracted by pleasant or unpleasant thoughts.

Money problems can waste much time, and distract you from your studies. You can avoid money problems by creating a budget, and/or by avoiding impulse purchases. A good strategy is to give yourself some time to think, and evaluate before you make a purchase. Ask yourself, what will happen if I do not make the purchase? What are the benefits of buying this product?

Most of the material in this section involves techniques of avoiding problems that can waste your time. A general method of avoiding all kinds of difficulties is to organize your life, schedule, and living quarters, as discussed below. Also discussed under separate subheadings is how to avoid problems associated with: losing items, computer difficulties, and forgetting passwords and telephone numbers.

Organizing Your Life, Plans, and Living Quarters, Is a Good Time Management Strategy

In general, organizing your life will save time and effort.

Organize your appointments and social interactions so they do not interfere with your study time. Your homework, books, and living quarters, should be well organized, so you can quickly find

the items you need. It is especially important to organize the notes you take in each class. Ideally, each subject should have its own loose-leaf, or notebook.

If you frequently misplace items, organizing your storage space will reduce this problem. Every item should ideally be stored in a designated location. For example, you should have a place for the house keys, a place for pens, and a place for your textbooks.

How to Prevent Misplace Items, From Wasting Your Time

Another strategy, which can be combined with the above, is to have two or more versions of items you frequently misplace. For example, if you occasionally lose the car keys, have a locksmith make two or three copies of these keys. If you frequently lose your pens, hair combs, or anything else, simply purchase two or more versions of the item. If you often lose important papers, make several photocopies.

Computers and Related Difficulties, Can Waste Time

A good computer can save you much time and effort, and it provides the functionality to produce superior work. This is especially the case for writing and mathematics courses.

However, computers can also waste your time, and distract you from your work, if you do not use appropriate strategies. This is explained in the following paragraphs.

Computers are generally connected to the Internet, which is a very valuable research tool. However, some people get distracted from their studies by the web. This can involve, window-shopping on the web, reading articles about celebrities, and accessing social media sites, such as Facebook, or MySpace. The only practical solution is to practice self-control, and to avoid these websites while you are **studying**. For some students, this may not be very successful initially. However, the more you practice self-control, the easier it will be to avoid irrelevant websites while you are studying.

Computers frequently crash or malfunction, which can result in loss of hours of work. Buying a new computer may minimize these problems. However, the best strategy is to save your work every few minutes. This can be done with most computers, by pressing the **S key while holding down the Ctrl key**.

You should make multiple copies of your work, in case the hard drive from your computer malfunctions. **A good strategy is to make at least three copies of your work**. This can involve one copy on your computer, a second copy on a portable flash drive, and a third copy on an Internet storage site, such as **Dropbox**, or **Google Drive**. Internet storage sites are discussed under the following subheading.

Internet Storage (Cloud Storage) of Your Files Can Prevent Problems and Save Time

Internet storage (also called cloud storage) is very useful, because you can access your files from any computer. This is especially useful, if you use more than one computer for your assignments. If you forget to bring in a school assignment, you can download it with any computer available at your school.

With Dropbox, Google Drive, and many similar storage sites, you upload files by placing them in a special folder on your computer. (To obtain the special folder you must download and install software.) With this arrangement, copies of your files are retained on your computer. If you make any changes to these files, the files stored on the Internet site will change accordingly. If your computer or hard drive breaks down, you have a copy on the Internet site. If something goes wrong with the Internet site, you will still have copies of the files on your computer.

With Dropbox, Google Drive, and many similar storage sites you can designate files that can be accessed by others. This is useful, if you want others to see your work from the web. It also provides the functionality for viewers to add comments or make changes to designated documents. With this setup professors can add comments about your work, before it is submitted.

Dropbox, Google Drive, and many similar storage sites, provide some free storage. Dropbox provides 2 GB free of charge, and Google Drive provides 15 GB without charge. For writing assignments, even if your work includes some graphics, you are unlikely to need more than 2 GB. If your work includes

many graphics and/or sound recordings, you will probably do best with Google Drive, with its free 15 GB. However, if you are storing videos, you will probably need to purchase additional storage space.

For more information, on Dropbox see the following YouTube video: [Dropbox Tutorial 1-Setting up an account and the basics](#).

To access Dropbox directly, go to www.dropbox.com.

For additional information, for Google Drive see the following YouTube video: [Google Drive - a Complete User Guide](#). To access [Google Drive directly left click on these words](#)

For additional information on other Internet storage facilities see the following website: [Cloud Storage Industry Review](#)

Forgetting Passwords or Telephone Numbers Can Waste Your Time

A common problem that most people occasionally encounter is forgetting passwords, which can waste time. This problem can be eliminated, by simply writing the password in a closet or drawer, with a felt-tip pen (a magic marker). The same idea also works well for user IDs and telephone numbers.

When dealing with passwords that require a high degree of security, such as online bank accounts, a modification of the above strategy should be used. Specifically, the passwords should be divided into two or three sections, which can be written in two or three locations. For example, the first half of the

password can be written with a felt-tip pen on the inside of a desk drawer, and the second half can be written inside of a closet.

When using the above techniques, you should always try to make the password look like anything, other than a password. For extra security, you can add your own words or letters, to make a password look like a model number, or phone number.

Concluding Ideas on Time Management

Devise Your Own Strategies, and use Trial and Error, to Make Your Study Time Pleasant and Efficient

The ideas presented above are not the only way to save time, and manage your workload. There is a list of websites below with additional time management strategies. You should also try to devise your own strategies that work well for you.

When you use any time management strategy, you should evaluate it with the trial and error process, to determine how well it works for you. This should include modifications of the strategies to fit your own personal needs.

Additional Information on Time Management From Other Authors

For additional information, from other authors, see the following websites. **1)** [Your Time Management](#), **2)** [MANAGE YOUR TIME](#), **3)** [Managing Your Time and Study Environment](#), **4)** [130 Time Management Tips](#), **5)** [Video: Time Management Skills](#), **6)** [Video: Time management \(lecture for MBA students\)](#), **7)** [Video: Study](#)

[Skills for Students Time Management](#), **8)** [Video: How to Manage Time, Reduce Stress and Increase Happiness](#), **9)** [Video: Time Management" by Randy Pausch](#), **10)** [Video: 10 Effective Time Management Tips](#), **11)** [Video: Time Management and Study Skills](#), **12)** [Organizing Your Study Time - Part 1](#), **13)** [Video: Organizing Your Study Time - Part 2](#), **14)** [Video: Study Skills/Time Management Workshop](#), **15)** [Video: LBCC-Organizing Your Study Time-Part 1](#), **16)** [LBCC-Organizing Your Study Time-Part 2](#), **17)** [Time Management 101, is a free 66 page PDF e-book](#), **18)** [Time Management for Creative People is a free 32 page PDF e-book](#)

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