

MAKING YOUR SCHEDULE WORK

Name _____

Here are some strategies that you may find helpful to try if your schedule is not working as efficiently or effectively as you would like. When trying any new strategy, it is important to practice it regularly and to practice it long enough that you have a way of evaluating whether or not it is helping. Tests are good ways to evaluate new study strategies. If you begin a new strategy after one test on which you didn't perform as well as you would like, try a new strategy until you receive the results of the next test to get an idea whether the new strategy is working for you.

1. Identify your best time of the day.

Studying at your best time of the day, whether that is morning, afternoon or early evening, will enable you to complete your assignments in less time. Research studies show that what we can accomplish in 60 minutes when we're less fatigued will take as much as 90 minutes to accomplish when we are more fatigued. **My best time of day is** _____.

2. Study difficult or boring subjects first.

Study subjects that are more of a challenge to you first when you are less fatigued. Save subjects you like to study for later when you are feeling more tired but need to continue to study to keep up with your work. It will be easier to find the motivation to study something you find enjoyable when you are tired than for a subject you dread studying.

3. Use the same place to study every time.

Studying in the same place each day is like going to class in the same room. You begin to associate a particular activity with a particular location so when you are in that location, you are able to focus on the task at hand more quickly. Studying on your bed or in your bedroom is not advised because you probably associate your bed and bedroom with sleeping, not studying. It's too easy to take those 10 minute naps that turn into 2 hour naps. **I will study consistently in** _____.

4. Use the library.

Libraries are good places to study because this is the only activity we do in this environment. If there are reasons you choose not to use the library, try to find another location outside of your room that provides a good study environment and is relatively free of distractions.

5. Avoid distractions.

Many things can provide a distraction to studying if we are looking for ways to procrastinate. Identify your top time wasters and for the next few weeks, try to find ways to reduce the frequency with which these distracters are interfering with your study time. This might mean that finding another place to study would be helpful. **My top time wasters are:** _____.

6. Use waiting time.

If you have extra time before or between classes, after meals, after chapel before lunch, while waiting in line, or waiting for someone or something, this is a great time to study discrete pieces of information such as learning vocabulary for a foreign or biblical language or memorizing dates for Western Civ or classifications for biology. Write this information on note cards and carry them with you so you can study your cards during your waiting time.

7. Treat school as a full-time job.

Try to accomplish as many of your school tasks as possible within a concentrated period of time, such as 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. If you use these hours either for attending class or studying, you'll have much more free time in the evenings and on the weekends to spend time with friends or doing ministry. Your classes are likely to get the amount of attention they require as well. It doesn't mean that you'll never need to study in the evenings or on the weekends because there will be crunch times and you probably will. However, treating school as a full-time job and adopting the hours of a full-time job will probably result in better, more efficient management of your time.