

## 1. Keep a to-do list

Rather than relying on your brain to remember everything that's to be done, make a list. Ticking things off the list will allow you to see progress and stay motivated.

Break larger tasks down into smaller ones (rather than just writing 'get dissertation done', break it down into: ethics application, recruit subjects, write introduction...).

Break your list into short tasks that can each be done in a few minutes, and longer ones requiring a 2 or 3 hour block of time. Break up a long day of revision with half hour 'breaks' of 3 or 4 short tasks. This way, even if you don't feel you're making progress with study, you're getting other important tasks out of the way. Alternatively, break your to-do list into urgent and non-urgent tasks.

## 2. Set personal goals

Setting goals keeps us motivated and allows us to decide where to spend our time. If getting a 1:1 is important for you, then you'll need to stay on top of your coursework and revision. If making the Olympics is important, then training should be a priority. If both are important, then you'll need to be super organised. Priorities will change from time to time, depending on which goal is more important (or urgent) at a given time.

## 3. Prioritise effectively

Once you know what your goals are and what needs to be done, prioritising tasks should be easy. Don't spend lots of time on things that are not important to you, or that don't need to be done yet, when there are more important urgent tasks to be done.

## 4. Manage distractions

Take note of the things (or people) that drain your time, or distract you from what's important, and avoid them. Computer games and social media can be a massive drain of your time, while rearranging your DVD collection and cleaning the fridge are never the most important things to be done in exam week. Turn off all email, social media and text notifications while studying.

## 5. Stop procrastinating

Procrastination is the 'art' of putting off things that really need to be done, and filling your time with nothingness that don't need to be done at all. Ever. Sometimes using phrases like 'I must...' or 'I should be...' (usually followed by 'studying') can lead to procrastination. Instead, say 'I am going to...' Make it sound less like something that you have to do and more like something you want to do.

## 6. Don't take on too much

Learning to say 'no' is a great way to save yourself time. Knowing what you want to achieve (goals) and how much you already have (to-do list) will help. Of course you don't always have to say 'no' to helping others, taking up new opportunities, or challenging yourself a bit more, but those tasks that you do take on shouldn't hinder your ability to complete important tasks at important times.

## 7. Do one thing at a time

Trying to do multiple tasks at the same time can be counterproductive. Yes doing things like studying while on the train or stretching while watching TV will save time, but there are other tasks that just don't go so well together. If you're texting someone in a lecture you might miss important information, or send the message to the wrong person. Give tasks your full attention, do them properly and get them out of the way.

## 8. Take breaks

Reward yourself with breaks every now and again. Not only will breaks keep you motivated, they will also help clear your mind and keep you fresh. But make sure that these are proper breaks—which involve you standing up, walking around and getting some fresh air, if possible—rather than simply checking Snapchat or Facebook every 5 minutes.

## 9. Schedule tasks effectively

Some tasks are easier to get done in the morning when you're fresh and motivated, while those that you like to do anyway can be left until the evening. Going to the gym during revision time is an example of something that might work really well in the morning for some people (motivate you for the day; get it out of the way) while for others going to the gym in the morning is an excuse to pass away most of the day, delay study and get too tired to concentrate in the afternoon. Learn what works best for you and schedule accordingly.

## 10. Remember the 80:20 rule

The 80:20 rule is a rule that can be applied to many areas of life and business. In terms of time management, many tasks can be 80% completed with 20% of your effort, and it's the minor details (proofing, referencing, etc) that can take 80% of your effort, but only get you 20% of the return. Reminding yourself of this can help you overcome procrastination. Get the 20% effort stuff first (just simply typing 2000 words), and worry about the 80% effort stuff after. In terms of training, however, it's the 80% effort (20% return) stuff that'll win you the Olympic medal!!!