# Start with…

## Where does your time go?

See if you can account for a week’s worth of time. For each of the activity categories listed, make your best estimate of how many hours you spend in a week. For categories that are about the same every day, just estimate for one day and multiply by seven for that line.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK** |
| Sleeping |  |
| Eating (including preparing food) |  |
| Personal hygiene (i.e., bathing, etc.) |  |
| Working (employment) |  |
| Volunteer service or internship |  |
| Chores, cleaning, errands, shopping, etc. |  |
| Attending tutorial class |  |
| Studying, reading, and researching |  |
| Transportation to work or library or study area |  |
| Organised group activities (clubs, church services, etc.) |  |
| Time with friends (include television, video games, etc.) |  |
| Attending events (movies, parties, etc.) |  |
| Time alone (include television, video games, surfing the Web, etc.) |  |
| Exercise or sports activities |  |
| Reading for fun or other interests done alone |  |
| Talking on phone, e-mail, Facebook, etc. |  |
| Other-specify: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |

Now calculate your estimated hours. Is your number larger or smaller than 168, the total number of hours in a week? If your estimate is higher, go back through your list and adjust numbers to be more realistic. But if your estimated hours total fewer than 168, don’t just go back and add more time in certain categories. Instead, ponder this question: Where does the time go?

**You can learn to manage your time more successfully.** The key is to be realistic. How accurate is the number of hours you wrote down? The best way to know how you spend your time is to record what you do all day in a time log, every day for a week, and then add that up. Do this for a week before adding up the times; then enter the total hours in the table on page 1.

You might be surprised that you spend a lot more time than you thought just hanging out with friends—or surfing the Web or playing around with Facebook or any of the many other things people do. You might find that you study well early in the morning even though you thought you are a night person, or vice versa. You might learn how long you can continue at a specific task before needing a break. If you have work and family responsibilities, you may already know where many of your hours go.

Although we all wish we had “more time,” **the important thing is what we do with the time we have**. Time management strategies can help us better use the time we do have by creating a schedule that works for our own time personality.

Look back at the number of hours you wrote in the previous table for a week of studying. Do you have 8 hours of study time for each module? To reserve this study time, you may need to adjust how much time you spend in other activities. The next activity will help you figure out what your typical week should look like.

## Where should your time go?

You will complete the following table as follows:

* Firstly, you will plan your study, work and fixed life activities.
* Then you will plan time for discretionary activities such as time with friends, time on social media, etc.

This activity shows most Unisa students that they do have plenty of time for their studies without losing sleep or giving up their social life. But you may have less time for discretionary activities than in the past. Something somewhere must give. That’s part of time management—and why **it’s important to keep your goals and priorities in mind**.

**The other part is to learn how to use the hours you do have as effectively as possible**, especially the study hours. For example, if you plan to study for three hours in an evening but then procrastinate, get caught up in a conversation, lose time to check e-mail and text messages, and listen to loud music while reading a textbook, then maybe you spent four hours “studying” but got only two hours of actual work done. So, you end up behind and feeling like you’re still studying way too much. The goal of time management is to get three hours of studying done in three hours and have time for other activities as well.

## Special note for students who work

You may have almost no discretionary time at all left after all your “must-do” activities. If so, you may have overextended yourself—a situation that inevitably will lead to problems. You can’t sleep two hours less every night, for example, without becoming ill or unable to concentrate well on work and studies. It is better to recognise this situation now rather than set yourself up for a very difficult term and possible failure. If you cannot cut the number of hours for work or other obligations, contact the Directorate: Counselling and Career Development ([counselling@unisa.ac.za](mailto:counselling@unisa.ac.za)) immediately to have a conversation about different options you could consider.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NON-NEGOTIABLE** | **Nr of hours per week** | **DISCRETIONARY** | **Nr of hours per week** |
| Studying, reading, and re­searching (at least 8 hours per week per module) |  | Organised group activities (clubs, church services, etc.) |  |
| Working (employment) |  | Attending events (movies, parties, weddings, etc) |  |
| Volunteer service or internship |  | Time alone (include relaxa­tion) |  |
| Eating (including preparing food) |  | Exercise or sports activities |  |
| Personal hygiene (i.e., bathing, etc.) |  | Time with friends (include television, video games, etc.) |  |
| Chores, cleaning, errands, shopping |  | Reading for fun or other inter­ests |  |
| Transportation to work or library or study area |  | Talking on phone, e-mail, Facebook, etc. |  |
| Attending tutorial class |  | Other-specify: |  |
| Other-specify: |  | Other-specify: |  |
| Other-specify: |  | Other-specify: |  |
| **TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS** |  | **TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS** |  |

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# Suggested study rosters

**Adapt these according to your needs and circumstances**

## Full-time studying student: 10 modules April - September

**Module names are: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the week** | 08:00-12:00 | 13:00-17:00 |
| **Monday** | Module A & B | Module C & D |
| **Tuesday** | Module E & F | Module G & H |
| **Wednesday** | Module I & J | Module A & B |
| **Thursday** | Module C & D | Module E & F |
| **Friday** | Module G & H | Module I & J |
| **Saturday** | Review modules that need more attention | Review modules that need more attention |
| **Sunday** | Rest | Rest |

## Part-time studying student: 10 modules April-September

**Week 01**

**Module names are: A, B, C, D, E**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the week** | **When do you concentrate best?**  **Choose 04:00-06:00 (early morning studying)** | **When do you concentrate best?**  **Or, choose 20:00-22:00 (night-time studying)** |
| **Monday** | A | Same as the morning choice |
| **Tuesday** | B | Same as the morning choice |
| **Wednesday** | C | Same as the morning choice |
| **Thursday** | D | Same as the morning choice |
| **Friday** | E | Same as the morning choice |
| **Saturday** | 04:00 – 10:00  Work with the modules that need more attention | 20:00 - 02:00  Work with the modules that need more attention |
| **Sunday** | Rest | Rest |

**Week 02**

**Module names are: F, G, H, I, J**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the week** | **When do you concentrate best?**  **Choose 04:00-06:00 (early morning studying)** | **When do you concentrate best?**  **20:00-22:00**  **Or, choose 20:00-22:00 (night-time studying)** |
| **Monday** | F | Same as the morning choice |
| **Tuesday** | G | Same as the morning choice |
| **Wednesday** | H | Same as the morning choice |
| **Thursday** | I | Same as the morning choice |
| **Friday** | J | Same as the morning choice |
| **Saturday** | 04:00 – 10:00  Work with the modules that need more attention | 20:00 - 02:00  Work with the modules that need more attention |
| Sunday | Rest | Rest |

# Further resources

* Getting Support  
  <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Learner-support-&-regions/Counselling-and-career-development/Manage-your-studies/Manage-study-challenges/Getting-support>
* Motivation  
  <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Learner-support-&-regions/Counselling-and-career-development/Manage-your-studies/Manage-study-challenges/Motivation>

E-mail a counsellor: [counselling@unisa.ac.za](mailto:counselling@unisa.ac.za)

[Book an online appointment](https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Counselling-and-Career-Development/Contact-us/Online-counselling-with-Microsoft-Teams) with a counsellor.