Manage Your Time!

How to choose the right planner for your needs • How to use a paper planning system • How to prioritize your task lists • Tips for household sanity • Organizational resources

Choosing a Planner
Take your time in choosing the right planner for your needs. While the two-page-per-week style seems to be the most popular for college students, there are also one or two-page-per-day planners and monthly planners which may better fit your needs.

Consider all of the information you will need to keep in your planner and the space you will need to effectively write everything down. If you are a list writer, you may prefer a block style planner with lots of room for jotting down notes. If you are a more visual person, look for a planner that includes an hourly timeline which will allow you to block out the times when you are busy and see what time you have available.

Consider your space and organizational requirements.
- What will you be writing down?
- Will you be planning for your family as well as for yourself?
- Are you a list writer?
- Do you need an hourly schedule?

Consider size requirements
- Will it fit in your purse or book bag easily?
- If it is too big to carry conveniently, will you use it?
- If it is too small for your needs, will you use it?
- Planners are only helpful if they are used!
Using Your Planner

- You've bought it, now what do you **DO** with it?
- Write down all known appointments for the year: doctor's appointments, anniversaries, interviews, etc.
- Write them down in the monthly AND in the daily or weekly section.
- Write down your class schedule—again in both the monthly and the daily section.
- Write down your homework assignments, noting them on the day they are due.
- Add any additional things that require your attention:
  - Study sessions
  - Commuting times
  - Your work schedule
  - Your spouse's work schedule
  - Your children's after school activities
  - Babysitters

- Make looking at your planner a daily habit!
- Use your planner to note changes in your class syllabi or assignments.
- Invest in correction supplies such as white out to keep your planner neat.
- Be creative and personalize: use different colored inks, stickers, sticky notes, etc.
- Try using a To-Do list to help prioritize your daily tasks.

To Do Lists

- Before going to bed, or early in the day, make a to-do list which prioritizes your daily tasks.
- Mark the “must do today” tasks with an “A,” the “should do today” tasks with a “B,” and so on.
- As you proceed through your day, focus on completing your “A” tasks.
- Sometimes “A” tasks will not be chores or homework, but rather specific time spent with children, pets, partners, etc.
Using a To-Do List

- Many people make to-do lists primarily for the satisfaction of checking things off as they’re completed. This can, indeed, be a powerful motivator, but it can be discouraging at the end of the day if your list has not been marked up! Here is a method for giving each and every task on your list a mark, even if it has been moved to another day:
  - * In Progress. You have started the task, but not yet completed it.
  - √ Completed.
  - --> Moved. You have re-planned this task for a future date and time.
  - X Deleted. This task no longer needs to be done.
  - O Delegated. Someone else will be completing this task. When it is finished, mark it with a check mark.

- As you look over your list, give each item a mark and move it to the next day, if necessary. Some tasks, such as laundry, seem to be perpetually in progress. That’s okay. Give yourself credit for having started the task even if you have not completed it.

Household Sanity

Only you decide what level of clean is necessary for your home. Try not to be influenced by outside pressures or previous housekeeper abilities.

Tips for Household Sanity

- Nurturing Relationships
  - Schedule specific time for the people in your life.
  - Stick to your scheduled dates so you can devote yourself to studying the rest of the time.
  - Don’t forget to nurture yourself! Schedule time to do what you love.

Studying with Children

- Give your children your undivided attention before you start studying. If they’ve gotten your attention, they will be more likely to leave you (relatively) undisturbed during your study time.
- Be clear with your children about how much time you will be studying and then do something with them while you take a break.
- Set a timer and tell your children that they can come get you when the timer goes off.
- If they are old enough, consider implementing family study time at the table.
Maintaining a Household

- If someone offers help, take it! Then thank them! Avoid pointing out how they did the task incorrectly.
- If it takes less than two minutes, do it now!
- Find your own level of household sanity.
- Make a “safe zone” for yourself that is always clean and organized.
- Keep a running grocery list on the refrigerator.
- Make a list of weekly tasks and put it in a central location. Mark the tasks off as you, or someone else, completes them.
- Write down your schedule on a family calendar so everyone will know when you are busy.

The 10 Minute Clean

- Set a timer for 10 minutes. Pick up and put away everything you can get your hands on in that 10 minute time. Clean for the entire 10 minutes without distraction.

Have your cleaning supplies handy so you don’t waste time looking for them. Recruit other hands to help out for 10 minutes and you can double or triple your cleaning power.

Questions?

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