

## Planning Study Time

How to manage your study and still have a life!

Why plan?

Planning will allow you to identify what you need to do and when you need to do it.

Planning will allow you to

- achieve more
- gain free time
- gain confidence in your ability to handle difficult tasks
- adjust your plan to cope with the unexpected
- gain satisfaction from achieving goals
- have the feeling of being in control

How busy are you?

At the beginning of your study, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Am I too busy?
2. Do I know how to set/reach goals?
3. Do I know what's coming?

(Brueckner, 2011a, 01:48)

## 1. Am I too busy?

### Non-discretionary activities

We all have tasks that we need to do. The following table gives an estimation of the time required to complete these tasks.

**Table 1**

#### *Non-Discretionary Activities*

Activity	Number of hours
Sleep	7
Prep and eat	2
Travel	1
Personal hygiene	1
Shopping	
Family	
Housework/gardening	

Generally, we spend at least 12 hours a day on things we need to do

*Note.* According to S. Brueckner. Adapted from *LBCC- Organizing your study time – Part 1* [Video], by Long Beach City College, 2011, February 7, 03:12. YouTube ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3\\_EIR-uPOhw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_EIR-uPOhw)).

### 1. Study Hours

Be aware of the number of hours you are expected to attend lectures and study for each course.

Generally, at EIT, you will need to spend 10 hours a week on each course. You may find that some courses require less than 10 hours per week while others may need more time.

### 2. Work Hours

How many hours a week do you spend in paid employment?

### 3. Total Study and Work Hours

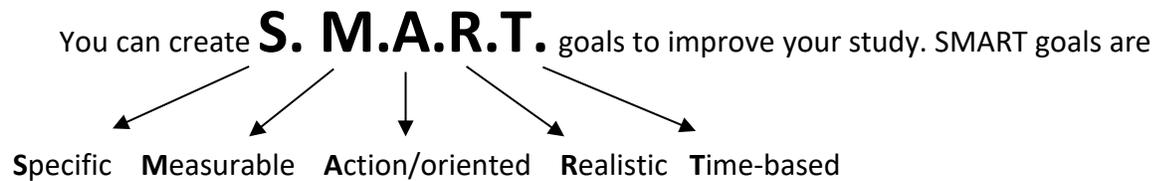
Add up your lecture/study and work hours.

If your answer is  $\leq 56$  hours and you do not have excessive family commitments, you should be able to cope with your study.

If your answer is  $> 56$  hours, you may find it difficult to find time for the required hours of study.

However, **you** are the one who knows/decides what you can cope with (Brueckner, 2011a).

## 2. Do I know how to set/reach goals?



(Brueckner, 2011, 13:31)

### Goal Setting Tips

- Set specific goals, for example, “I will pass all my courses,” or “I will get As for course one and two, and a B for course three.”
- Know if you have achieved your goal. Monitor your progress – make sure you are on track.
- Plan how you will achieve each goal.
- Set a realistic goal for each paper.
- Know the time-frame for achieving each goal.

## 3. Do I know what’s coming?

You can use the following planners to keep track of what you need to do:

- (a) assessment planner
- (b) weekly planner
- (c) daily to-do list

## (a) assessment planner

An assessment planner is useful because it gives you dates for the holidays and you can write the due dates for all your assessments for every course on one page. Figure 1 is an example of a completed assessment planner.

Click [here](#) to link to a semester planner

**Figure 1**

*Completed Assessment Planner*

Assessment Planner Semester 2						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
19 July	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 August
2	3	4	5	6 HS Assessment 1	7	8
9 TP Assessment 1	10	11	12	13 BL assessment 1	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 WV Assessment 1	26	27	28	29
30 TP Assessment 2	31	1 September	2	3 HS Assessment 2	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 BL assessment 1	25	26
27	28	29 WV Assessment 1	30	October 1	2	3
4 Semester	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 TP Assessment 3	19	20	21	22 HB Anniversary	23	24
25 Labour Day	26	27	28	29 HS Assessment 3	30	31
November 1 STUDY WEEKS	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 EXAM WEEKS	16	17 WV Exam	18	19 BL Exam	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Keep your assessment planner in a prominent place, for example:

- inside cover of folder
- by computer screen
- on your phone or computer
- on refrigerator door

Unfortunately, there will be times when you have several assessments due in one week. Your assessment planner will show you where these busy weeks are and, hopefully, this awareness will push you into action well before the assessments are due.

## (b) weekly planners

Weekly planners are useful for keeping track of what you need to do during the week. See Figure 2.

### [Weekly Planner - Version 1](#)

### [Weekly Planner - Version 2](#)

When writing a weekly planner start with the tasks you need to do, such as,

- attending all lectures
- meeting family commitments
- completing other non-discretionary tasks.

Then write down the things you want to do, for example,

- having time for relaxation
- spending time on hobbies and sports
- having family time.

**NB.** It is important to spend some time (but not too much) doing the things you want to do.

Finally, enter your study tasks, such as,

- writing assignments
- revising for tests and exams
- previewing and reviewing lecture topics.

**Figure 2**

*Example of a Weekly Planner*

Weekly Planner							
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6am							
7am							
8am						Kids sport	Church
9am	HS Class	Review notes	HS Class	BL Class	HS Class		
10am							
11am	Review notes	WV Tut	Review notes	WV Class	Review notes		
12pm							
1pm	BL Class	TP Lab	TP Lab	TP Lab	BL Class		
2pm			WV Class				Family time
3pm	TP Class	Alex's hockey practice		Write WV assignment	WV Assignment	Study time	
4pm							
5pm							
6pm							
7pm	Write HS assignment		Write HS assignment	Study time	Band practice		Finish WV assignment
8pm							
9pm							
10pm							

## (c) Daily to-do list

Writing down what you plan to do each day can help you feel organised and in control. It can be very satisfying crossing tasks off the list. Figure 3 is an example of a to-do list.

There are a number of ways to create a daily to-do list:

- diary
- apps for smart phone
- computer
- paper
- post-it notes
- whiteboard

**Figure 3**

*Example of a To-Do List*

TO DO	
<b>TOP PRIORITIES</b>	<b>GOAL DATE</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Find information for HS assignment	25-Jul
<input type="checkbox"/> Finish TP discussion forum post	27-Jul
<input type="checkbox"/> Arrange meeting for BL group assignment	27-Jul
<b>SECONDARY TASKS</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contact tutor with BI questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Organise notes for HS course
<input type="checkbox"/> Meet with Jax	<input type="checkbox"/> Analyse the next assignment task for T
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete readings and notes TP	<input type="checkbox"/> Analyse the next assignment task for E
<input type="checkbox"/> Find information for lab work - ask Harry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pick up Alex's hockey gear from Corin
<input type="checkbox"/> Return my library books	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Book car in for service	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Make up study cards for WV test	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>NOTES</b>	
Mark's cell 0092865021845	

Know your  
energy cycle

Are your energy levels higher in the morning or in the evening?

Try to study difficult and/or less interesting material when your energy levels are highest. During your low energy levels, you can concentrate on easier courses or do tasks that require little mental concentration, for example, photocopying or filing.

## Procrastination

To procrastinate is to delay doing a task that needs to be done. We often procrastinate even when we know there will be negative consequences as a result (Jaffe, 2013).

While most of us procrastinate from time to time, a study by Ferrari showed that 20% of adults are chronic procrastinators (Jaffe, 2013).

- fear of failure
- feel overwhelmed - where to start
- find course difficult or boring
- live in the moment and not plan for the future
- give in to distractions and temptations (Brueckner, 2011b)

Why do we procrastinate?

Overcome procrastination

- Divide jobs into smaller parts; write subject plans.
- Include deadlines for each task; remember tasks usually take longer than expected.
- Be accountable to someone; tell your partner or friend what you plan to do during your study session.
- Always include rewards.
- Expect to be successful (Brueckner, 2011b).

Studying is a job!

- Make studying a habit; try to study at the same time each day.
- Tell family and friends the times you plan to study.
- Avoid distractions.

## References

Brueckner, S. (2011a, February 7). *LBCO-Organizing your study time–Part 1* [Video]. YouTube.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3\\_EIR-uPOhw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_EIR-uPOhw)

Brueckner, S. (2011b, February 23). *LBCO-Organizing your study time–Part 2* [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNMbYLEGmHA>

Jaffe, E. (2013). Why wait? The science behind procrastination. *The Observer*, 26(4).

<https://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/why-wait-the-science-behind-procrastination>

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