

# Time Management 101

*“The bad news is time flies. The good news is you’re the pilot.” –Michael Althsuler.*

## Where does your time go?

### Time Audits

Start your time management journey by using a time audit to determine where your time is going now. There are time audits where you can estimate your time, and audits where you actually track your activities for set period of time. There are **168 hours** in a week. Use a tool to figure out **how you are using those hours**.

## What matters to you?

### Goal Setting

By setting specific goals, you will be better able to prioritize how you want to spend your time. Time management is not about doing more with less time- It is about doing fewer things with greater importance. **You must determine what is important to you**. Write down your **top three goals** and **keep them visible**.

## Choose your Tools

### Choose a Planner

Many different types of planners exist. First, decide if you want a **paper or electronic** planner. Both have pros/cons, so you have to decide what fits your preferences and lifestyle best. Next, decide if you want a planner by **day, week, month, or a combination** thereof. For most students, a planner that includes an hour-by-hour daily plan is favorable.

### Choose a Prioritization Tool

Prioritization is perhaps the most challenging part of time-management. Often, everything seems equally urgent and important. You will likely need to **use a tool and practice this skill**. Search the internet for the Urgent/Important Grid, the Circle of Influence, and the 80/20 rule. See if any of these tools interest you. If not, a Learning Specialist can help you choose the right tool.

## Make a “Parking Lot”

A parking lot is a **running “to-do” list**. It can be a piece of paper in your planner, or a running list on your mobile device. It is a place to “park” things that pop into your mind that you need to take care of. When these thoughts emerge, simply put them into the parking lot and know that you will deal with them at your next planning session.

## Use your Tools

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### Schedule a “Weekly Date” with your Time Manager

Here is what that date might look like:

1. Write all **static items into your planner** (classes, meetings, appointments, etc.).
2. Add everything you need to get done this week to your **parking lot**.
3. Use your **prioritization tool** to determine what is most important. Move items from the parking lot to the prioritization manager. It is helpful to keep your **goals in front of you**.
4. Find time for your **highest priority items first** (such as studying) and schedule these into the planner, then move to the next level of priority, and so on. You may not be able to schedule time for the lowest priority items.  
NOTE: **Make self-care a high priority item**. Doing this will allow you to keep momentum in mastering your time.
5. **Set any reminders** that you may need in your mobile device (i.e., Planner Commandment #4- see below).

## The Planner Commandments

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The Planner Commandments are **an absolutely essential** set of behaviors for your time management tool to work for you.

1. Thou shalt have one and only one planner.
2. Thou shalt enter all tasks and appointments into planner.
3. Thou shalt have thy planner with thee at all times.
4. Thou shalt reference thy planner three times a day.

## Assess and Revise

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Time Management is challenging. Each week, assess what is working for you and what isn't. You may find that the first set of tools you tried didn't work for you. Try something different! If you need help, contact a Learning Specialist.

WSU's Student Success Center offers academic support and counseling services at no cost to students. For assistance with any of these strategies, or for more information, visit your **Learning Specialist** by calling 509-358-7757 or make an appointment at [wsu.mywconline.net](http://wsu.mywconline.net).