

Time Management Skills for College Students From a Stanford Entrepreneur

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Be organized.

It saves you time to find information for a class. Create data repositories for each of your class. This could be as simple as creating a folder for each class, and then putting any information related to that class in that folder.

Make friends.

No matter how good your notes-taking skill is, or how well you understand a class, you will always have questions. You should have a friend in the class who may have a different take on the same class materials as you do. Together you will both have a better understanding of the materials.

Focus on purpose, not procedure.

Think about why you are learning the materials, and how it may apply to real life work, as opposed to just blindly learning the course material.

Don't just read, think.

The best courses I took were the ones where I genuinely thought about the subject. One of my favorite subjects was basic chemistry, simply because I spent as much time working on coursework as thinking about how amazing and beautiful chemistry works in real life. Your passion, of course, can be on a different subject.

Understand the basic things.

I also believe class work is all about foundational understanding. Let's make the analogy that education is a building, and tests as earthquakes; a building with weak foundation (not understanding the basics) can fall at the weakest earthquakes (a midterm). You can, in fact, build the buildings specifically for certain kinds of earthquakes (studying only the materials that are relevant for a test). This is both unsustainable and can bite you later. There were a couple of times where I was able to derive the necessary equations from my basic understanding to an engineering test when I had forgotten how to solve the problem.

Prioritize your coursework.

Especially if you are on a tight deadline and can't finish your work in time. It's absolutely important that you decide to work on the things that have the biggest impact (perhaps to your grade), and not because it's easy!

Work on things that are important.

This is truly about short term rewards versus long term gains. Yes, doing that easy thing will make you feel good about yourself, but if it's not relevant to your overall work, you're doing it wrong. How do you determine whether it's important? Well, you have to tie your tasks to your guiding metrics. For school, one of those metrics is your grade.

During tests, work on the highest return on investment.

Make sure you read all the problems ahead of time. Find the one that has the highest points per allotted amount of work and do that first. In this case, you're directly managing your resource (limited time) to value (the number of points you get for each question). Undoubtedly, I've scored well on hard tests for precisely this reason. The professors who want to exhaustively test students create tests that are never meant to be finished! Therefore, if you work on the highest ROI, then you maximize your scores.

Don't study all the time.

First, it doesn't work because you're probably overloading yourself with useless information. Remember the make friends part? It applies to a broader scope as well, because friends can give you a different perspective on everything.

Write everything you have to do down.

Get it all out of your head and onto paper. The worst thing that you can do on a daily basis is use your active brain to worry about small irrelevant things. It can destroy your focus.

Note that most of the tips are **about your state of mind in which no tool can solve.**

For more information on Appfluence or the Priority Matrix organization system see:

<http://www.appfluence.com/>

<http://www.appfluence.com/productivity/top-10-time-management-skills-for-college-students/>

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