

Using Weekly Planning Guides

The weekly planner gives you a perspective of what your week usually looks like and prepares for tasks that are not part of your routine. It guides you through the quarter week by week.

Start with your obligations:

- Block in your class schedule
- Block in your work schedule
- Block in 8 hours of sleep (or whatever you require for peak performance)
- Block in 1 hour each for breakfast/wakeup, lunch, and dinner
- Block in special but regular activities (athletics, TV, meetings, intramurals)

Now schedule your study time:

- Spend at least 2 hours outside of class for every hour in class. (Adjust for classes that require more time based on rumor, experience, or self-knowledge.)
- The time outside class includes time for reading texts, making & using flashcards, rewriting/reorganizing/reviewing notes, library work, writing papers, using study groups & tutors, etc.
- Assign each study hour to a particular class or task (not just “study”).
- Use as much of the 8-5, M-F as possible (Make school your full time job).
- Consider the time of day you are most alert and tackle your hardest classes then.
- Vary the subjects and activities to keep your brain fresh.
- Schedule 30-50 minutes study sessions with 5-10 minute breaks.
- Use the time between classes for reading textbooks, rewriting or reviewing notes, studying flashcards, etc. You can accomplish a lot in even 5-10 minutes. Remember, 80% of new information is forgotten within 24-48 hours if not reviewed.

General Tips:

- Plan a physical activity each day to energize yourself.
- Leave some unscheduled time for a “shock absorber” or relaxation.
- Some people make copies of their standard schedule for the term and then fill in the variables for each week.
- You may prefer to make a daily “To Do List” from the weekly planner to include specific academic tasks, errands, chores, appointments, etc. Checking things off a daily list gives many people a feeling of accomplishment.
- Always know what’s ahead for the upcoming day or week, always go to sleep knowing you’re prepared for tomorrow.

How does your weekly plan look to you? Does it correlate to what is really happening in your week? Are there changes you need to make to help you succeed? Can you adjust any of the priorities in your life to make your plan more workable?