



TIME MANAGEMENT: Creating a Master Schedule

★ What is a master schedule?

It is a type of schedule that reflects fixed and flexible events. It can be created just once a semester (unless significant changes occur) or can be done at the start of each new week. With this visual guide, you can devise any type of game plan that is do-able for YOU!

★ Why should I schedule my time?

Students who intentionally map out their days usually have numerous commitments to juggle, AND they want to maximize their time so as not to “give up” anything. Plus, a schedule helps to minimize decision-making on “what should I be doing right now?”– the result can lower stress and anxiety. Who doesn’t want that?!

★ Where do I start?

A master schedule should include fixed priorities – which may vary from person to person – as well as some flexibility. A suggested format for the attached blank grid is as follows:

FIXED TIMES:

1. Fill in all regularly scheduled class and lab times
 2. Fill in all regularly scheduled work/volunteer hours
 3. Fill in all regularly scheduled activities (meetings, study groups, sports practice, piano lessons, etc.)
 4. Fill in times for sleeping, eating, and personal hygiene
 5. Fill in commute times to and from the above activities
- ** If you are a parent, don’t forget to schedule in your children’s required activities and your “family-time” as well!

(OVER)

FLEX TIMES:

1. Fill in one important “fun for me” activity for the week (more later!)
2. Fill in time for pre-class and post-class mini-reviews (10-30 minutes each)
3. Fill in time for exercise & “de-stress” activities at least several times a week
4. Fill in blocks for general study (don’t target specific courses)
5. Fill in blocks for household duties & errands (don’t target specific tasks)

6. Leave open blocks for the “un-expected” (and used for extra studying when needed - like midterms & finals!)
7. And finally....fill in times for a few more “fun for me” activities!

★ **Final Tips:**

1. You have 168 hours/week to utilize wisely or waste – the choice is yours
2. Maintaining a schedule is not a matter of “will power” but developing a positive and productive life-long habit
3. Exceptions to your schedule will occur, but after wards, return to the plan
4. Make several copies of your schedule and place in visible areas
5. Be prepared to modify your schedule as necessary to meet your new needs
6. Don’t neglect the importance of weekend time
7. Try the “two-fer” approach by combining activities when possible –studying while you are doing laundry, for example
8. Share or divide duties with other family members in order to free up extra time in your master schedule
9. When determining study time, you should figure 2 hours per credit each week – thus, 12 hours of classes translates to 24 hours of study time weekly!
10. If you aren’t sure where to begin, keep track of your activities on a blank grid for 1 week – this will give you a launch point to create your schedule



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Information adapted from the University of South Carolina website