

KEEP IN MIND

Time management looks different for everyone. The important thing to remember is to cut yourself some slack. Do your best, accomplish what you can, and reward yourself for a job well done. Take time to breathe deeply, love fiercely, and be thankful for all those seemingly meaningless tasks that make up a fulfilling life.



Improving Your Time Management
Health & Wellness

Improving Your Time Management

While we lead different lives and juggle different schedules, we all get the same 24 hours each day.

Some people seem to do better stretching time than others.

They're relaxed, prepared, and always get their stuff done. Other people are like that kid in school who's constantly running down the hall—papers flying—trying not to miss the last bell.

If you're more like the latter, there is help. Studies of people with solid time management skills have shown several positive patterns. Try the tips below to help you sail through your schedule with success:

- **Make a physical list to stay focused.** Mental lists don't count. Writing things down will save time in the long run. And we feel energized and accomplished when cross something off.
- **Do the thing you least want to do first.** Getting something you dread out of the way cuts stress.
- **Wake up early.** Most of us are more clear-headed in the morning. Get up an hour earlier to tackle one or two things on your list.
- **Set a timer.** Work on one specific task for a set amount of time. Deadlines help with focus.
- **Take breaks.** Our brains can only concentrate in 90-minute blocks. Do a small task that requires different skills for 15 minutes. If you're on your laptop, then clean the kitchen or office area.

- **Delegate.** Let go of your need to control every aspect of everything. Pass off smaller tasks to others, and don't stress if they're not done perfectly. Let your kids unload the dishwasher or your coworker file reports.
- **Use an online calendar.** Syncing your appointments between your desktop, laptop, and phone relieves you of the stress of having to remember. Try Google or Outlook.
- **Pad your appointments.** Give yourself a breather between tasks.
- **Wait wisely.** If you're in a long line, check emails, make lists, catch up on reading.
- **Be still and recharge.** You'll be more efficient. Take an afternoon nap. Find a quiet place to sip a cup of tea. Listen to relaxing music or read an inspirational book.
- **Say no.** Choose two or three important things on your list. Consider everything else optional. Don't feel guilty about saying no.
- **Be present.** Focus on one thing at a time.
- **Enjoy yourself.** If you figure out how to make work more enjoyable, you'll be less likely to procrastinate. Add a plant to your desk. Or find other ways to make your environment bring you joy and pleasure.