

Time Management Tips

Many students are, at first, reluctant to create a time management schedule for a variety of reasons. For one, many might find them too restrictive. Others may find them too difficult to stick with 100% of the time. While they could be restrictive, keep in mind that this is medical school and you will have to make many sacrifices and changes to your normal habits and patterns. Regarding sticking with your schedule 100% of the time, nobody can! The idea is to do the best you can with it and make notes and changes when you come across challenges. It is also a good idea to build some flexibility into your schedule when possible to account for last minute changes and disruptions. You should also be scheduling in “me time” activities to build in some mental health and self-care.

Advantages to Creating a Schedule

- Helps you identify goals
- Establishes priorities
- Allows you to practice decision making skills
- Allows you to take responsibility for outcomes
- Assists you in monitoring your progress
- Produces feelings of accomplishment
- Reduces stress levels
- Avoids work overload and burnout

Creating a Schedule

1. Start with a blank worksheet – there are various templates, but a basic Excel sheet works
2. Add anything in that is required/mandatory (lectures, TBLs, Labs, Exams, etc.)
3. Add routine activities (daily grooming, meal prep, transportation to/from school, etc.)
4. Fill in your study time, including previewing, reviewing, condensing notes, group study meetings, individual studying – be specific about what you’re doing in those times
5. Add in your “me time” activities (calls home, club meetings, walking your dog, etc.)

Tips

- Study time should consist of previewing, quick revises, basic study time, practice questions, review of challenging topics, study groups, TA/Fellow/Scholar/Faculty times, and anything else that is imperative to your success
- Think about using your weekdays to use practice questions about current content and the weekends for timed review
- Build in 10-15 minute breaks between topics when studying
- Think about flex study time to “catch up” on areas you’re behind in
- Have an accountability partner to make sure you’re staying on task