

Time management



Managing your time is an important skill, particularly when you are studying and have many conflicting priorities and deadlines. Not only do you have the competing deadlines of many subjects, but you also have

attention to what you can see, hear and smell around you. Your thoughts will continue to generate worries and concerns, but just keep gently bringing your attention back to the present moment.

Pace yourself. Allow time for things to go wrong. Remember there are lots of things out of your control. What if you or someone close to you gets ill? What if your car breaks down? When things are going well and you are feeling good, then work a little bit harder, add in another “shift”, step up the pace a little. This will allow you to step off the pace and drop a shift or two when things are not going well. Distractions are a productivity zapper! Before you know it, you’re off task, off schedule and getting behind. You then start scrambling to catch up, taking time away from your wellbeing and leading to increased stress. Distractions can be anything - email, social media, friends, pets, colleagues, hunger! Let people know when your breaks are scheduled and when you will be responding to social media and email. Eat regularly and schedule regular time for your pets so that they too know what to expect!

Stay motivated. Procrastination and lack of motivation are very much related. If you lack the drive to get started and stay on track, you will find it increasingly difficult as things begin to build and become overwhelming.

Say no. Are you a person who has “too much on your plate”? Do you find it hard to say no to people? Do you think that being busy means you’re being productive? Being busy can provide an adrenaline buzz but rarely means you are being effective and that buzz of adrenaline will eventually lead to chronic stress. Learn to say no more and focus on your priorities and your plan.

Focus on one task at a time. Research shows that multitasking is not effective. Try to focus on

one task at a time and complete it. Break tasks into mini-tasks if you find it difficult to stick on one topic for very long. While on task don’t be checking your emails or social media at the same time. Schedule separate times for these, perhaps a few times a day, so you’re not tempted to look at them while you’re on another task.

Good time management makes life easier and more enjoyable. If competing priorities are causing you distress, you are falling further and further behind in study, work or what needs to be done at home, then seek help. Contact JCU Student Equity and Wellbeing: <https://www.jcu.edu.au/student-equity-and-wellbeing>.

Further information and support

- x The JCU Learning Centre offers some great information and tools on time management <https://www.jcu.edu.au/students/learning-centre/getting-started>
- x Download the JCU Student Equity and Wellbeing information sheet series <https://www.jcu.edu.au/student-equity-and-wellbeing/resources>
- x MindTools Time Management https://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_HTE.htm