

Managing Your Time



Center for Academic Success
UMDNJ
School of Nursing

Managing Your Time

Being a successful nursing student is a time-consuming job that requires a number of different skills. For most students, the ability to manage time effectively will be essential for success. Time is arguably our most precious resource. Use these tips to help you maximize your time, and become a more productive student.

KNOW THYSELF

Values are enduring beliefs or attitudes about the worth of a person, object, idea, or action. This simple method is presented for you to identify discrepancies between what you value and how you behave in relation to the delegation of time.

Make a list of areas in your life that you value and next to it identify the total percent of time (include travel time) you believe you should allocate to each. We'll come back to the "actual percent" column in a moment. For example:

Areas in my life that I value	Desired percent of time	Actual percent of time
Self-care (eating, sleeping, grooming)		
Relationships (family, friends)		
School / studying		
Religion / spirituality		
Other		

To become a more efficient time manager requires an assessment of how you currently (and realistically) spend your time. The following represents an ideal week in the life of a full-time nursing student:

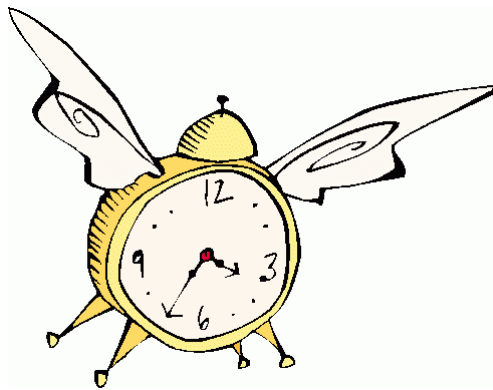
Total hours available:	168
Sleeping (8 hrs p/ night):	56
In class (1 hr p/ credit):	12-18
Studying (2 hrs p/ 1 hr in class):	24-36

This leaves 58-76 hours per week for eating, commuting, social and recreational activities, work, family, and household. Does this sound accurate to you? Reasonable? Or nowhere near reality???

To identify areas of inefficient time use, maintain a time journal for 7 days. Keep an accurate record of all your activities, described in 30-minute intervals, and indicate whether it is something you must do, want to do, or do not need to do. For example:

Time	Activity	Must do	Want to do	No need to do
7:00 AM				
7:30 AM				
8:00 AM				

At the end of the week, review the amount of time you devoted to your valued areas. Evaluate whether or not your behavior (actual percent of time) reflects what you stated as valued (desired percent of time.) When your behavior reflects your values, you are in balance (a.k.a. harmony.) When your behavior does not reflect your values, you are in imbalance and eventually you will experience emotional and physical consequences. Often, people in imbalance are reluctant to create change, but change is necessary to promote harmony in your life. Seeking balance is a challenge, but the change does not always have to be permanent. Sometimes adjustments are necessary only while you are a student. Start by reviewing the “No need to do” column of your time journal. Those activities that do not directly relate to your valued areas or to the necessary activities of daily living should be curtailed, delegated, or eliminated. Also use the journal to identify “dead time,” time wasters, and pattern behaviors, then make the adjustments that are necessary to manage your time more efficiently. Need assistance with the adjustments? Visit the Center for Academic Support Services (1124 Bergen Building) and we’ll do our best to help you.



GOALS

A goal is an object or aim you want to attain; a desired outcome. Long-term goals are outcomes 5 or more years in the future, and are related to life-long journeys that include ambitions and career aspirations. An example might be: “I will be a nurse manager in an acute care setting within 10 years after graduation from nursing school.” Intermediate goals are outcomes you want to achieve within 1 to 5 years, and are the keys to successfully reaching long-term goals. “I will complete my science prerequisites for the nursing program within 2 years.” Short-term goals are desired outcomes that take hours, days, weeks, or months to attain. “I will cook 10 meals this weekend and put them in the freezer.”

To be effective, goals must be specific (identifies precisely what is to be obtained), measurable (sets a minimum satisfactory level of performance), be realistic (has a reasonable chance of being obtained), and have a time frame (length of time it will take to attain the goal.) Goals help prevent wasting time because you know your destination before you begin. What makes a busy person effective is setting and working towards specific, measurable, realistic goals that can be reached within a given time frame.

- Begin goal setting by identifying your roles in life. Roles can mean how you relate to people (spouse, parent, coworker) or what you do (housekeeper/cook, nurse’s aide, Sunday School teacher.)
- Identify one or more goals for each role (either short-term, intermediate, or long-term.)
- Involve your family when writing a goal. They will have a vested interest in your attaining your goal when they understand the rationales for and expected outcomes of the goal.

- Put your goals in writing, because it makes them more tangible and you can review them routinely to remain focused. Telling others your goals can be motivating because you create additional emphasis on the need to perform.
- When you attain goals, reward yourself and your family members appropriately. This motivates you and recognizes the significant others in your life who are helping you attain your goals.
- Goals need to be revisited. Roles, responsibilities and relationships change over time. Be flexible enough to revise, eliminate, or reset a goal depending on the changing factors in your life. Revising goals is not a sign of failure, but rather a mature recognition of reasonable expectations.

PRIORITIES

After setting goals, you need to set priorities, which is the process of identifying the preferential order of doing something, or figuring out what requires your attention first. The following criteria may be used to classify activities. Important activities relate to your values and goals. Pressing activities have to be accomplished in the short term.

1. pressing & important tasks – insist on your immediate attention, must be tackled first, and are essential /vital (e.g. reviewing for tomorrow’s exam, caring for your sick child, making dinner for the family)

If you find yourself putting most of your activities in category 1 and are constantly functioning in “crisis management” mode, you will be anxious, overworked, overwhelmed, and speeding toward burnout. We all have urgent or unexpected activities that must be addressed, but the scramble to meet last-minute deadlines should not become your default mode of functioning. This should be your in-case-of-emergency mode.

2. not pressing & important tasks – relate to essential tasks, require you to take initiative and be proactive (e.g. planning a weekly calendar, playing with your children, doing laundry, reading for the exam in 2 weeks)

Most of life’s activities, including academically related tasks, can be placed in category 2 because they are important but have several days or weeks before they have to be completed. Get used to demonstrating the self-discipline needed to tackle these tasks while you have the luxury of time. If you ignore or delay these tasks, the pressure to accomplish them increases until they must be reclassified into category 1. Attending to this category is like preventive car maintenance: Get it accomplished before the car breaks down and it becomes a major crisis. Effective time managers function mainly within this mode and therefore keep anxiety to a minimum. This should be your “just do it” mode.

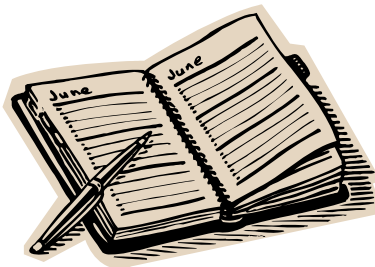
3. pressing & not important tasks – compete for your immediate attention, but relate to activities you do not consider vital (e.g. listening to a telemarketer, doing something that someone else thinks you should do)

When setting priorities, you need to limit activities in category 3 because this mode relies on reacting and responding, rather than being proactive. You are reacting to urgent stimuli, but more often than not the urgency of the activity is based on the expectations of others. In this mode, you're meeting other people's needs, not your own.

4. not pressing & not important tasks – minor, insignificant, trivial activities that do not compete for your immediate attention and are not urgent (e.g. cleaning the sock drawer, socializing with uninvited visitors)

Finally, you need to seriously limit or eliminate activities in category 4. With so many important and pressing tasks at hand, why waste your time? If you find yourself trying to avoid urgent problems and issues in categories 1 and 2 by putting most activities in category 4, you're most likely functioning in an unhealthy escapist mode.

When setting priorities, you are the only person who can decide if something is important. You can make choices that are in harmony with your values and goals. Unfortunately, you do not always have control over time frames. The ability to set priorities, however, puts you in a position of control because you are the one making the decisions.



GETTING ORGANIZED

Going back to the roles that you identified earlier, you may have noticed that all of the accompanying responsibilities and stresses result in multi-role overload, not to mention the information overload you most likely experience as a nursing student. There's also possible work overload from your job, access overload from cell phones, pagers, emails, and faxes, and stimuli overload if you live or commute in a densely populated area. When overloaded for any length of time, you may end up spiraling toward a crisis or breakdown. You must become organized and manage your time to regain control of your many roles and responsibilities. A simple, concrete method of time management is the use of calendars.

1. Managing by the year: If you are a student, chances are you have at least a general idea of what you'll be doing for the remainder of your academic program. This should include a listing of what courses you must take each semester to successfully meet the graduation requirements (a.k.a. your curriculum plan.) If you are unsure, see your advisor ASAP to discuss this schedule!
2. Managing by the month / semester: Make monthly calendars for every month within a semester and insert important personal events (social / recreational activities, vacations, holidays, doctor's appointments) and school-related commitments (first and last days of the semester, add/drop deadlines, test dates, midterms and finals, due dates for papers and projects, etc.) These reminders provide a broad overview of your monthly activities. Putting events on the calendar means you don't have to use precious brainpower to keep that information in the forefront of your mind...just make

sure to check the calendar on a regular basis! Post this monthly calendar in a highly visible and trafficked place (try the fridge at home) so that your family members can be kept abreast of your upcoming events. If the calendar is large enough (try a desk calendar), each family member can use a different colored marker to add their major events for the month (tests, sports games, business trips, etc.)

3. Managing by the week: Weekly calendars can take many formats including pocket planners, week-at-a-glance organizers, PDA's, etc. (Free printable calendar templates are available at www.printablecalendar.ca/). They provide an overview for the week and should be constructed just before beginning a new week (try every Sunday night). First block in all fixed commitments, including recurring or unbreakable appointments. Include adequate time for activities of daily living (sleeping, grooming, food preparation and consumption, household chores), children-related activities, work, classes, religious services, etc. Allow time for those commitments that require travel to and from. After all your required tasks are inserted, begin to decide how to carve up the remaining time. Factors to consider include:

- *determining the time of day when you are most productive (morning person, night owl, etc)
- *setting consistent times to study each day
- *deciding how much time you need to study (in general, plan to study 2 hours for every hour per week you spend in class)
- *scheduling breaks within study periods (for every 50 minutes of studying, give yourself 10 minutes of break time)
- *allowing a few minutes before each class to review your notes from the reading, preview that day's topic, and prepare questions for the instructor
- *taking a few minutes after each class to review the notes you just took and material you just covered

Remember: When developing a weekly calendar, it is essential to establish consistency in activities from one day to the next because it creates a routine that is familiar, and familiarity reduces anxiety while boosting productivity. Also, it reduces the need to expend energy making decisions. Your job now is to implement the routine plan you made for yourself. You made a commitment to study at a certain time, and you need to have the integrity to keep your commitment.

4. Managing by the day: Daily lists itemize your personal and academic goals for the day should be constructed in the evening for the next day. Start by listing all the personal and school-related *special* events for the day that appear on your monthly and weekly calendars (not the routine tasks like class or eating.) Now add in all the academic and nonacademic activities you intend to accomplish, being as specific as you can (instead of "study", try "study pharmacology chapters 4-7.") Rank each item on the list in the order of priority (have to get done, should get done, and want to get done.) This will also function as your "To Do" list. As you complete items, cross them off. As more and more items get crossed out, it starts to feel and look very satisfying and will give you a great sense of accomplishment!

Also, try to coordinate the scheduling of activities to take advantage of blocks of available time. When possible, combine activities or group similar activities together. For example, shop at stores with multiple departments (school supplies AND food for dinner.) Remember that you can't plan for

everything and some tasks may not get accomplished by the end of the day, preferably the lower-priority activities. If you repeatedly have tasks left over at the end of the day, you may have to revise your future daily lists with a more realistic attitude, move an uncompleted task to the next day, delegate the task, or eliminate it entirely. And don't be afraid to purposefully leave some unscheduled time to account for life's little surprises and to give yourself "wiggle room." Routines are important, but so is flexibility.

Keep in mind that although individualized to meet your needs, all calendars should be simple, realistic, and flexible. They should not be so complex that they become an additional chore. At this point, it may seem that you don't have the time or energy to begin this time management system, but a well-thought-out plan that is followed promotes the efficient use of time. By spending a little time now, you can save a lot more time in the very near future!



SELF-DISCIPLINE

By now you've assessed your time usage, you've set goals and priorities, and you've got a calendar system in place. But how do you stick to it? Hopefully, your family has helped you establish your weekly calendar, which is essentially a commitment to yourself and others to achieve certain goals in a certain amount of time. In other words, you've made a promise, and keeping promises requires self-discipline. Self-discipline means orderly conduct in keeping with self-imposed constraints, which in turn means making some tough decisions, choices, and sacrifices. It also involves the ability to say "NO," the ability to avoid time traps, and the ability to self-motivate.

1. saying "NO"

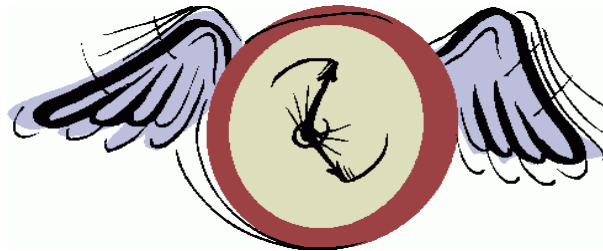
This one little word can have a big impact on your time management. In the helping professions, you may use the word "YES" all the time. But while you're a student, it's time to make YOUR needs the priority. Learn to say "NO." When asked to do something by someone else, ask yourself questions such as:

- *Is this consistent with my goals and priorities?
- *Is this something that I must do? Want to do?
- *Is this person able to do this by him or herself?
- *Is there anyone else who can do this task?

Answer "YES" or "NO" or if you're unsure, buy yourself time with "let me think about it overnight and I'll get back to you tomorrow." The most common consequence of saying "NO" is feeling guilty,

although this feeling is a waste of energy. Instead, use the energy to prevent guilt, which you can do several ways:

- *Recognize that humans can not eliminate all feelings of guilt, but they can limit them.
- *Understand that there is “good guilt” (feeling bad about something you did or didn’t do based on your ethics and morals) and “bad guilt” (feeling bad about something over which you have no control.) Bad guilt is irrational and physically and emotionally draining.
- *Change the beliefs on which your guilty feelings are produced. Remind yourself: “It is appropriate for me to meet my own needs before someone else’s. I am not a bad person if I decide not to do what someone else wants of me.”
- *Make a weekly calendar that respects your goals and priorities. While studying, you should not feel guilty about not spending time with your family because you have also scheduled time to meet family needs.
- *Compensate for your behavior. For example, “I want to watch the big game on TV tonight, so I will study 2 extra hours this weekend.” (This one is for occasional use only!)
- *Use feelings of guilt to your advantage...this is an opportunity for personal growth and change.



2. *time traps*

Time traps are interruptions that interfere with your ability to use time effectively. A review of your time journal should reveal whether your time is productive or you get caught in time traps. Some time traps are unavoidable, but awareness of these events and effective management can help you address most of them. First, you must recognize when you are caught in a time trap and realize how much time is being wasted. Some events over which you may believe you have little control are:

- *unwanted calls or small talk calls
- *arrival of unwanted visitors
- *waiting for others
- *rush-hour traffic
- *assuming the role of counselor to meet the emotional needs of others

Many of these events occur because you are unaware of how much time they waste; you have not organized your day; or you have not set limits on yourself and others. You are not powerless, and in order to regain control of your time, you must be proactive. Suggested solutions are as follows:

MANAGE ACCESSIBILITY

- *Turn cell phone off or ignore calls.
- *Make your home number unlisted.
- *Use caller ID to screen calls.
- *Block out uninterrupted time for studying; turn off the phone during this time.

- *Give your email address only to selected individuals.
- *Learn to say, “It’s nice to hear from you, but I really can’t talk now. I’ll catch up with you next week.” If the person is insistent, say, “I’m sorry, but I really do have to go.” Then close the door or hang up, and do NOT feel guilty.
- *Put a “do not disturb” sign on your door.
- *Give your family instructions to interrupt you only for emergencies.

MANAGE WAITING TIME

- *Set limits on the amount of time you are willing to wait.
- *Capture idle moments by reviewing flashcards or notes.
- *Use captured moments to accomplish small tasks (e.g. while waiting for an appointment, write a thank you card, make a meal plan and grocery list, review your weekly schedule, write a check and prepare a bill for mailing, etc.)
- *Make appointments for first or last available appointment of the day. Call ahead to make sure the office is on time.

AVOID WASTING TIME

- *Multitask your errands. Go one-stop shopping (stores that have hardware, grocery and pharmacy all in one, or at least next door.)
- *Cook one-dish and / or 30-minute meals.
- *Cook double the amount for your family and freeze the other half for another dinner. Or freeze in single-serving portions to use for lunches.
- *When possible, avoid rush-hour traffic. Leave earlier or later and use the saved time to your advantage.
- *Simplify gift giving. Order online or shop in one store for multiple recipients. For example, buy all your holiday gifts in a book store. Personalize by topic and with a personal message inscribed on the inside cover.
- *Avoid meetings unless they are absolutely necessary. Set time limits for subject and participants. This requires everyone to be concise and focused.
- *Shop when stores are least crowded (just after opening, just before closing, Wednesdays)
- *Avoid the library during peak times (midterms and finals.)

MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS

- *Lower your expectations. For example, you do not have to cook a four-course meal every day, and perfection is not necessary to pass a nursing course.
- *Recognize when you are experiencing “good guilt” versus “bad guilt” and act accordingly. (See above.)
- *Avoid accepting the role of counselor for your friends. It’s time consuming and emotionally exhausting. Be able to say “I care about you and this issue you’re having, but I’m not a counselor. You may try talking to someone who is trained to help.”



3. *motivation*

Motivation is the driving force that encourages you to do something; an incentive or bribe that induces you to action. It can be internal. Learning something new, attaining a goal, and being impressed with your performance are examples of internal motivation. Be future-oriented to stimulate yourself toward the achievement of a long-term goal. For example, visualize yourself walking up to receive your diploma, or receiving your first paycheck as a nurse. This can also mean delaying gratification in the present in the interest of the future. Motivation can also be external, including earning a high grade, obtaining respect from others, and receiving an award. To deal with the present, a break from studying, a candy bar, a walk around the block, or just sitting down and getting started may be motivating enough.

Each person's motivators are individual. Think about the tasks you complete every day. What payoff do you receive for completing them? When you are able to identify what really spurs you to action, then you can use these same incentives for accomplishing school-related activities.



4. *balance*

Do you feel as though you must get an A on every test? Do you feel like you aren't done studying until you've read every single word? If the answer is yes, you may be a perfectionist. A perfectionist is a person who compulsively strives to attain excellence according to a given standard, and has an idealized self-image. Unfortunately, you are probably striving for the impossible. It is humanly impossible to be perfect, and attempting to maintain an idealized image is irrational, impractical, and self-destructive.

Perfectionism can be physically and emotionally debilitating. Because you can never really achieve perfection, you set yourself up for not meeting your own imaginary standard of perfection. This can emotionally shatter your self-image, be demoralizing and unmotivating, and/or promote feelings of failure. Also, attempting to be Wonder Woman or Superman will take its toll on your body. A little stress keeps you alert, motivates you, and helps concentration. However, excessive stress taxes most body systems and results in physical depletion and exhaustion.

To conquer obsessive/compulsive, perfectionistic thinking, you must achieve a sense of personal balance. There is a big difference between expecting perfection and striving for excellence.

- 1) Recognize that no one, including you, is perfect.
- 2) Alter your frame of reference. Do this by putting the new set of circumstances into the present situation. Ask yourself such questions as:
 - * Will I still graduate if I earn less than an A on this exam?
 - * Is a grade of an A on this paper worth not going to my child's sporting event?
 - * Does dinner have to be a homemade 3 course meal on the table promptly at 6PM?
 - * Can the laundry wait until this weekend?
 - * Can we afford to have the lawn cut by the neighbor's kid rather than cut it myself?
 - * Does dust provide a protective barrier for the surface of the furniture?

Individualize the questions to reflect your personal and family responsibilities. We're not suggesting that you lower your standards on those things that are most important to you. You can still strive for excellence and give 100%, but you are doing so in light of your present circumstance.

The bottom line is that if you are adding a huge commitment into your life (e.g. nursing school), something else in your life will have to give. Reassess your values and priorities, and do not feel pressured or guilty about your temporarily lowered standards. Controlling perfectionism and relaxing an idealized self-image is much easier said than done. Remain true to yourself in light of your goals, and seek growth and development, not perfection as you seek balance in your life.

5. *delegate*

A dictionary will tell you that "delegate" means to surrender, relinquish, or give up. However, instead of losing something, delegation actually does the opposite. Your transferring a task to another person means you gain time. For delegation to achieve desired results and positive feelings for both parties, stick to the following guidelines:

- a) Identify the personal qualities of the people to whom you can delegate. Before delegating a task, consider whether the person has the capacity to complete the task. Does the person have the appropriate intellectual, physical, and/or attitudinal ability to be successful at this task? Do they have the potential? Are they the appropriate person for the task? (e.g. A 5 year old can't clean the house, but can pick up his or her toys.)
- b) Identify the outcomes of the task to be accomplished. Explore with the other person the expected result. You should both have a clear, concise, mutual understanding of what is to be accomplished. The focus here is not on how the task will be done, but on the product or conclusion. (e.g. The clothes need to be cleaned, whether it is taken to the cleaners or completed at home.)
- c) Identify the resources necessary to accomplish the task. Consider the human, economic, technical, or organizational resources that may be needed, which may include information or skills. The focus here is on flexibility in the extent of support needed vs. available. (e.g. to cook dinner, one person may draw on past experience and another may need a cookbook.)
- d) Relinquish accountability for the task. Accountability exists when a person assumes responsibility for something. In delegating something, you transfer the responsibility for the task to another person, and that person assumes ownership of their actions and the results of those actions. You must relinquish accountability for a task in order to feel free from the burden of a task. The focus here is not on supervision, authoritarianism, or consequences for

tasks not accomplished, but rather on the concept of trust. Do not hover over or micromanage the person to whom you have delegated a task. Allow the person to explore, practice, and grow. Initially, less than perfect outcomes go with the territory of delegation (e.g. pink socks or bland meals.)

Delegation does not occur in isolation. Communicate your needs to family and friends. Have a family meeting and discuss what tasks need to be done, what people are able and willing to do, and what skills need to be learned. When everyone is involved in the decision-making process, there is ownership, and an increased likelihood of success. Delegation requires an acknowledgment of your interdependence, and will reinforce that you must trust in others. Finally, routinely review the plan and evaluate how it is working. Ask questions such as: Do tasks need to be rotated? Does someone need to learn a new skill? Change the plan as necessary. The delegation of plans must be flexible to meet the needs of everyone involved.



6. *overcoming procrastination*

Procrastination is putting off or postponing something until a future time. It is a protective mechanism to delay something that we would rather not deal with. We do it because in the short term it reduces anxiety. However, in the long run it will waste time and increase anxiety. We all do it to some degree, but when taken to the extreme, it can hinder our ability to complete tasks for which we are responsible. Saying any of the following out loud or in your head is a sign of procrastination:

- * this is too boring
- * this is too hard
- * I don't know where to begin
- * I am too tired
- * I have more important things to do
- * I can do it tomorrow
- * I have plenty of time left
- * I work better under pressure

These are just a few of the ways we rationalize (give explanations for) our behavior, when in actuality, they are just excuses! Sometimes we repeat our excuses so many times that we convince ourselves. To overcome procrastination, you must first realize that you are procrastinating, stop doing it, and then take constructive action to overcome it.

Breaking the procrastination cycle requires a new mindset. When we delay tasks, it is often because we look at them as chores; routine responsibilities that we consider unpleasant. Therefore, tasks associated with school must never be viewed as chores but placed within a positive frame of reference. They are tasks that must be accomplished to reach your goal of becoming a nurse. Now, take the reason that you stated why something should be postponed and challenge that statement with reverse logic or motivating statements. For example:

- * This is boring: “It may seem boring now, but it’s important because it’s required for my long-term goal.”
- * This is too hard: “I can do this! It may be difficult, but I did not get this far in my education without being able to do what I have to do to pass a course!”
- * I don’t know where to begin: “Yes I do! I need to review the requirements for this assignment. I will make an outline on how to move forward, and plan the tasks into my schedule. I will break the task into smaller, more manageable parts of the task, and focus on them one at a time. I will discuss my progress with my instructor and clarify anything I do not understand.”
- * I am not in the mood: “I will never be in the mood for this task. I will divide the task into several parts and reward myself after completing each part.”
- * I have more important things to do: “I will list the other things I have to do and I will put them in order of importance. I will eliminate or delegate the things that I can, and will do this now because it is the most important.”
- * I can do it tomorrow: “No, I am thinking about it now, so I should do it now. I don’t want to keep thinking about it. Why put off until tomorrow what I can get done today?”
- * I have plenty of time: “I am always busy and things will always come up between now and then. That’s life. I will get this out of the way now. There is no time like the present.”
- * I work better under pressure: “I can do much better job, with much less anxiety, if I do it now. With this much time, I can do it right, not because I have no other choice.”

Make your own responses personalized to your own needs and motivations. Follow these simple guidelines: Identify and admit that you are procrastinating, challenge the procrastination with a direct opposing thought, and justify your challenging statement with a logical explanation. Sometimes, challenging procrastination involves larger changes like modifying your priorities. More often, it involves smaller changes like using strategies of motivation. You can motivate yourself by setting short-term goals, providing rewards for finished tasks, using positive self-talk, or setting and sticking to a firm schedule.

Other anti-procrastination tips:

- Make a list of self-motivating statements, such as “now or never,” “no time like the present,” etc. Pick one and repeat it when you feel like postponing a task.
- When you realize you’re procrastinating, try doing for just 5 minutes what you’re thinking about delaying. Once you’ve started (which is often the hardest part), you’re likely to continue.
- Commit to completing a task, and promise a friend or relative that you’ll get it done. A promise to a third party can serve as a powerful motivator.
- Use your weekly schedule and to-do list; check off tasks after completion (which can feel surprisingly satisfying.)
- Write reminders to yourself and post them in conspicuous places.
- Set realistic and decisive goals, be specific in your intentions and set specific deadlines for yourself (e.g. “I will have 5 pages written by Friday at 5 PM.”)
- Use rewards: Force yourself to give up something pleasant if you fail to meet your goal, and promise yourself something pleasant if you *do* meet your goal.
- Remove any distractions from the environment or move to a place with fewer distractions.
- Have someone else keep asking you if you’ve done the task yet: Their nagging will get old fast and you’ll complete the task just to get them to stop.
- And in the words of Nike, **JUST DO IT!** The moment you find yourself procrastinating, just suck it up and do it; then you won’t have to think about it anymore!!