

# Top Ten Tips for Time & Task Management

- 1. Know yourself.** Understanding your own procrastination/time wasting habits is the first step in learning to manage your time effectively. Make a daily activity log for two days to see how you really spend your time.
- 2. Establish specific and realistic goals.** Example: I will study one Chemistry chapter, complete one French lesson, and clean my desk.
- 3. Set priorities.** Try to do the hardest or most difficult task at the beginning of your study session when you are most refreshed.
- 4. Divide big jobs into workable steps.** Example: First, I will read my chemistry chapter; second, I will make note-cards for all new terms; and third, I will start to memorize the note-cards. I will then do a 10-minute review of the note-cards every day until the test.
- 5. Develop alternatives.** If barriers occur, be flexible and efficient enough to use your time on another priority. Example: your lab partner begs you to borrow your chemistry book for a couple of hours because he accidentally left his at home this weekend. (This means that you can't work on the plan in #3 for a while.) In this case, you might decide to work on the next Spanish lesson that is due.
- 6. Set false deadlines.** Some students write the due dates of certain papers/exams a couple days ahead of time so that they have some "unexpected bonus time" to polish up their work.
- 7. Concentrate on doing one thing at a time.** A lot of students work like grasshoppers ("If I don't like what I'm doing now, I'll try something else... and something else... and something else"). Working like a grasshopper gives the illusion of productivity, but usually yields weak results.
- 8. If possible, finish each task fully.** This method eliminates many procrastination tactics and saves time because you don't need to figure out where you left off in the task.
- 9. Make like Nike and JUST DO IT!** (Enough said?!)
- 10. Reward yourself for a job well done.** Your reward should match the size of the task and should not become a barrier to achievement. The best rewards are things that help us to relax and/or rejuvenate. For example, go for a nice hike, call an old friend, go see a movie, or read a fun magazine.