

# How to Use Time Management in the Workplace

Explore this Article ■ [To- Do Lists](#) ■ [Urgent- Important Matrix](#) ■ [Questions & Answers](#)  
■ [Tips and Warnings](#) ■ [Things You'll Need](#) ■ [References](#)

Co-authored by **Sydney Axelrod** and **10 contributors**

Last Updated: December 4, 2020

Do you know someone at work who can finish all the tasks assigned to them and still have time left over to pursue their hobbies, enjoy a lunch with their family and friends, go camping over the weekend and even take up more responsibility at the office? You do, don't you? If you think that colleague of yours has Hermione's Time Turner, you'd be wrong. There is no such thing as Time Turners or time machines (not yet). That dude or girl was able to do whatever he or she wanted because of proper time management. This article will show you how that's done.

## Things You'll Need

- ☐ A small notebook or a blank sheet of paper.
- ☐ A pen.
- ☐ A highlighter.

### Method 1

## Method 1 of 2: To- Do Lists



- 1 Accept the truth:** one day means 24 hours. This applies to you and anyone else you may work with. Even your boss.



**2 Get to work at least a half an hour earlier than usual everyday.** Get a sheet of paper and sit down somewhere quiet. Take a deep breath and think about everything that needs to be done.



**3 Prepare a list of to-do activities.** First of all, draw a table with three columns- tasks, due date and priority.<sup>[1]</sup> Make the column for the tasks the biggest.



**4** Write down the tasks to finish, as they occur to you. Include the respective due date.

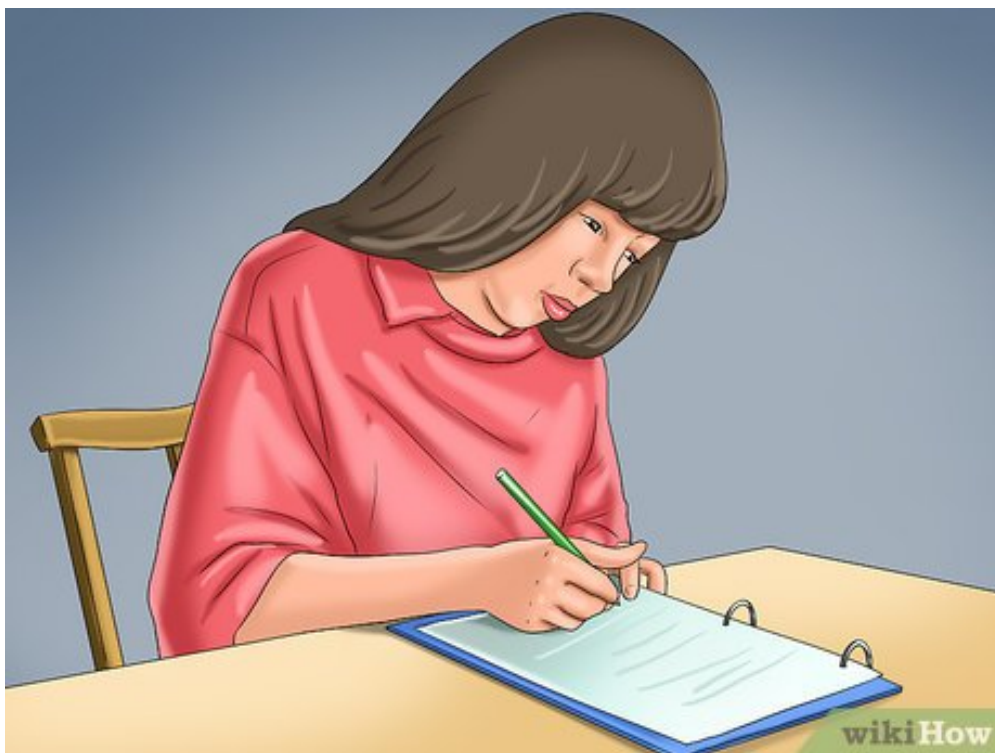


**5** Prioritize the tasks and label them with 1, 2, 3 or A, B, C (high, medium, low priority):

- Tasks to be completed within a day or two would be high priority tasks. More time should be assigned to these tasks and they should be dealt with first.
- Tasks to be finished within a 7- 10 days would be of medium priority.
- Tasks that have two or more weeks to finish would be low priority.



**6** Once you have completed all the above steps, all you need to do now is get to work and start checking off items when you finish.



**7** Any task that you do not finish on that day get carried forward to the next day and so on. Keeping to the to- do list could feel a bit difficult if you are not used to it but stick to it for a day and it will get easier.

- This method was popularized by Stephen Covey, A. Roger and Rebecca R. Merrill through their book "First Things First".



## Method 2 of 2: Urgent- Important Matrix



- 1 Get a small notebook.** Sit down someplace quiet and think about all that you have to finish.



- 2 Write down everything you have to finish.** Label them "Important" or "Urgent" based on the following criterion.
  - Important would be those tasks that have to be completed in order to achieve your goals.
  - Urgent would be tasks that require immediate attention.



**3** Decide how important an activity is and rate it on a scale from 1- 10; 10 being most important. Do not think about how urgent an activity is.



**4** Draw a matrix as depicted in the picture and label the quadrants.



## **5** Write down your tasks into the quadrants according to the description below.

- Important Activities- These refer to activities that have bearing on your goals and is not urgent, that is, you have plenty of time to finish it. Example would be preparing a monthly report on your performance.
- Critical Activities- These refer to tasks that are important as well as urgent. E.g.: preparing a minutes of meeting or preparing a daily report on performance.
- Distractions- These are tasks that are neither important nor urgent and should be avoided if possible. E.g.: watching movie, chatting with friends etc.
- Interruptions- These activities are urgent but not important and the most common source of interruption would be your colleagues. E.g.: a quick 5 minute meeting with your boss, a colleague asking you for clarification on some document etc. If possible, these activities could be rescheduled to when it's convenient for you.



**6** Check off the items as and when you complete them. Do not put anything aside for later. If you can do something now; do it.



**7** When you are done with all the critical and important tasks; enjoy the distractions- listen to music, read a book or hang out with your colleagues at the watercooler.



**Community Q&A**



### Question

I am approaching my exams, how do I manage my time?



Community Answer

First get off from social media. Next, make a schedule of what to study at what time. Last but not the least, don't waste time doing things like shopping, gaming etc.

Helpful 1 Not Helpful 0



### Tips

- Stick to the to-do list diligently. The whole purpose of it is to get you to focus on the task you have written down.
- Assess how much time you have in a day, that is, how many working hours. E.g.: you work for 9 hours a day. Reduce any time allotted for scheduled meetings (1 hour), breaks (1.5 hours), lunch (1 hour), contingencies (1 hour) etc. You have approximately 4.5 hours a day to complete your tasks.



### Warnings

- Do not procrastinate. You could carry forward tasks you have not completed to the next day and the next and the next. But that would defeat the whole purpose. Make yourself sit down and finish one task at a time.

### References

1. ↑ Sydney Axelrod. Certified Life Coach. Expert Interview. 30 June 2020.

### About This Article



Co-authored by:  
**Sydney Axelrod**  
Certified Life  
Coach

This article was co-authored by **Sydney Axelrod**. Sydney Axelrod is a certified life coach and the owner of Sydney Axelrod LLC, a life coaching business focused on professional and personal development. Through one-on-one coaching, digital courses, and group workshops, Sydney works with clients to discover their purpose, navigate life transitions, and set and accomplish goals. Sydney has over 1,000 hours of relevant coaching certifications and holds a BBA in Marketing and Finance from Emory University. This article has been viewed 17,020 times.

★★★★★  
1 votes - 100%

Co-authors: **10**  
Updated: **December 4, 2020**  
Views: **17,020**

Categories: **Job Skills** | **Time Management**

<https://www.wikihow.com/Use-Time-Management-in-the-Workplace>

