







# How to make the most of the time that is given you

Yes, this is an allusion to Gandalf's response to Frodo in the Mines of Moria (*The Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien). If we look at time as something that is given to us by God rather than something that we possess, it changes our perspective on how it is used. Simply put, our time is not our own. The question then is, how do we steward it wisely?

**Each of us has the same amount of time each week: 168 hours.** This time must be spread across survival functions, social life, schoolwork, employment, ministry, and church life in a way that keeps us healthy and effective in fulfilling our responsibilities.

<p>Work toward 7-9 hours of sleep</p>	<p>Don't skimp on sleep. Research has shown the important role that sleep plays in learning, memory, and motor tasks. You need adequate sleep for optimum performance.</p>
<p>Morning person or night owl?</p> 	<p>Schedule your study time around your natural rhythms as much as possible. Each of us has certain times of the day when we are most productive. This is the best time to study the subjects you find most challenging.</p>
<p>Create an Action Plan</p> 	<p>Consider your tasks on 4 different levels: semester, month, week, and day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Semester:</b> Create a calendar with all of your semester assignments. This gives you a big picture perspective.</li> <li>▪ <b>Monthly:</b> On your monthly calendar record readings and assignments that are due for each class. Colour coding each class can be helpful.</li> <li>▪ <b>Weekly:</b> Each week, consider which assignments are due and which need to be started. Map out your task for the week.</li> <li>▪ <b>Daily:</b> Create a "To Do" list of what you need to accomplish each day.</li> </ul>
<p>Prioritize</p>	<p>Not everything is of equal importance. Learn to distinguish the "needs to be done right now" from the "can be done later." Work on your highest priority items first—even if they are the ones you enjoy the least.</p> 
<p>Don't Procrastinate</p>	<p>Avoiding unpleasant tasks makes them take more time in the long run. Get started early. Break larger tasks into smaller ones. If you are having trouble getting started, ask for help!</p>

<p><b>Reward yourself!</b></p> 	<p>Once you reach a goal, celebrate! Use leisure activities to keep your motivation high.  <i>Once you finish that chapter, you can watch that show you've been wanting to see on Netflix...</i>  <i>Once you've written that paragraph, you can have another bite of your candy bar...</i></p>
<p><b>Maximize your study time</b></p>	<p><b>Study the most difficult material first.</b>  Don't use mindless tasks or low priority items as a way to avoid the more difficult work.</p> <p><b>Slow down</b>  Reading more slowly can save you from needing to re-read later. Take the time to write down notes and digest what you are reading.</p> <p><b>Study in shorter "chunks" of time</b>  Break up your study time into shorter time blocks with breaks in between. This will help you stay focused and waste less time.</p> <p><b>Find a study spot</b>  Find a regular location for studying that works for you. This space should be reserved for study activities so when you enter it, your mind moves into the study mode. A location with reduced distractions can improve focus. Consider looking for a favourite location in the library.</p> <p><b>Reduce electronic distractions</b>  Close your email and social media websites when you are studying. These can very easily divert attention from the task that needs to be done.</p> 
<p><b>Get Organized</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Make use of a planner to keep track of all of your assignments.</li> <li>✓ Use a binder or notebook with folders for each subject.</li> <li>✓ Hang a 4-month calendar in your room to have a visual of the semester.</li> <li>✓ Colour-code each subject so it is easy to keep track of materials and assignments.</li> </ul>

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