

Planning and predicting

ACE - Grow Your Skills



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Planning and predicting

Create and implement a study planning.


Description

To get things done in time, it is important to make a (study) schedule. To do this, you should first figure out what needs to be done for a particular task. Then, you set priorities and make a realistic schedule with a good estimate of the time needed. Interim deadlines are also included in the planning. It often makes sense to make a monthly, weekly and daily schedule. Done with planning? Then it is important to carry out your planning in the right order and monitor your progress. Is something going wrong? Then evaluate what is causing it and adjust your planning. But... Procrastination is the thief of time.

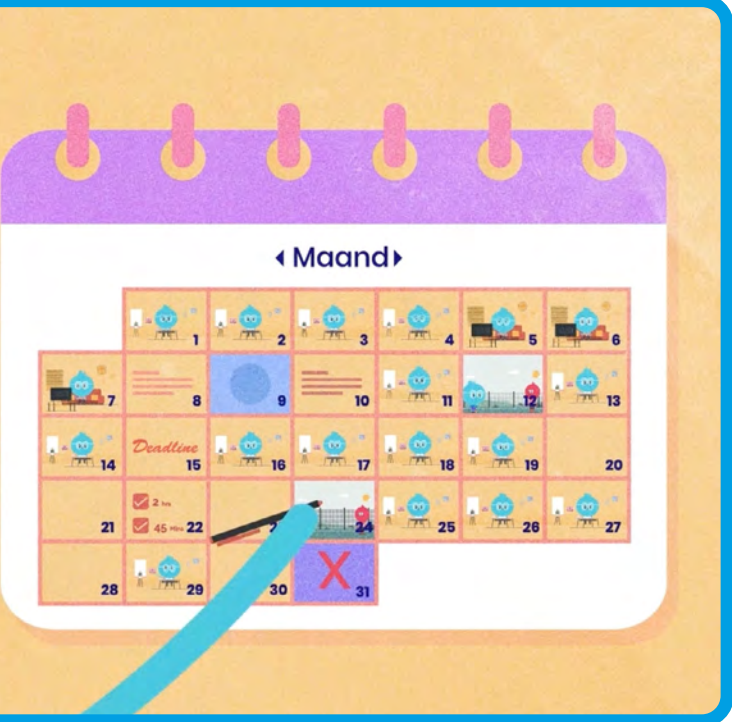
By planning well, you keep an overview of what needs to be done and are better enabled to make choices. This often gives peace of mind. You will not face unpleasant surprises and can avoid rush jobs. The interim deadlines you set for yourself prevent procrastination and keep you on track.

Schedule time for planning. This time investment now will give you more free time at the end. Make a list of everything you need to do and write down how much time those tasks will take. Complete the task list by including deadlines and intermediate deadlines and make your schedule accordingly. Adjust your schedule when you find that some tasks take more or less time.

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Planning: theory versus practice

There are, of course, pitfalls when you start planning. For example, it is common that when you start planning, you start out very optimistic and fill up your entire schedule. However, keep in mind that there are many **distractions** in a day. Because of this, in practice it can sometimes be **difficult** to stick to a schedule. And then there are days when you don't really feel like following your schedule at all. Or days on which unexpected events happen, such as friends calling and asking you to do something fun. It is therefore very important to **cut yourself a little slack and build margin into your schedule**. Take adequate rest and time for yourself. It is better to schedule too much time for tasks, than too little time. So make sure you plan liberally. This will prevent you from running out of time and thus panicking.

12 tips for good planning

1. In the end, it's about **getting the tasks done** and not about the schedule. Your schedule is there to ensure that you allocate your time effectively. Avoid looking at your schedule for too long. Focus on getting the tasks done.
2. Finished a task? Then **cross it off** your schedule.
3. It is important to **reward yourself** when you have completed difficult tasks. By **celebrating successes**, you motivate yourself to continue learning.
4. **Don't be too hard on yourself** on the days on which you don't get all the tasks done. We often put enough pressure on our lives. Remember that a schedule should help prepare you. It is not good if you start to feel bad at the thought that you are never going to meet your schedule.
5. You **don't have to adhere to the exact times** you have planned. The point is to finish what you want to get done. Suppose you have scheduled time between 7 and 9 p.m. to learn 3 chapters of your history book. If while learning it turns out to be slower than planned, that's not a bad thing at all. It is more important to learn those chapters well than to stick exactly to your schedule.
6. Make sure you plan enough time for **relaxation**. You can't spend all day being productive. Planning an evening to **do nothing** is not bad at all. Turning on Netflix every now and then or hanging out with friends is part of life too.
7. **Don't panic** if unexpected things prevent you from meeting your schedule. Remember that you have built in a margin for the important midterms and exams.
8. **Evaluate your planning** after a few weeks. Are there things to improve? Did you schedule enough time for yourself? What went easily for you and what didn't? And can you detect patterns in times when you didn't follow your schedule (for example, on weekends)?
9. **Avoid nightly studying**. There are students who, in times of stress, think they can pull an all-nighter and thus be better prepared for that important test. But, in reality you need enough sleep to make a test well.
10. **Divide big tasks into smaller tasks**. A big task can sometimes be so overwhelming that you don't know where to start. As a result, your motivation to start the task is often gone immediately. A smaller task is then more pleasant to work on. Divide a large task into several smaller tasks. Example: divide the task 'learn for the economics exam' in 'learn economics chapter 1', 'learn economics chapter 2' and so on.
11. **Be proud of yourself** when you manage to meet your goals within the allotted time! This means that you made a realistic schedule, and you managed to execute the schedule well.
12. At first, it can be difficult to determine how much time you need to complete certain tasks. Once you start, you'll soon enough find out exactly how long you'll spend on each task. Does experience show that you haven't made a feasible schedule? Then change your schedule and **plan a little more time for each task from now on**. This will help you learn to plan better each time.



Assignment 1 Planning

You can learn it.

Good planning is not always easy. Fortunately, it can be learned! What should you pay attention to? The important thing is to get an overview of your to do's. It is good to start planning as early as possible. This ensures that you'll have time and space to do other things as well. This allows you to start your tasks with motivation. Below is a complete step-by-step plan for making a good schedule.

Step 1: Task overview

The first step is to list all tasks you have to do. Also include all tasks that have nothing to do with school, such as sports and a part-time job. Also don't forget the social activities that are scheduled, such as birthdays and other appointments you have made.

Step 2: Determine how much time you need for each task

It is important to know how much time you need to complete a task. Some tasks you finish in an hour, such as doing your homework. Reading books for subjects such as Dutch and English takes several days. Learning for an important exam takes the most time. It is best to spend several hours each day studying for an exam, rather than cramming everything into 1 full day.

Step 3: Prioritize the different tasks

A day has only 24 hours. There is no more time than that. So it is important to determine which tasks are urgent and important. By prioritizing each task, you can decide which tasks you can do now and which you can do at a later moment.

You can divide tasks into 4 levels:

- Urgent and important
- Urgent but not important
- Important but not urgent
- Not important and not urgent



Tasks	Time	Urgency
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
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Step 4: Make your schedule

A schedule is an overview where you can see what tasks you need to do per week and per day. It is important to include all your activities in the schedule. For example, think about school tasks, school hours, work hours and social activities. Allow for unexpected tasks when making a schedule. Plan in the calendar what you'll do and when you'll do it (e.g., school, sports, homework, et cetera...). List what you will do during study hours under "To Do's".

You can write the schedule in your calendar or diary, or you can write it on a separate sheet and hang it above your desk. If you prefer typing to writing, create your schedule in Word or Excel and print it out.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
To Do's	To Do's	To Do's	To Do's
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Daily To Do's
_____	_____	_____	<i>For daily tasks</i>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
To Do's	To Do's	To Do's	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

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