

HOW MUCH TIME - SHOULD I SPEND ON HOMEWORK?

The number of hours that you spend on homework will vary, depending on study periods available in your daily schedule and the type of course that you are taking. Take for granted, however, that you will require more study time as you progress from grade to grade.

One secondary school in Toronto advises its Grade 9 students to schedule one hour each week night for home study, and to increase that schedule up to three hours in Grade 12.

A final tip: count on more time prior to and during exams.

1. Every study guide published in the last 25 years starts by advising you to settle on one location in which to study. That's still good advice, whether you choose the kitchen table, a bedroom or the family recreation room. Choose a place with good lighting, preferably with a firm chair and desk, and where interruptions or distractions will be at a minimum.

2. Make out a study schedule for one week, allowing yourself breaks to reward yourself, and make an honest assessment of how well you did at the end of the first week. Revise it - and then try sticking to it for the rest of the school year.

3. Psychologists say you have a good chance of retaining new information if you recall it within 24 hours. If you recall it once again within a week your memory hangs onto it. That's why it is essential to look back at the notes you took in school that day and to review them again before the week has ended. Simple as that sounds, it is often the difference between average and excellent marks or between passing and failing.

4. Try to do more than the bare minimum that is required. Your interest in a subject will jump dramatically if you read some of the supplementary material recommended by the teacher.

5. Understand what you're supposed to do in your homework before you leave the classroom. It's not a good idea to try to figure out at 9 o'clock that evening what the mathematics teacher meant by something he said just before the second last period ended. Find out during class.

6. Try to prepare ahead. Both your interest and your retention rate will soar if you have read in advance materials that your teacher will be presenting. Often, what you thought might be a boring class turns out to be fun.

7. Organize yourself so you complete chores before you start your homework. Others allow themselves the reward of a break to make social phone calls, talk on MSN, or watch T.V.

8. Take a close look at the way you take notes and ask yourself whether you could improve your methods. The most successful students organize their notes immediately after taking them rather than waiting a few days or a week. If you feel you're still having problems, speak to the teacher of the subject which is giving you trouble.

9. Don't let yourself fall behind. Nothing is more discouraging than the realization that you've missed an assignment deadline while other work is falling behind. Try to provide time in your schedule for assignments. If you're still falling behind, take another close look at your schedule and make adjustments.

10. Finally, learn keyboarding skills if it is at all possible. Not only are keyboarding skills helpful for getting a job, but teachers in high school, college and university confess that they tend to give higher marks for neatly typed assignments. Neat typing won't disguise a sloppily researched assignment, but it is far better than almost illegible handwriting.

A WEEKLY TIME BUDGET

MY OBJECTIVE FOR THIS WEEK IS \longrightarrow HOURS

Each night when you have finished your homework and review, indicate the subject on which your time was spent. Make use of your HOMEWORK SCHEDULE to help you.

| TIME | MON. | TUES. | WED. | THURS | FRI. | SAT. | SUN. |
|-------------------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|
| 4:00 - 4:30 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 4:30 - 5:00 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 5:00 - 5:30 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 5:30 - 6:00 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 6:00 - 6:30 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 6:30 - 7:00 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 7:00 - 7:30 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 7:30 - 8:00 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 8:00 - 8:30 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 8:30 - 9:00 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 9:00 - 9:30 P.M. | | | | | | | |
| 9:30 - 10:00 P.M. | | | | | | | |

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