

Homework – How to Get it Done Fast!

Doing homework can be both time-consuming and frustrating. Here are a few tips to get your homework done fast, efficiently and without distractions. It is also important that you pay attention in class and ask plenty of questions.

WRITE IT DOWN! If it is not in your diary, you may well forget it. Do not just put down one word as you may have forgotten what it means when you get home. Try to write enough so that your homework assignment is clear. Add the date the work is due in, even if it is 'next lesson', so that you know when it has to be completed.



Make sure you understand the homework so that you don't waste time and get frustrated. Listen carefully to what the teacher says as you really don't want to be doing the wrong thing, too much or too little for homework. Feel free to ask questions about the homework assigned. Your teacher will never mind you asking a simple question, especially about something as important as homework.

Start on your homework if your teacher gives you free time at the end of class. It helps keep the work load down when you're actually at home. You can also ask the teacher for help. You can always save the talking with friends for break or lunch. Use spare time at lunch too and, if you have begun some homework during the day, start with that when you get home. Finishing it off quickly will give you the confidence and momentum to keep going.

If you need help ask your family. Don't call your friends and copy their answers! Teachers will find out, and even if they don't, there will be consequences. You won't be able to understand the work completely, and then your test grades will suffer. Having said this, it's ok to call a friend if you don't understand the homework and need to ask for help (although asking your teacher will guarantee the right answer.) If you do call your friend, only stay on the phone for as long as you need to - you don't want to get distracted!



Make a timetable for your evening in the same way that you have one for your school day. Then you will know exactly when you need to settle down to do your homework. For instance:-

4.30-5.00	Get home. Snack and relax
5.00	Unpack bag, check homework to be done
5.15-6.30	Homework
6.30-7.00	Watch TV
7.00-8.00	Dinner, watch TV or play games
8.00	Pack bag for tomorrow
8.15	Shower
8.30	Bed

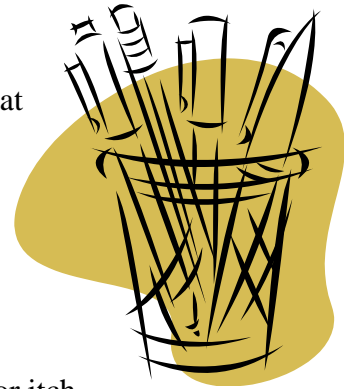
Plan out how long it should take to get each piece of homework done and don't let yourself waste time. Set a schedule for yourself and make every effort to follow it.

REMEMBER: time can never return! Don't leave yourself with regrets later. If it's a long project make sure you don't procrastinate.

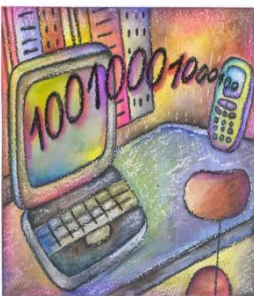


You will need a quiet work space with a table or desk. If you do your homework in your bedroom make sure it is clean and your bed is made. Make sure there is good lighting available.

Have a home 'tool kit' with everything you need: pencils, pens, rubbers, sharpeners, protractor, glue, etc. Make sure that your work-space is tidy and organized so as to avoid losing things and having messy work. Use box files or stacking files, labelled with subjects to organize your books and papers. A two-tier 'in-tray' is useful for 'homework to be done' and 'homework completed'.



Change into something comfortable so you don't shift in your seat or itch your back and twist; it'll pressure you into losing focus.

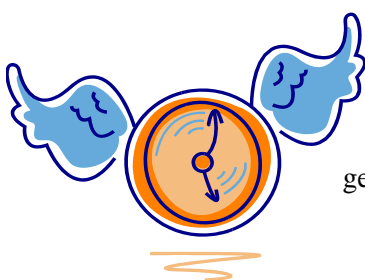


Remove any sources of distraction. This means turning off your mobile, logging off your computer (unless you will need it for your homework) because emails and instant messages will distract you and turning off the television. It's not a good idea to have distractions in the background, such as T.V. in the other room, or a sibling playing video games next to you.

If you must listen to music while doing your homework, choose instrumental tunes without words. However, it is generally not a good idea to listen to music while studying or doing homework because it can distract you.

Let your family know that you do not want to be disturbed while working so they can respect your privacy.

Organize your homework list. Estimate how long it will take you to complete each homework subject, and tackle the hard work first. It will get progressively easier as you go along. If your motivation is very low, pick one of the easier tasks, or a portion of a task to get you started and motivate you to finish.



Time yourself on each piece of homework. This will help you work faster and keep you motivated instead of bored and forced to do the homework. Encourage yourself: tell yourself, "Every time I finish one page of homework, I'll be closer and closer to the end." This will make time go by faster and you'll get your homework done.

Progress through your studies. Take short breaks between assignments, and remember to stay focused and concentrate. You can easily get stressed by sitting through an hour or two of homework without stopping. Not only do you have to do homework quickly, but get it correct, and if you don't get it correct it was a waste of time.



Eat while you work. Having a healthy snack while you complete your homework, such as fruits or vegetables, can actually sharpen your focus and improve your memory.

You can postpone assignments that are not due the next day, just not until the last minute. If you have more time allowed for a particular homework assignment, get it done at a later time or over a weekend so you can hand in the daily homework on time. Just make sure you don't wait until the last second to get that assignment done - take a good look at any work you are postponing so you know what you'll be doing.

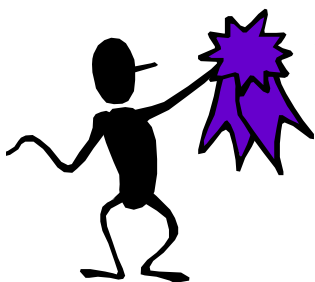
If you think you are a procrastinator, get a calendar and plan all the steps out for any big project. If you know you'll forget, DON'T postpone any assignments. Do everything you get on the same day that you got it, that way you will never find yourself behind schedule and will be happier.

Re-organize as needed. Make sure your supplies and homework are not one big mess; this will make it more difficult to get things done. An easy way to do this is to have a weekly or monthly clean out of the place you keep your homework.



If you are someone who gets distracted, follow these steps:

- Decide exactly what part of task you are focusing on, one at a time.
- Get a timer, set it for a short time, e.g. 5 or 10 minutes, and when it goes off, just check yourself to see that you are still focused on the goal
- Don't waste your time and energy getting too annoyed with yourself if you get distracted - just re-focus your attention, once you get engaged with what you are doing you will be fine.
- If you realize your attention is wandering over and over, work out why you are getting stuck with your work - you could write it down as a question.

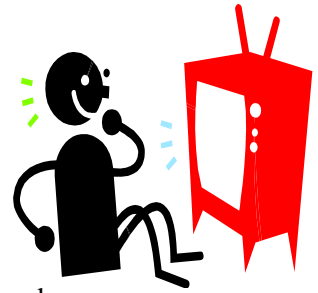


Reward yourself for each task accomplished. Again, take short breaks and return to finish up the last of your work. Don't make the breaks too long, though!

Think of the free time you will have to enjoy once your homework is complete. This should help motivate you to get your homework done.

If you really cannot do your homework:-

- **Don't excuse yourself regularly.** Making frequent excuses will lead to the teacher to distrust you and could lead to negative consequences. If you cannot complete it ask for help then finish the work quickly and hand it in.
- **Do as much work as possible before going back to your teacher so that they know you have tried.**



When you have completed your homework, mark it off in your planner. You could colour code it with highlighters so that you know it has been done.

Pack your bag for the next day. Consult your planner to see what lessons you have and pack all the appropriate books, text books and equipment you need. If you need your PE kit or technology equipment, put it next to your bag. If you have food tech and need to get ingredients out of the fridge in the morning, write a note and put it on your bag so that you do not forget. You might find

it easier to have an enlarged copy of your timetable on your desk or wall so that you can easily see what lessons you have next day.

Use your planner to write down any important notes, messages or reminders as well as homework. That way you won't forget anything else you need to do or bring to school.



WELL DONE!