

24-HOUR LIBRARY: HOW NOT TO LEAVE THINGS TO THE LAST MINUTE

IN COLLABORATION WITH A PREVIOUS WARWICK STUDENT



The Library is 24/7 but you don't need to be. Here's one student's best advice on how to avoid all-nighters and beat the procrastination bug!

Just because you can, doesn't mean you should. It's an important life lesson, but one that's hard to stick by; especially when it comes to studying. With all the pressures on your time, it's understandably quite tempting to put your studies off... until you suddenly realise you have an essay to write, a group presentation to prepare, four articles to read, and it all needs to be done by noon tomorrow. Suddenly, there's nothing for it but the all-nighter.

It can be hard to motivate yourself when studying alone.

As a fellow adrenaline junkie/serial procrastinator, I understand the thrill of the late-night work session. Doing things last minute generates an adrenaline high, and research suggests that procrastinators might actually benefit from this sense of competing against the clock. That said, getting

started earlier means you have more time to think deeply, check for errors and improve your drafts. The results are (usually) better.

So how do you get a grip on your time?

Write the ultimate to-do list

Sometimes the biggest obstacle is just getting started. It can seem overwhelming! Try writing a to-do list that captures everything, no matter how big or small, related both to your work and your personal life. Getting it all written down means your brain doesn't need to exhaust itself trying to remember everything.



Identify your priorities

Not everything needs to be done right now. Review your list and note any

deadlines. What are your priorities? It can be useful using Stephen Covey's [Urgent vs Important matrix](#) to figure out what to focus on first.

Try writing a to-do list that captures everything...

Plan everything in advance

Now that you've worked out what to focus on, think about how long each task will take. A good rule of thumb is to then double that! It can be helpful to map out a schedule around your calendar. Colour-coding your classes, time with friends, sports events as well as your study time will allow you to visualise where your time is going.

Stick to the plan!

The important (and difficult) bit is then sticking to the plan. Personally, I find it easier to stick to my study schedule if I have also scheduled in time with friends or time to just flop

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and do nothing. It's impossible to be productive 24 hours a day, unless you have a Time-Turner. It might be that you need to adjust your plan – there's no point planning to revise at 9am if you work better late at night, and alternatively if you find you just want to go to relax in the evening, then maybe think about how you could work in some study time during the day.

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Study Buddy

It can be hard to motivate yourself when studying alone. Why not try working with friends? On the other hand, if your friends are likely to distract you while you work, plan a night out as a post-study reward. You can also head to the Library and go to a [Write Here](#) [Write Now](#) session to work alongside others too!



Try out some time management systems

Some people just work better at the last minute. But if you find it stressful to live life at the eleventh hour, have a look at implementing some organisational tools. Browse the Library's Productivity Tools page to help find the best app or software to help you stay organised and boost productivity.

Fundamentally, all-nighters aren't effective if you're pulling them all the time. The Library is here if you need to pull one - but you're likely to feel less stressed and more in control if you avoid last minute work. Take it from an expert!