

# Adjusting your study habits

We're all learning and moving forward together. While many things may feel out of control at the moment, it's important to remember that our **goals and tasks have not been canceled**, just amended. Try to be patient with yourself, faculty, family and loved ones during this time.

Taking care of our well-being is especially important as we gradually start to build new habits. Laying out a plan and **adjusting routines to include movement, mindfulness and quiet time to focus** may help you feel a sense of control that can seem out-of-reach during challenging times.

**Use this resource as a starting point.**

### **In this guide, we'll cover:**

- Managing time efficiently
- Focusing on one task at a time
- Keeping our space clean and organized
- Establishing new habits and routines
- Staying connected remotely
- Taking extra care of yourself and others

Remember that we're getting through this **together.**

## Managing Time Effectively:

There is no doubt that some of the time normally spent in classes, with friends or in group meetings have decreased. Therefore, many students are left with ample "unstructured" time to manage.

Setting a schedule for yourself can help provide structure and keep you motivated. If you don't already keep a daily or weekly calendar, try something like the example below to organize your time. After you determine your class and study times, be sure to include time for things like meals, checking in with loved ones and getting fresh air.

	Scheduled Activity	Course Tasks	Personal/Self-Care
8:00 AM			
9:00 AM			
10:00 AM			
11:00 AM			
12:00 PM			
1:00 PM			
2:00 PM			

## Remember that you can overcome obstacles with **time and patience.**

### Focusing on one task at a time.

It's important to be intentional with your time in order to stay productive. When doing more work on your own, time is less structured and therefore, it's tempting to multi-task. Many people think that they can do multiple things at once, but research says that is probably not true.

What we know about multi-tasking includes a lot of downsides like:

- **Assignments take longer.** Each time we come back to an assignment (after scrolling social media, for example), we have to get familiar with it again. Finding our spot, remembering what we were going to do next, etc. all take valuable time.
- **Mistakes are more common.** Distractions and switching between tasks tires out the brain, so we're more likely to miss things like spelling or math errors.
- **You'll remember less.** When focus is scattered, you're less able to commit what you're learning to long-term memory because it doesn't get properly embedded into the brain.

### What to do instead:

Consider the [Pomodoro technique](#), which helps you focus for 25- or 50-minute periods and then rest for 5- or 10- minute breaks. You'll notice that breaking tasks into larger chunks of time boosts creativity, productivity and efficiency!

## Fuel learning by limiting clutter, mentally and physically.

### Keeping your space clean and organized.

When we spend a lot of time in the same space, it can quickly become cluttered or dirty. Maintaining clean physical space is especially important right now and a way to show yourself self-appreciation. The more clutter you can see, the more often you'll find yourself distracted. It also feels great to live in a place where you're not falling over that lost pair of shoes. We feel better, mentally and physically, when we take time to maintain a tidy space and personal hygiene.

#### In order to maintain a clean space:

- Designate different areas for different tasks. For example, use your desk area only to do computer work or writing; eat or take snack breaks in a different space and reserve your bed for sleep or mindful rest time.
- Use your breaks or set reminders to clean up the space you are working and living in.
- Periodically wipe down your desk area and organize any papers that have accumulated.
- Close any tabs you aren't using (yes, your digital space needs to stay organized as well!).
- Schedule Zoom meetings or attend office hours with others, which will encourage you to get dressed, comb your hair or whatever you would do on a "normal" day.

## A new routine can help you stay on track and set you up for **success.**

### Establishing new habits and routines

You have probably already had to break some of your regular schedules and routines, which creates an opportunity to establish new ones that are conducive to your current situation and physical set-up. Write down what you would normally do and start thinking about what you can maintain (i.e., getting up and dressed every day, even if you aren't leaving the house) and how you can mindfully swap out other habits for new ones.

#### For example:

- **If you usually study in a coffee shop or library**, ask yourself what kind of environment helps you study. Consider how you can recreate that at home, like studying in a chair rather than on the couch or in bed or playing a white noise app in the background.
- **If you always study in groups or with friends**, try a virtual version of this. Set up a [Zoom](#) call with friends, even if you're working on different tasks or assignments.
- **If you thrive on tight timelines, but now have a more open [schedule](#)**, think about how working with others or setting up a schedule can recreate that for you.

## You or those around you may need a little more **support** than usual

### Staying connected remotely

It is critical to stay connected to each other, especially during challenging times. You or those around you may need a little more support than usual, so it's important to check in often with your friends and family. In addition, you might be working on group projects or assignments with classmates and need to be creative with how you stay in touch. Remote collaboration will look a little different, but it is possible.

- **Try not to procrastinate.** That group project may be out-of-sight, but resist the urge to put it off. Continue to make progress, assign tasks and stay in touch.
- **Meet regularly.** If you usually see each other in class or lab, plan to still touch base every few days. Use tools like [Zoom](#) to video chat rather than texting when you can.
- **Set a purpose for meetings and share notes.** Meetings might feel different when using video; try to set a purpose or agenda items in advance. Take notes in a shared document to help everyone follow along.
- **Check on each other and ask for backup.** If someone has been absent, ask them directly if they're still able to participate. If you still aren't getting a response, let your instructor know. It isn't being petty, it's your responsibility as a peer to ensure people are okay.

# Build Your Best You

Stay On Track This Semester

**We're all in this **together**;  
check in with yourself and one  
another often.**

## Taking extra care of yourself and others

Even though we are working to limit face-to-face time with others, connecting with family and friends might be more important than ever. Know that staying in touch with peers, neighbors, classmates and loved ones may require some creativity, but is very possible with the use of phone and video chats. Also remember to check in with yourself regularly to monitor your own well-being.

Keep in mind that those who struggle with things like anxiety, depression, unhealthy relationships, food insecurity and substance use issues may be experiencing more intense feelings of isolation and concern during this time. If you know someone who has expressed these things to you in the past, make an extra effort to check in on them regularly to reduce feelings of isolation. If you are someone who deals with these things yourself, reach out for support; chances are your loved ones **want** to be there for you.

**Lastly, remember, **this will pass**.** *Travel plans, academic direction and social interactions may have shifted, but remember that this chaotic period of time is temporary and will end. Until then, take a deep breath, do your best, get some rest and wash your hands.*

Visit [wellness.asu.edu](https://wellness.asu.edu) for more resources, tips and tricks on how to stay on track this semester. Don't forget to follow Live Well on Instagram for daily updates, fitness videos and opportunities to connect with your peers.