

USING WEEKEND TIME EFFECTIVELY

Have you ever suffered from "weekend overload" - an overwhelming pile of work gathering like an out of control snowball for the weekend because things were put off all week? One of the best ways to deal with this is to address the source of the problem - try [Using Weekday Time Effectively](#).

Despite our best efforts there are times for everyone when the weekend is packed with work, so here are some strategies for getting the most "bang for your buck" from weekend study time:



- Keep a regular sleep schedule for as much of the weekend as possible. Go to bed and get up at the same time that you do during the week. For many students morning is the time when their energy and concentration are at their best, but this prime study time disappears if you were up late and need to sleep in.
- Even students who do get out of bed before noon find that morning weekend time is usually wasted. There's an unmatched feeling of ease on Saturday mornings - the whole weekend stretches before you like an endless expanse of time. So you head for the mall or treat yourself to a morning of watching cartoons. There's nothing wrong with relaxing on the weekend - it's critical to have a balance of work and leisure time in your life. The problem is that using the mornings for fun activities wastes what could very well be the most productive study time of the day, and puts pleasure before business. Do you really have fun at the mall or watching cartoons, knowing that hours of work are hanging over your head? If so, then enjoy. But if not, think about the impact that the "[Guilt Overlap](#)" has on your enjoyment of down time. Try working for a few hours in the morning and the early afternoon, and saving fun activities or easy tasks like grocery shopping or laundry for late in the afternoon or evening, once you've got something solid accomplished and can enjoy this time free of guilt.
- Another problem with leaving school work till Saturday night or Sunday afternoon is that often that's precisely when your friends or floor mates spontaneously decide they want you to go out with them. If your work is done, or has at least been started, you have more flexibility to take this time off without getting behind. Typically social activities occur in the afternoons or evenings, so by getting work done in the morning you may not have to get further behind on your work or sacrifice an evening out because you spent the morning doing laundry. The weekends are a key time for R&R, so do plan extra breaks and some time off. Planning ahead ensures that both working and relaxing are done effectively.

- There also seem to be some unique interruptions to study time which occur on the weekend. Phone calls from family or friends at home are a notorious and often lengthy disruption to study plans. To manage distractions like this, determine a designated time when Mom should phone, or set up a signal - you'll call and let the phone ring twice, then hang up, so she'll know it's a good time for her to call.
- The weekend is often when students tackle academic work that requires longer stretches of time, like writing an essay. It can really get boring to spend hour after hour in the same place, staring at the same wall, and as a result your concentration can suffer. Try changing your study location when working for long stretches (see "External Study Environment" in [Managing Distractions](#)). Spend a couple of hours in your room, then head to the library for a while, or perhaps a student lounge or empty classroom in your favourite building (use common sense security precautions with this one.) You might find some truth to the old cliché "a change is as good as a rest." Keep in mind the importance of [breaks](#) when working in long stretches too.