

# Time Blocking: The Secret to Effective Management of Your Prep Time

Time management is an essential skill, and time blocking is an easy and powerful way to master this skill. You can use it to plan your prep periods or other time in your schedule and get more things finished. It enables you to take control of the minutes in each day.

**Follow this process to take advantage of this valuable technique:**

1. **Start with planning.** Make a list of all of your important tasks for the week. Then, narrow this list down to three to five essential tasks (see page 3).
  - **Be realistic about your planning.** Avoid thinking that you can do a million tasks in one day or week.
2. **Plan your time for during your prep or lesson planning time.** After you have a short list of tasks, plan your time on your schedule. This is called time blocking and essentially requires you to take each prep period or other available time for paperwork or lesson planning and assign a task or item to it.
  - Clump related tasks together and add them to specific blocks of time.
3. **Reduce distractions.** Time blocking demands that you eliminate distractions, so you don't lose focus.
  - Figure out what your main distractions are. Do you waste time on social media or constantly check your phone? Do you spend hours in your email inbox and respond to every message instantly?

- Eliminate or reduce these distractions. You may want to set aside a specific chunk of time each day to handle your social media, email inbox, and other tasks that distract you from your more essential actions.
  - When you're working, let others know that you're busy so they can limit their interruptions.
4. **Remember to be flexible.** Unless you know the exact amount of time each task will take, it's important to be flexible. Your goal is to complete the tasks during your prep or paperwork time but you need to be realistic. This will also enable you to take care of other important things that come up with a minimum amount of stress or changes to your schedule.
5. **Review your time blocks regularly.** Make adjustments as needed. If your tasks change, or you find that they take more or less time than you thought, modify your time blocks to take the new information into account.
- **Reviewing your time blocks will also give you the chance to see when you're most productive.** Reviews will help you evaluate your productivity levels and decide which parts need attention.
  - Another advantage of doing reviews is that it gives you the chance to see if your reminders are working or if they need to be changed. Use alerts on your phone or computer, sticky notes, or traditional alarms to remind you that it's time to move to the next task. The key is to find something that works for you.

**Effective time management can help you finish more tasks each day, be more productive, and feel more accomplished either at home or at work.**

IMPORTANT TASKS FOR THIS WEEK OF: \_\_\_\_\_


### 3 ESSENTIAL TASKS TO COMPLETE THIS WEEK

1

2

3