

1. Make use of To-do-Lists

Students with ADHD often find it hard to prioritize due to difficulty with organization.

Here is one method that helps. Get a notebook, which is dedicated to keeping track of your assignments. Make a list of tasks that are required to complete every assignment. Start by creating a list of every assignment that you need to finish in the week. Ensure you organize all your tasks by the due date.

Then breakdown every assignment into steps; for instance, you will have to search for sources if you're writing a paper that requires research. This implies that you need to visit the library, so put down all the steps necessary to accomplish your tasks. This will help you create a plan.

When prioritising your plans, you can make use of the student resource chart below, which is based on a famous decision making tool called the Eisenhower matrix.

STUDENT RESOURCE CHART

Important / Urgent
DO
 Do It Now.

Important / Not Urgent
DECIDE
 Schedule a time to do it.

Not Important / Urgent
DELEGATE
 Who can do it for you?

Not Important / Not Urgent
DELETE
 Eliminate it.

Notes: _____

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Try using this in conjunction with the “Two Minute Rule”, which states that when something in the first category “important and urgent” comes into your head, if it will take less than 2 minutes, e.g. sending an email, making a quick call, filing something, **THEN JUST DO IT NOW**. If the task will probably require more than two minutes, then schedule a time in your diary to do it and make sure that you either do it at that time or if not re-schedule it. You should always have a time when you can look back and tick off the items you have successfully completed or need to reschedule. **This is your Diary Review Time and often needs to be done several times a day to get used to the system.**

For items in the second list, the “important but not urgent tasks”, you can decide on the right time to do it by scheduling a time in your diary.

The third group of tasks involves the ones that are not important but urgent, if possible try to you can delegate these or think of someone that can help you handle such tasks.

The last group of tasks has to do with things that are not important or urgent and you can simply delete them, or park them for consideration another time.

When using this or any other system it is essential to review the process regularly and make amendments depending on how things are going.

The key to any good diary and to-do-list system is regularity, persistence and review.

There are probably many systems that will work for you, so it is not a question of finding the perfect one, but rather finding one that is “good enough”, simple to use and then sticking to it. Many students get lost in looking for the perfect organisational tool, which works for a few weeks then they move onto another one and so on. This is clearly not going to help.

There are also some very good apps like Todolist that are easy to use and many of our students find them invaluable for staying on top of their task management.

Come up with an easy system that might involve for example one diary and one app or notebook and stick to it. Managing too many systems at once will just lead to further chaos and confusion.