

Time Blocking

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn more about time blocking and why it is an important tool to improve your productivity skill. You will better understand how strong technology skills are essential to making the most out of this process. You will also reflect on the need for initiative to begin time blocking.

Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Purpose of Time Blocking
2. Guidelines

1. Purpose of Time Blocking

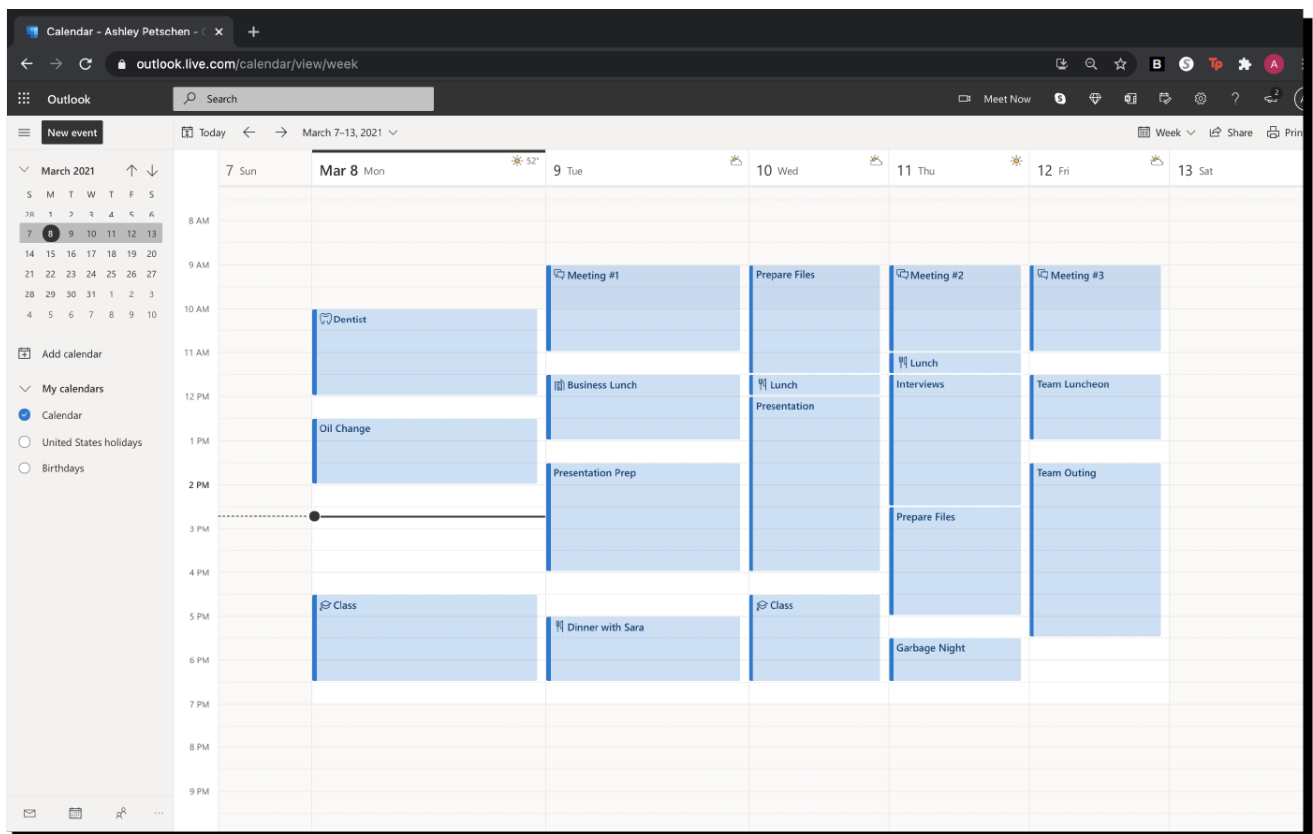
Have you ever had a day that flew by? A day when you seemed to be moving non-stop from one task to another? Everyone has days like these. Too often, when you plan your day, you neglect to include time for daily tasks or you do not allow enough time for them. **Time blocking** helps with this by scheduling time for tasks as you would for a meeting. For instance, you can reserve time on your calendar for working on a specific project, checking emails, exercising, professional development, or reviewing your goals.

Why is time blocking important? Mainly because we have several tasks that we know need to be done, but end up getting pushed aside. While a to-do list is helpful to keep track of these tasks, they tend to just sit on the list unless we actually schedule a time for them. Time blocking reduces procrastination, avoids tasks from accumulating, and ultimately enables you to get more done.

In Context

Lara arrived at work at 8 a.m. She sat down at her computer and began to run through the emails that came in since yesterday. She replied to those that needed a response and when she was done she looked at her clock. It was already 9:55! She had a meeting starting in five minutes. She got up and rushed to the meeting room, forgetting her notes and coffee.

Lara could have prevented this from happening if she had blocked off a set amount of time to deal with her emails. By using a digital tool, like a calendar, she could not only plan her day, but also have a visual illustration of everything she needed to accomplish. This would also allow her to see where she had free time in her day, in case she needed to add something last minute.



Initiative: Skill Tip

Time Blocking takes initiative. You need to understand the value so you can then sit down and get started with your calendar and to-do list. Once you get started, it can become a habit, and you can reap the benefits all year. Consider what tasks you can start blocking time for and add them to your calendar.



TERM TO KNOW

Time Blocking

Reserving time on your calendar for everyday tasks.

2. Guidelines

There are three steps to follow as you block off time on your calendar. The more consistent you are about time blocking, the easier it becomes. You will be able to move quickly as you add new events or tasks while retaining your daily items that, for the most part, do not change week to week.



STEP BY STEP

1. Schedule your pre-sets: These are typically items that occur at the same time each day. Some examples are commute time, taking a child to practice, daily work meetings, or in-person classes you are taking. This list also includes set appointments like going to the dentist or salon. These are important items and you will typically plan other things around these.

2. Block off time to work on important tasks These are things that need to be done each week, but they do not have a set time. Examples are grocery shopping or writing a research paper for class. You should have a good estimate of the time needed for these tasks from past experience or, in the case of a paper, guidelines provided by the teacher.

3. Consider daily needs and personal time: In this category, you will find things that allow for more flexibility in terms of time needed. For example, you could spend an hour eating lunch most days, but on a day with lots of pre-sets, you may need to cut it down to 30 minutes. Another example would be the time you take for exercise. Some days you may be able to fit in a full hour, but other days, you need to cut that time in half.



Technology: Apply Your Skill

You received an invitation to a graduation party. During which stage of time blocking should you add this to your Google calendar?



TRY IT

Open your favorite calendar. This might be Google Calendar or Outlook Calendar. As shared in an earlier lesson, you want to choose the one that works best for you. Look ahead to next week and practice blocking out time for your pre-set and important items. What time do you have left? Does the visual help you better see where you have free time?

Time blocking can help you be more productive. It ensures you complete all tasks that are required, while also allowing for other tasks that are important to you or that bring you joy. Strong technology skills allow you to utilize the digital tools available to you in a meaningful way.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned the details of and the **purpose of time blocking**. You then explored three key **guidelines** that can help you block your time effectively. You learned that it can help you be more productive. You also reflected on the need for strong technology skills so you can get the most out of digital tools, like calendars, that you use for this process. Lastly, you considered the importance of taking initiative to get the ball rolling so that, in time, time blocking is a less time-consuming task.

Hope you enjoyed the lesson!



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