



How to Create Time Management Schedules for Adults with ADHD during the COVID-19 Outbreak

The COVID-19 outbreak has upended family life around the world. School closures, working remote, physical distancing — it's a lot to navigate for anyone, but especially for adults with ADHD. The information that follows is intended to help adults with ADHD understand the basics of prioritizing what is important and how to create an organization schedule that will help manage their time effectively.

Good time management involves:

- Prioritizing what's most important over what's less important and can wait.
- Selecting needs over wants, especially with leisure time. Consider fun things like video games, and Netflix as you would a dessert, and consume them only after you've finished what needs to be done
- Meeting multiple deadlines by accurately estimating and setting aside enough time to complete a task.
- Knowing where you're supposed to be at a given moment, and allowing enough time to get there. Careful scheduling makes you look like you have your stuff together.
- Keeping complicated projects in step-by-step order. Breakdown tasks down into doable steps, and schedule each into a list or calendar.

Creating an organizational system involves prioritizing a few events you should schedule every day:

- **Sleep.** Use your electronic calendar on your phone, tablet or computer to schedule the sleep you need. You can also track your weekly sleep schedule on your phone.
- **Waking Up.** Mornings can be difficult for adults with ADHD, even with good sleep. Try taking your stimulant before you get out of bed, and think about buying an annoying alarm clock that won't shut off until you perform a certain task.
- **Procrastination.** Create artificial deadlines in advance of the real ones, leaving enough time to procrastinate before the actual date, so you'll be covered if anything goes wrong.
- **Private Time.** Adults with ADHD need time to decompress, meditate, and refocus — especially if you also have sensory challenges. Schedule downtime into your day, so you don't hit your breaking point.
- **Your Passions.** Schedule events and things you love to do. This also serves to limit your time on minor stuff like social media.

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How to build an organization schedule:

- Write down a schedule that fits your routine and tasks to accomplish (e.g., morning, afternoon, dinner, work, weekend, evening) Post the steps of your routine where you can see them. (You can use an electronic calendar like Google Calendar, your phone, Excel document or write it down on a piece of paper).
- Set a watch or phone alert to go off five minutes before you're scheduled to begin a new task. That will give you time to finish whatever you are working on, and refocus.
- Start small. If creating a whole new life routine at once feels like too much, pick one small thing – like making the bed or doing laundry. When you consistently do this for two weeks, add another tiny thing. Before you know it, your larger routine will change.
- Set a day to start over. If you fall off on your routine because of vacation, a houseguest, or an unexpected event like an illness, mark a day on the calendar when you'll pick up where you left off.
- Don't give up. If you have a hard time with a part of your routine, try doing it a different way. More often than not, just a tiny tweak can make a difference.

Adults with ADHD thrive when they stick close to daily routines and schedules. Set up reliable routines for the different aspects of your life – getting ready for work, spending time with family and friends, getting to bed on time – and you'll free up important time to enjoy the rest of your day, without feeling guilty about putting off a task or missing an appointment.

Articles on Creating Schedules

<https://www.additudemag.com/time-management-for-teens/>

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COVID-19 Quarantine

A Daily Sample Schedule for Adults Working from Home

	Time	
Morning		Good morning! Get washed and dressed, wake others in the household if necessary
		Breakfast Something healthy, clear/clean the dishes (with help if possible)
		Work/Parenting Get the kids started with their schoolwork, start your work day
		Break time Check on the kids and/or take a bit of time for yourself
		Work/Parenting Get the kids settled in an activity, continue your work day

	Time	
Afternoon		Lunch Something healthy, clear/clean the dishes (with help if possible)
		Work/Parenting Get the kids settled in an activity, continue your work day
		Break time Check on the kids and/or take a bit of time for yourself
		Work/Parenting Get the kids settled in an activity, conclude your work day
		Fresh Air Family walk or bike ride, yard work, sit on the porch/balcony

	Time	
Evening		Dinner Something healthy, clear/clean the dishes (with help if possible)
		Relaxation Time TV, yoga, video games, reading, catch up with friends
		Good night! Maybe a relaxing bath, some reading

TIP: If possible, alternate/share parenting responsibilities.

Provided by CADDRA - Canadian ADHD Resource Alliance

