

# Structuring “Free Time”





**Managing time effectively is linked to improved academic performance, reduced stress, and greater productivity. <sup>[1][2][3]</sup>**

# Creating Structure

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- In college, there is increased **freedom** and you will have a lot of **flexibility** with your schedule.
- However, it is crucial to follow a **routine** and create structure throughout your week. This means more than just filling your schedule with classes and study sessions.
- It involves intentionally **planning** and **organizing** your time to ensure that you are meeting not only your academic commitments but also taking care of your physical, emotional, and social well-being.

# Example of Structured Free Time

GMT-07	SUN 7	MON 8	TUE 9	WED 10	THU 11	FRI 12	SAT 13
7 AM							
8 AM		CHEM 8 – 9am		CHEM 8 – 9am		CHEM 8 – 9am	
9 AM		Breakfast/Coffee 9 – 11am	PROJ 8:30 – 9:45am	Breakfast/Coffee 9 – 11am	PROJ 8:30 – 9:45am	Breakfast/Coffee 9 – 11am	
10 AM	Academic Time 10am – 2pm		Gym 10 – 11am		Gym 10 – 11am		
11 AM		MATH 11am – 12pm	Lunch 11am – 12pm	MATH 11am – 12pm	Lunch 11am – 12pm	MATH 11am – 12pm	
12 PM		PHYS 12 – 1pm	Academic Time 12 – 2pm	PHYS 12 – 1pm	Academic Time 12 – 4pm	PHYS 12 – 1pm	Gym 12 – 1pm
1 PM		Academic Time 1 – 3pm		Academic Time 1 – 3pm		Academic Time 1 – 2pm	
2 PM	Laundry 2 – 3pm		CHEM Lab 2 – 4:45pm			Free Time! 2 – 8pm	
3 PM		Gym 3 – 4pm		Rest 3 – 6pm			
4 PM		Academic Time - Do Pre 4 – 5pm			Chill 4 – 8pm		
5 PM		Chill 5 – 8pm	Finish Lab Report 4:45 – 6pm				
6 PM			Do Nothing 6 – 8pm	Club Meeting 6 – 7pm			
7 PM							
8 PM							
9 PM							

# Impact of Routines

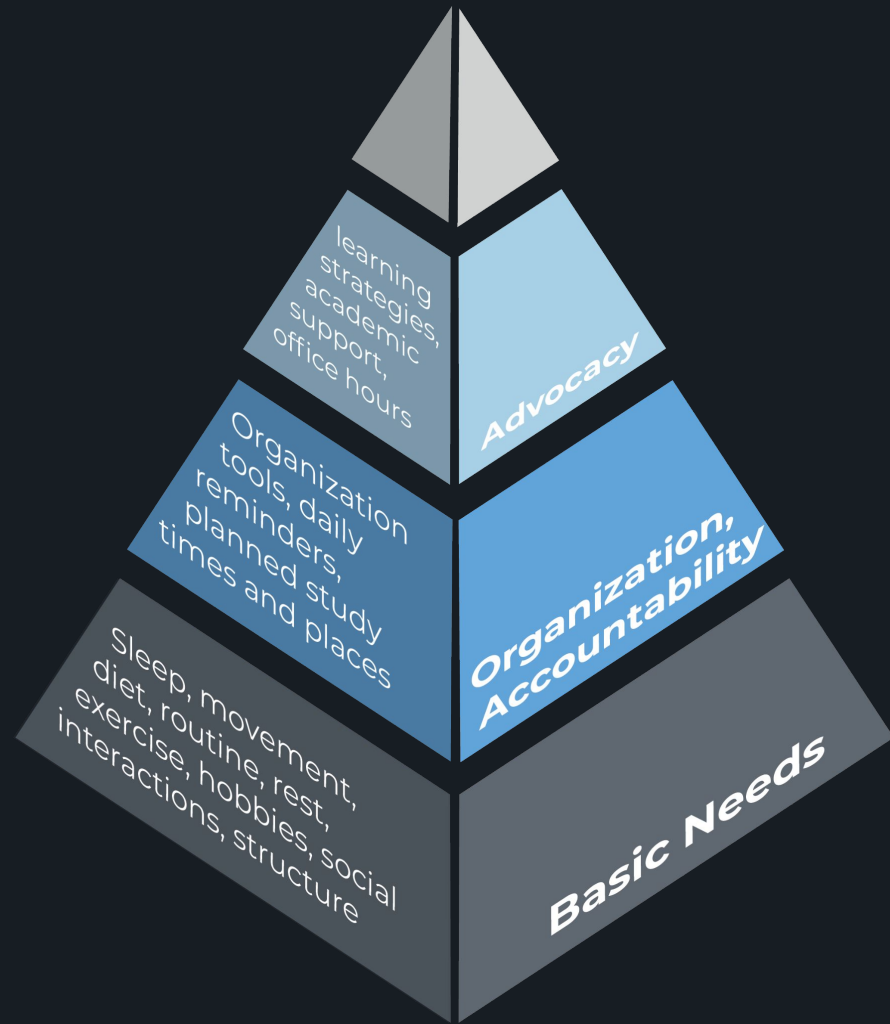
Routines allow our brain to switch from “manual” to “autopilot”, which allows us to focus on more important tasks. Routines:

- Reduce stress and anxiety
- Increase focus and organization
- Build confidence and discipline



**DISCIPLINE = FREEDOM**

# Executive Function Hierarchy of Needs



# Stress + Rest = Growth

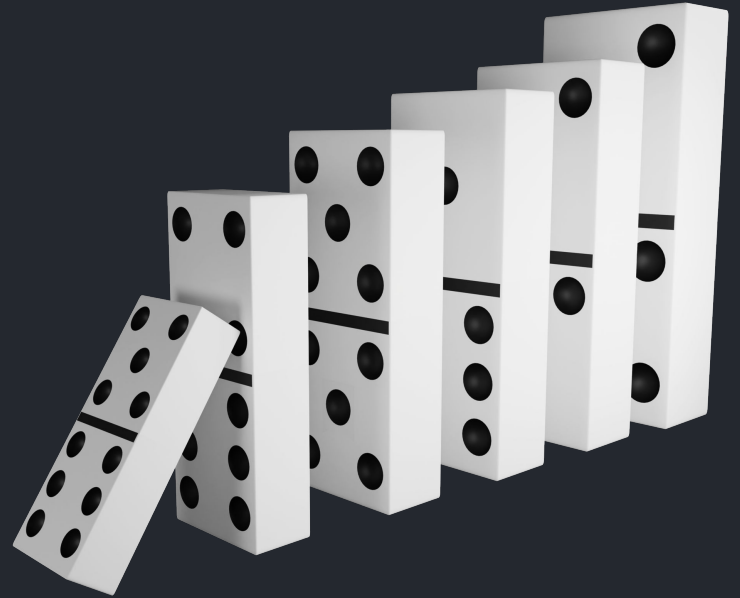
Make sure you have time to recover between big assignments, exams, or reports

- Helps students avoid burnout
- Allows them to stay engaged
- Increases information retention



# Lead Domino

- Identify your lead domino
  - The one thing that, if fixed, will have the largest trickle-down effect
- Create a routine around your lead domino
- How can you hold yourself accountable?





# Self-Reflection

**During which part of the day do I feel most alert and focused?**

**My Answer:**



# Self-Reflection

**What is my optimal work duration, including short breaks, before I notice a decline in my focus and productivity?**

**My Answer:**



# Self-Reflection

**What activities or methods do I use to unwind, recharge, and relax?**

**My Answer:**



# Self-Reflection

**What are a few “lead dominoes” you could add to your routine?**

**My Answer:**



**Activity**

# What You'll Need

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## 1. Your class schedule

- *If you have not registered for courses, your Untapped Mentor will provide you with a mock schedule.*

## 2. Your calendar

- *You can use an electronic calendar or use this [time blocking template](#).*

# Block Your Week

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1. Start with **classes and other obligations that have a set time**: work, club meetings, etc.
2. **Basic needs**: sleep and wake times that allow for enough sleep, meals, movement, and hygiene.
3. **Academic time**: studying, assignments, and other academic tasks.
4. **Free time**: Netflix, hanging out with friends, video games, self-care, etc.





# Thank you!

[untappedlearning.com](https://untappedlearning.com)



# Research Used

1. Inside Higher Ed
2. Path Relationship of Time Management and Academic Achievement of Students in Distance Learning Institutions
3. Time Management Theory