



What a BALANCED LIFE looks like

Why MICRO-MANAGING YOUR LIFE is key to a happier, more IN-CONTROL you

Struggling to get through the pile of work on your desk, let alone find the time to see your friends, get to the gym or do your washing? Then you need to perfect the art of time management – and we show you how...

Step 1: Prioritise

If long working hours and weekends spent on chores have killed your social life, it's time to reassess, says Abbie Allen, personal concierge at lifestyleelements.com.au. "Write a list of your top five priorities – what your life *should* be about. If 'doing laundry' isn't on the list, understand it needs to be slotted into your life, but that other things are more important."

Step 2: Track

"Spend a week tracking what you do each day," says Allen. "List everything, from how long you spend checking emails to washing up; this shows where your time is spent. If your tasks don't match your priorities – and most people's don't – it's time for a change."

Step 3: Get visual

"Using different colours, shade in blocks of time on your calendar," says Allen. "Green could signify your work hours, red the time you'd like to spend exercising, blue is when you want to socialise and yellow is the small block of time for chores. This allows you to visualise how you'd like to schedule your day. Don't blur the colours and you'll be on the way to making your priorities a reality."

WORDS BY KATHERINE CHATFIELD. GETTY IMAGES

Get organised

AT WORK: Planning is the key, says Julie Morgenstern, author of *Time Management from the Inside Out*. "Plan your working day the night before. That way, you'll arrive to a schedule and can start the day efficiently." But be flexible and realistic. "Organise your day to include your 'daily interruption ratio' for unforeseen events. Personal assistants should plan just 15 per cent of their day; the rest will be taken up by tasks from their boss. If you're part of an office team, plan 60 per cent of your day. Leaving 'open time' for unexpected issues means you won't drown in work."

AT HOME: If you start cleaning but break off to make a phone call and pay your gas bill, you're not being time-smart. "If your brain is constantly switching gears, everything takes longer. For maximum efficiency, group together similar tasks. Pay all your bills in one go. Clean non-stop for 30 minutes. This allows your brain to lock in to one thing, helping you do everything faster."

Technology time-wasters

"Mobile phones and email are great tools for organisation but can be big time-wasters," says Allen. "If you're interrupted by non-crucial messages every five minutes, no wonder you'll struggle to get things done." Stop technology taking over your life by:

- 1 "Checking your email just three times a day – 9am, 12pm and 5pm are ideal."
- 2 "Turning your phone to silent and cancelling incoming email alerts."
- 3 "Not replying to every message. If it doesn't require an acknowledgement, don't waste your time by replying, 'OK.'"

Just do it!

Procrastinating simply prolongs the task, warns Morgenstern...

AT HOME: "Time how long it'll take. Washing-up takes minutes – nothing compared to a whole day thinking about it. If you know it'll be quick, you'll feel motivated."

AT WORK: "Set goals. Work on something for an hour, then have a coffee. Giving yourself a reward means the faster you get started, the faster you can claim it." **COSMO**

THE PERFECT PLAN

Domonique Bertolucci, author of *Your Best Life*, recommends creating a "time map". "It's flexible, but your ideal day should be based on something like this," she says:

WEEKDAY		WEEKEND
6.45am: Wake up	2pm – 6pm: Work	9am: Wake up
6.45am – 7.30am: Exercise	6pm – 6.30pm: Travel home	9am – 2pm: "Me-time", or time with partner, friends or family
7.30am – 8.30am: Get ready and have breakfast	6.30pm – 7.30pm: Dinner	2pm – 6pm: Housework
8.30am – 9am: Travel to work	7.30pm – 10.30pm: "Me-time", or time with partner, friends or family	6pm – 10.30pm: "Me-time", or time with partner, friends or family
9am – 1pm: Work	10.30pm: Bedtime	10.30pm: Bedtime
1pm – 2pm: Lunchbreak		

To personalise and download your own time map, visit domoniquebertolucci.com.

LEARN TO LET GO "You'll never have enough time to do everything, so get over feeling bad about it," says Allen.