Tips for creating and sticking to a schedule

Observe

Don't expect to come up with the perfect schedule right away! Set a trial period" to observe how much time things *actually* take you, figure out when you are most productive, etc., and *modify* your schedule as needed.

Visualize

Are you a paper planner or a Google Calendar person? There are **dozens** of options for planning out your days, so figure out which one you like and *visualize* your schedule (don't forget to color-code!)

Plan backwards

Research shows that if you plan *backwards* from a deadline, your estimates of how much time it would take to complete a task will be more accurate, which would help you stick to your schedule.

Be flexible

Consider the *kinds* of work that you need to do and **focus on the tasks that align with your mental state.** For example, if you feel tired or distracted, pick a monotonous task instaed of a detail-oriented one.

Work with a timer

To avoid procrastination, set short (5-15 min) timers and work with no distractions until the timer goes off. Committing only 5 minutes to a task makes it less overwhelming and goes a long way in helping you get started.

Set downtime

Set up downtime/app limits on your devices so that you are not getting distracted while doing your work. Downtime in the evening will also help you relax and maintain a regular bedtime

Relax

Put your recreational activities on your calendar! Taking time to rest will not only make you feel better in the moment, but help you be more productive next time you do your work.
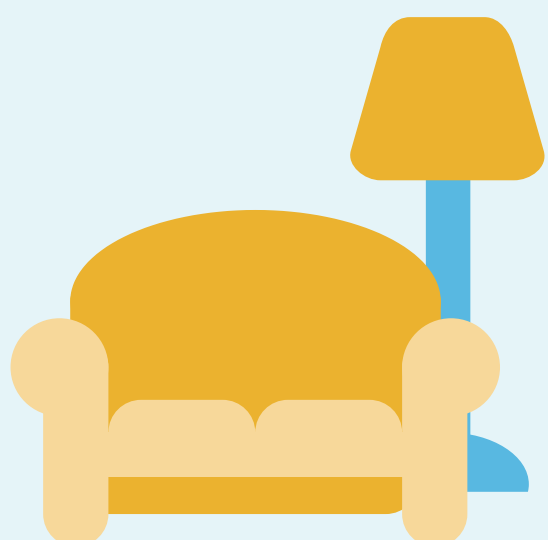
Ask for help!

Scheduling is a skill that we all master gradually as we go through life, which is why **asking for help should be your first step -- not your last resort!**