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 instead 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!