

THE ULTIMATE TIME MANAGEMENT GUIDE FOR BUSY MUMS

Time for you to get organised and
get shit done!

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The Ultimate Time Management Guide for Busy Mums: Time for You to Get Organised & Get More Done!

Before we go any further, I want to make it clear that we are all unique and have different styles of working, so we have to find out what works best for us! I am going to share with you some strategies and tools you can use to help manage your time as a busy mum

Time management can be a big issue for busy mums that have many things going on in their lives. For mums that truly want the best for themselves and their families, time management can play a major role as to their success.

If you always feel rushed and you feel you can't get anything completed during the day you might want to address your time management methods. If you have the feeling of not being able to focus on one thing at a time and not being able to handle distractions well, then you should take a step away from the action and relearn the basics.

Time management is a simple concept: plan and organise your schedule to make your time as clear and productive as possible. However, as with most busy mums, we must accept that there will be plenty of challenges during the day and we have to deal with them as they come up.

If you are finding that you are pressed for free time or that you just feel too busy chasing your kids around, here are some tips to make your time more productive and find some time for yourself.

Wake up a little earlier and take time to take care of yourself

Take a few minutes to have a cup of coffee or tea and write down what you need to do for the day or maybe do absolutely nothing. If you want, write down any tasks you promised your family or yourself to do earlier and prioritise as to when you can complete them.

If you really want to do something great take on exercising: wake up 60 minutes earlier than your family and work out. Movement is a great way to start the day and it clears your mind. There is so much to be said for exercising and living a healthy lifestyle. The point is that you want to give yourself a head start.

Keep a notebook and pen handy

Try to keep a notebook with you at all times. As long as you are not driving or doing something dangerous, it is best to write down your random thoughts in a note book. This way you can decide what to do with the task when you are ready to review new information. This is a good way to decide if an idea is good enough to pursue. More importantly, you can prioritise the idea.

Writing down your ideas and forgotten tasks in a note book can be a powerful tool in dealing with distractions. If you are like me (with lots of stuff in my head), a notepad and pen is essential to time management.

Time management is necessary for almost anyone in this super busy world we live in.

However, I feel it's even more important for busy mums because we are responsible for keeping our families together. Our days are filled with running around for our children, working on multiple projects at the same time plus some of us trying to juggle school or a home business.

So time management skills are definitely needed and can really help.

5 Step Strategy to Becoming More Organised

There is lots of advice out there on what you should be doing to make the best use of your time. Here are 5 simple steps you can take now to get more done. If you can only implement one tip from each step, you will benefit enormously.

STEP 1: Take control of your email

Emails are a wonderful resource to help us in our lives, but they can soon take over – if you allow it.

Emails are not urgent

If something was truly urgent, people would call you so don't think that you have to answer something as soon as it hits your inbox – even if it has the high priority tag and / or urgent in the subject line!

Have set times to check emails

Establish set times to check and respond to your emails as this will really focus your time more effectively. Checking your messages twice a day is enough – try 11.00 am and 2.00 pm.

Disable email notification

Make sure that you disable the notification sign and noise so that you won't get distracted and just see what has come through – this allows you time to spend on tasks you need to complete without distractions.

Make use of rules

You can set up rules to filter your emails according to the filing system that you set up. For example, if you are a virtual assistant dealing with different clients, you may have different email addresses for each client. You can set up a rule to filter incoming emails through a specified account to a specific folder. Customise rules to suit your requirements.

Use different emails addresses

Set up different email address to use for all newsletter subscriptions leaving your main business email address free for clients and associates.

Unsubscribe from newsletters

Think about all the newsletters that you have subscribed to and never read. If you haven't read a newsletter within a month, you are never going to read it – why not unsubscribe.

STEP 2: Take control and manage your day to day activities

If you don't have a plan for your day, you will soon be asking yourself what you have achieved at the end of each day – all about working effectively.

Create a schedule

Include all personal and business appointments on your schedule so that you don't miss any important appointments.

Include deadlines on schedule

Include details of all important deadlines (clients and your own business) on your schedule so that you can plan the work accordingly.

Treat yourself like an important client

Block off time in your diary as though you were attending an appointment with a client to complete work but also include me time as well.

Have a task list

Keep a running task list for everything that needs to be done so that you can plan your day and also mark off completed tasks for sense of achievement. You can also categorise your task list for easy reference.

Have checklists and templates

Create checklists and templates for all regular tasks as this will save a lot of time (e.g. I have a checklist of things to do when I take on a new client, templates for letters and emails).

Automate your business

Make use of technology available and automate your business processes. E.g. think about using auto responders for some of your email communication.

STEP 3: Take control and keep projects on track

It is important for all project work to be planned so that you know what you want to accomplish and by when.

Have a budget

All projects need to have a budget in order to effectively monitor the expenses. Use something simple like Excel to record all income and expenses.

Use staff time sheets

Have time sheets for all staff involved in the project to use as a means of monitoring time spent. You will then be able to see if you are ahead or behind schedule easily.

Create expenses system

Create a sheet in Excel for all expenses in order to monitor against budget on a weekly or monthly basis.

Every project, regardless of size, requires the support from a number of different people. You therefore need to have a contact management system with all contact details to be available for everyone involved to be able to access easily.

Review project regularly

Regularly review projects against objective and budget to see the progress. You can then make any necessary changes immediately instead of leaving until the last minute.

STEP 4: Take control of your filing

Not many people like filing but it is an important part of running any business successfully – you need to be able to retrieve any document quickly.

You need to schedule time on a regular basis to do all your filing – I do mine on a weekly basis.

Remember, the simplest systems work the best!

Paper filing system

System needs to be simple and easy to maintain otherwise there is no point. I make use of a 2 drawer filing cabinet and use a colour coding system:

Drawer 1 – yellow files includes general and financial information

Drawer 2 – pink files includes marketing, projects and client information

Electronic documents filing system

Ideally, this should mirror your paper based system to make things easier.

Email filing system

You need to make sure that your inbox doesn't get cluttered. Again, this should mirror your paper and electronic filing system.

Backup system

It is imperative to have a backup system and regularly back up your work. You could make use of online solutions, external drive or memory stick.

STEP 5: Take control and delegate

The smart way of working is for you to be working **on** your business as opposed to **in** it – this is where delegation comes in as a useful tool.

Support team

A support team are people you can use to delegate some aspects of your business and personal life. They could include a virtual assistant, cleaner, gardener or child care.

Who could you have on your support team?

Set deadlines and prioritise

When delegating tasks, set deadlines and prioritise tasks for the person doing the work.

Clear instructions and information

You need to be clear with your instructions and information to avoid any misunderstandings.

Give advanced notice

You need to give advanced notice of required tasks so that other people have enough time to complete the work.

Communication is key

Communication is the key to an effective relationship with those you delegate work to and is a two way process. Remember to treat people how you would like to be treated!

Dread the thought of returning to work after maternity leave?

Do you want help and support to create a business you love that fits in with your family?

[Check out the resources available](#) that have been designed for you!