



SHIFTING SCHEDULES

Students see varying results when adapting to new online school schedules

Every day junior Lily Lafone wakes up at 7:25 a.m. to get ready for school. Depending on which day it is, she'll take any one of three AP classes. After school, she does her homework, and attends either a Key Club, Best Buddies or FFEA meeting. She'll then walk her dogs, tidy up her room, watch Netflix and hang out with her siblings before dinner. After that, she'll do a full-body workout and a mile and a half run, before going to bed at around midnight.

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic causing a shift to remote learning, the average day-to-day schedule for any student can prove to be quite exhausting.

Working from home is something the world is still slowly figuring out how to manage. While some have seemingly returned to their pre-COVID-19 lifestyles and schedules, most have had to adapt and form new schedules and time management strategies.

Time management is the practice of organizing and scheduling time

to complete tasks or assignments in an efficient way. It has become increasingly important with the ongoing implementation of online school as students are less focused on their schoolwork.

One way students manage their time is through the use of a calendar app where they are able to track assignments, events and daily to-dos. Canvas provides another method of management, where students can find important school-related dates and assignment deadlines.

"I honestly really only look at the Canvas app on my phone and see when everything I have to do is due, [which is found] under the 'To Do' tab in the middle [of the app]," Lafone said. "It's very efficient, and I haven't missed one assignment or turned anything in late."

Despite the obvious negative aspects of the pandemic, one positive outcome is the flexibility that virtual schooling provides. From a survey of 339 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School students, more than 80% said they have more flexibility while attending online school.

"I would say I'm less busy because online learning can be really flexible, and you can plan things around it," Lafone said.

Since some assignments have more time allotted for them to be completed,

and students generally have more free time due to a lack of things like clubs, sports and social events, many now delay working until right before their assignments are due. 85% of students report they have had less out-of-school events during the pandemic, and 59% report they have found themselves procrastinating more during online school. While this is not necessarily a harmful trait, it can hurt students who underestimate the time or effort an assignment will require.

Another negative aspect of time management for online school is the lack of separation between school and home. Online school severely lacks the disconnect found between going to school and then going home. Instead, many find school life quickly blending with their home life. In addition to negative mental health implications, this phenomenon also makes students' days feel like they are entirely taken up by school.

"For my brain during an average school year, there's a separation of school and home, [but] since everything is at home, I find it very hard to stay on task or gain the motivation to complete my work," junior Brooke Kessler said. "Sometimes I feel like I'm not truly learning the material that's being taught due to said distractions."

While online school can prove to be stressful, students have found that keeping their schedule organized helps alleviate some anxiety.

"I feel like I have the perfect balance of completing things in a timely manner, as well as not sacrificing my mental health," Lafone said.

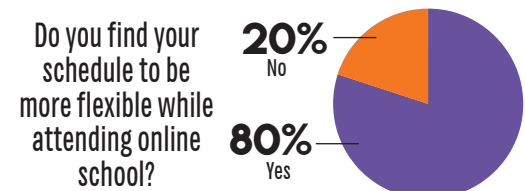
Student-athletes' schedules have had mostly positive effects from the COVID-19 pandemic. For those who are still able to play, the newfound flexibility of online school and assignments allows more time for practice and training. Additionally, since online school can be attended from anywhere, traveling sports players are able to attend class while away from home.

Junior Calista McCausland plays competitive travel soccer on the Team Boca U17 team. She puts in about 25 hours per week.

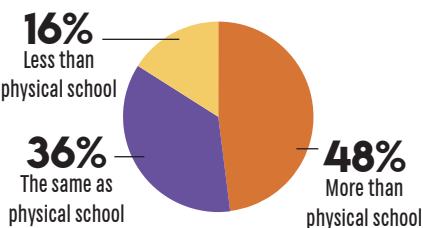
"My soccer schedule works better now because I have more time to train outside of school," McCausland said.

Time management has certainly changed for students as a result of online school. However, the new flexibility and loose structure provided allows each student to make a unique and effective schedule that works best for them.

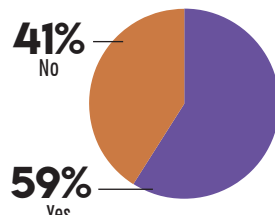
Story by Travis Newbery; illustration by Julia Landy



How much classwork and in-class activities do you have in your online classes?



Have you found yourself procrastinating more during online school?



*Results from a poll of 339 MSD students

E-LEARNING STUDY TIPS

Revamp Your Space

When it comes to doing school from home, it can be tempting to lay in a comfy bed all day, but as appealing as that may seem, it is not the best strategy for students. The brain often associates different places with the activities that take place in them. For instance, a bed for sleeping and a desk for learning.

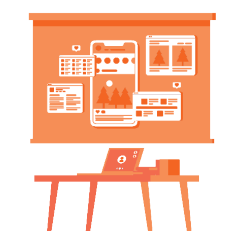


By creating a small, simple study space, it is easier to stay focused on the task at hand: learning. Setting this space apart from the rest of the room keeps distractions such as televisions, phones and other people away. This space should have only the essentials for learning, including notebooks, pens and textbooks.

Ensuring that the other people within your household know about your space can also limit interruptions and distractions, allowing your focus to remain on studying or learning.

Limit Social Media

By either turning off your phone notifications or setting the device aside, the temptation to pick it up and waste valuable work time will no longer be an issue. It is important to limit the number of outside distractions that could take your focus away from the schoolwork at hand.



Break Down Tasks

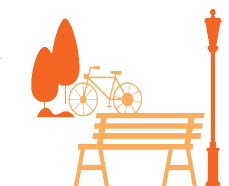
Working on the same subject for hours at a time can make everything seem repetitive and boring, creating a lapse in concentration. Breaking the work down into easily digestible pieces can help keep yourself on task.



Switching topics every half-hour or after every chapter of review can be a good way to divide the time among several different subjects.

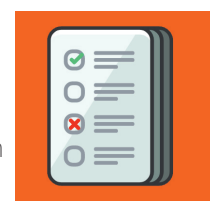
Give Yourself Breaks

Studying for hours on end can make a task tedious and boring. Taking breaks every 30 minutes to an hour can help keep your brain sharp and focused.



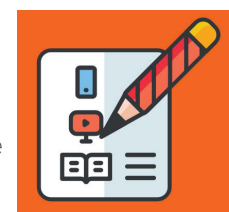
Personalizing Learning

Not everyone in the world learns information in the same way. Figuring the best way for you to learn is important when it comes to understanding as much information as possible. Personalizing your individual learning can make studying seem less tedious and more fun.



Make a Plan

At times, the amount of work that teachers assign can seem overwhelming and impossible to complete on time. Making a study plan for each of your classes is a great way to ensure that you have enough time to complete your homework by the due date and to prepare for quizzes and tests.



At Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, teachers use Canvas as a medium to assign classwork and homework to students. One interesting feature the site offers is a calendar that shows every assignment that students need to complete and when they are due.

Checking the calendar at the beginning of every week can help students to ensure that all their work is accounted for and finished on time. Setting a specific number of hours aside for studying each week will also make managing school and life much easier.

Another way to keep your study plan organized would be to have a separate planner or organizer for school work. Maintaining a simple, easy-to-read guide for your schoolwork can help you be more efficient in meeting due dates and deadlines.

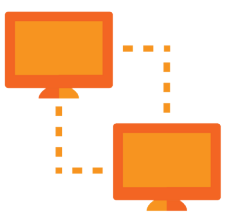
Take Handwritten Notes

As easy as it is to simply copy and paste a teacher's notes, it is not the most beneficial way for you to learn. Writing information down helps the brain kick-start the memorization process and ensures maximum retention.



Use Online Resources

When it comes to online school, there are endless possibilities of resources available on the world wide web. Study sites such as Quizlet provide student-made flashcards for anyone to use as well as offering the ability to learn how to spell and pronounce terms.



Connect With Others

One of the downsides of online school is the lack of interpersonal cooperation. Getting together outside of school hours has become a very difficult and sometimes even dangerous task during the COVID-19 pandemic. Forming a group chat on iMessage, Snapchat, Instagram or WhatsApp can help students create a cohesive learning environment.



Having access to other people opens up the door to new opinions, insights on information and sources for answers.