

# Prioritising your tasks

## Deciding what is important

To successfully prioritise your tasks, you need to know what is important.

Try using the urgent/important matrix to determine your priorities for the week ahead.



## How the matrix works: Examples

**Quadrant 1:**  
Urgent and important

### Readings for tomorrow's lecture

These obviously have to be done before the lecture. Find a time to do them.

### Voicemail about a job interview

It's important and won't take you long to check, call back and make an appointment. Sorted!

### 5% lab exercise

It's a graded assessment, and probably not too big. Do it!

**Quadrant 2:**  
Not urgent, but important

### 2,000-word essay (due in ten days)

You don't have to start now, but you don't want it to sneak up on you. Plan some time to spend on it over the next few days.

### Birthday gift for a friend

Schedule your shopping for a more convenient time (a break between lectures, or shop online during a bus ride).

## How the matrix works (cont'd)

### Quadrant 3:

Urgent, but not important

#### Mum needs computer advice

It's urgent for her. Perhaps ask to call her back after you've done the things in Quadrant 1?

#### Flatmate want a chat

Ask them nicely to come back later.

### Quadrant 4:

Not urgent, not important

#### New season of favourite show

Check for a 'watch on demand' options. If it's on a streaming service, it'll still be there later.

#### What's new on Facebook/Instagram/etc.

Leave it for later. All the posts will still be there and there'll be more to see. Something to look forward to!

## Try it yourself

Think about how you spent your time over the last day. Use the matrix below to identify where these activities would sit.

Where did spend most of your time? What changes could you make?

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT		
NOT IMPORTANT		