

Summertime Time Management

It seems as though you just finished enjoying your Memorial Day cookout when you realize one day that it's almost Labor Day! "Where *did* that time go?" you wonder.

For some of us, especially those of us who have children at home, summer is a time of transition as we take a break from our school-year routines. We have a temporary respite from the demands of early morning alarm clocks, packing lunches, carpools, sports practices, and homework. The demanding schedules of September through May have been replaced with.....**no schedule at all!** One day melts into the next, until suddenly it's time to buy school supplies again. Our big plans for those "summer projects" are still on the drawing board.

If you have such projects, and are anxious to cross them off your list by Labor Day, here are some suggestions:

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- **Set a SMART goal.** For example, let's say you want to set a goal to refinish an old cabinet by August 31st. That goal is:

- S**pecific (remove the old finish and refinish the cabinet),
- M**easurable (the cabinet will look like new when the refinishing is complete),
- A**ctionable (you can create a series of action steps to complete the project),
- R**ealistic (you have the ability to make it happen), and
- T**ime-Sensitive (you have a deadline).

- **Break the project down.** You can't "do" a project, you can only do individual tasks that, when all are completed, will result in a finished project. For example, the tasks you would need to complete for a furniture refinishing project might include:
 - ✓ Making a list of supplies needed
 - ✓ Buying supplies
 - ✓ Setting up a place to work
 - ✓ Removing hardware
 - ✓ Stripping off the old finish
 - ✓ Sanding
 - ✓ Applying the new finish

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- **Schedule time to work on each task.** Every evening, create a list of the tasks you will do tomorrow. Be sure to include a task from your project task list. Repeat this process daily, until your project is complete!

Have a great summer and enjoy completing those projects!