

Time Management Tips for Moms

Being a mom and staying on top of everything in our homes can be a huge challenge, especially for those of us that work.

Whether you work in the home or out of the home, a mother's life can be very demanding with all the responsibilities that we face. We still have to get the kids ready, fed, bathed, little ones kept occupied, have play time, cook meals, clean, do laundry, dishes, shop, and everything in between.

I am a Work at Home Mom and with 4 small children and I often feel like throwing in the towel. Sometimes I do fall apart - I think all of us have at some point. But then reality sets in and we remember that we have bills to pay and our busy lives must go on.

But in spite of it all, I have found that there are certain things that I can do to that really help me maintain a more balanced life.

1. Keep a To Do List. Last week I wrote a post on this exact subject. You definitely want to [Read the Post](#) because it I share in detail how I organize my weekly to do list by category. I think it is the FIRST and most important thing that helps me to stay on top of everything in both my home and businesses.

2. Prepare the Night Before. This is big for me, especially during the school year. Mornings are always hectic for me, trying to get everyone ready, fed, and out the door. So, I try to limit the tasks that have to be done in the morning by preparing the night before. I set everyone's clothes out, make the kid's lunches, and I make sure bags are ready by the door (bookbags, diaper bag, purse, etc). This really helps limit the time it takes in the morning to get ready which is already a difficult task with multiple children. And throw a baby into the mix – there is way more to do in the morning!

3. Set Aside Tasks for Specific Days. I work better when I have a schedule. I do certain things on certain days. For instance, on Monday I do all the laundry. When my husband gets home we all fold the laundry together and put it away. This knocks out a huge task at the beginning of the week, so I don't have to worry about it. That is one thing I learned, always do the task that you least like – FIRST. I carry that concept into other areas of my to do list as well.

4. Keep up with the Small Messes. As you know, with children (and husbands – LOL) there is ALWAYS some kind of mess to clean up – cracker crumbs on the carpet, marbles under the table, dishes in the sink, hair on the bathroom floor, toys – toys – toys.... When you ignore it for even just a day, the mess becomes bigger and bigger and more unmanageable. I decided that no matter how I feel or how tired I am, I am going to stay up on the small messes. So, when I see something that is out of place I put it back. When the sink is full of dishes, I wash them. When the kids toys are laying around and they are not playing with them – I have them clean them up and put them away. I try to have them help me as much as possible even though sometimes it would be easier to just do it myself.

5. Set Limits. I can very easily get distracted by things that wind up taking up valuable time. For me, my internet community & network is very important in helping me build my business, but I can easily spend hours doing this without realizing it. Some of you may struggle with talking on the phone with friends or watching soaps on TV. Whatever it is that you struggle with, you have to purpose in your mind to set a limits for yourself.



It is also good to set limits for your children. It is not good for them to sit in front of the TV all day while you play on the computer. It is not good for them to play video games for an extended period of time. If you cannot set limits for yourself, it will be harder to set limits for them. Start now!

6. Set Aside “Me Time”. This is one thing that refreshes me on a daily basis. I used to work at night. I felt like it was easier for me to get things done when the kids were in bed so I could focus without distractions. After a few months I nearly had a nervous breakdown. I wasn't getting enough sleep. I couldn't get up in the morning. I was cranky and tired all the time. So, I decided that I could no longer work that way. It was negatively affecting me and my family.

So, now instead of working after the kids go to bed. I shut down the computer and I take an hour or 2 to wind down and watch some TV. I then get to bed early and get the sleep that I need. The next day, I am up early and ready to go with a clear mind and rested body. I have found that I am actually getting more done now during the day.

7. Be Flexible. Flexibility is something that I have never been good at. I was always a very determined person and never liked to be interrupted especially while in the middle of something. But with children, it is impossible to be able to work without interruptions. One is asking for a snack, one needs their hiney wiped, one is screaming because they can't find their other shoe. It is one thing after the next. My multi-tasking skills have definitely improved over the years. I am now able to type out an email and have a conversation with my kids at the same time. Of course there are times where you really have to completely stop what you are doing because they need your undivided attention. But flexibility is definitely something that has really helped me to stay calm in spite of the chaos. LOL