

Task analysis chart

Course: _____ Assignment: _____ (e.g. writing a research paper)

Step / task	Completion date	Estimated time needed	Actual time taken
1 st e.g. analyze topic			
2 nd e.g. develop research questions			
3 rd e.g. read for general understanding			
4 th e.g. develop thesis			
5 th e.g. find relevant research and take notes			
6 th e.g. develop an outline			
7 th e.g. write 1 st draft			
8 th e.g. write 2 nd draft: reorganize, add research			
9 th e.g. add conclusion			
10 th e.g. copy-edit final draft for typos, etc.			

Instructions for task analysis

1. For major assignments (e.g. research papers, projects, theses) requiring several steps, break down into small, manageable steps. See examples on form.
2. Estimate time required for each step. If you're not sure about timing, OVERESTIMATE.
3. We recommend adding about 25%. For example, if you think the task will take 1 hour, allocate 1.15 hours. It's better to have more time than less. If you get finished in 1 hour, you have an additional 15 minutes to do something else.
4. Back plan from the final deadline. Instead of starting with the first step, determine what date you would like to FINISH the assignment and then work backwards from there. Back planning can help to ensure you don't run out of time and/or assignments can be handed in when YOU want them to be.
5. Keep track of actual time required to complete each step.
6. Reward yourself for completing a step.
7. Use this record when planning future assignments.

Note: An online [Assignment Calculator](#) for breaking large research papers into smaller tasks is also available.