

BACKWARDS PLANNING

STAY ORGANIZED

Backwards planning is an organization tool to help you spread out a big project over time. It makes the project seem less overwhelming and it allows you manage the time needed to complete the work over several days or weeks – making it easier to balance multiple projects.

- ⇒ **Get organized.** What is the project, paper or exam? And when is it due?
- ⇒ **Break that project down** into many small manageable steps.
- ⇒ **Capture even the small details**, like printing, because those can trip you up if you don't account for them in your plan.
- ⇒ **Create intermediate deadlines for each step.** Starting with the task closest to your final deadline, and working your way backwards, order the steps and create intermediate deadlines for each step of the process. Ask yourself, how much time will I need to get that step done?
- ⇒ **Avoid scheduling work at a time when you're actually unavailable.** Space out your steps and deadlines for this project around the other assignments, exams, and commitments you have – it's all about balance!
- ⇒ **Plan ahead** for editing, time to review, practice time.
- ⇒ **Leave room for emergencies**, delays and distractions. Avoid the overwhelm of an overly-ambitious timeline.
- ⇒ **Know yourself and be realistic** about what you can accomplish and when.

Example (BEGINNING AT THE END!):

