

Ask America's Ultimate Experts

Q "Help! I never have enough time!"

What would you do if you had more time in the day? Enjoy your hobbies? See your friends? Play with your kids? Relax? With these expert time-saving tricks, you'll get an extra 20, 30, even 60 minutes per day to do anything you like!

1 Time your errands!

Hate wasting time parked in long lines at the store or post office? Productivity experts Mark Di Vincenzo and Laura Stack know just how to dodge them:



Visit the post office 30 minutes after opening!

When it comes to the post office, the early bird doesn't get the worm! In fact, arriving a half-hour after they open—rather than first thing—will get you in and out faster! Post offices attract lots of customers at opening time precisely because they want to avoid a long wait, says Di Vincenzo. Showing up about 30 minutes later means the initial rush has left the building!

Shop at superstores after 7 p.m.!

That's when Kmart, Walmart and Target experience a sizeable lull in traffic: Shoppers who stopped by after work to pick up items on their way home are already gone and most other folks are sitting down to dinner, says Stack. Not only will you avoid long lines at the checkout, other employees will be less busy and therefore more able to help!

Buy groceries midweek!

Hit the supermarket midweek, and you'll finish your shopping in half the time! The reason? Most grocery chains start their biggest sales on Wednesdays, so that's when shelves are fully stocked, saving you from hunting for what you need, says Di Vincenzo. Even better: The retailers often have more cashiers so you fly through the checkout!



2 Get your family to pitch in!

Never get anything done because you're always trying to do it all by yourself? It's easier than you think to get your family to help out, insists Stack and timing expert Mark Ellwood. Just:

Don't be afraid to ask!

Worried your husband will think you're nagging if you ask him to take out the trash? Surprise—he wants to be asked to help, says Stack. In fact, according to a survey, nine out of 10 husbands say pitching in makes them happier with you since it helps relieve your stress and improves your mood.



Give kids this incentive!

More time with you! "Research shows women cut into time they'd spend with their family to complete chores," says Ellwood. So explain to your kids how you'll have time to play with them if they help you get through your to-do list!

Let go of perfection!

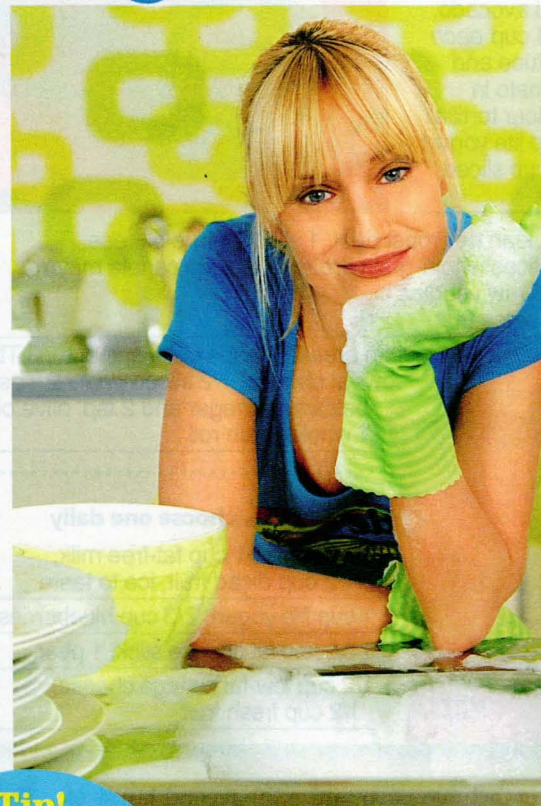
"Often family members don't want to help out because they're afraid you'll think they did it wrong, which is a blow to their self-esteem," says Stack. So even if your son laid the forks on the table crooked or your hubby didn't fold the towels neatly, tell them, "Great job!" They'll feel so good, they'll want to do it again to get more compliments!

3 Zip through personal tasks!

You'll be amazed at how much faster you'll get through everyday routines with these time-slashing tricks:

Skip stretching!

A new study reveals that folks who don't do a pre-workout stretch have no more aches and strains and aren't



Tip!

To get shopping done faster, try the free Errand Tracker smartphone app! Choose the stores you want to visit, and it will plot out the quickest route! Just visit [Errand Tracker.com](http://ErrandTracker.com).

any less flexible during exercise than those who spend 10 minutes stretching. The better way: Warm up your muscles by jogging in place for a minute or two, suggests Di Vincenzo.

Speed up computer tasks!

Get reports and other projects done 25% faster by downloading free programs that make it easy to create keyboard shortcuts to save typing time! Try AutoHotkey for PC at AutoHotkey.com and Quicksilver for Mac at Quicksilver.en.softonic.com/mac. Stack also recommends Roboform, which fills in your name, address and other info on online forms and enters login names and passwords. Download it at Roboform.com—it's free for up to 10 stored logins and passwords.

—Gabrielle Lichterman



Our expert panel



Mark Di Vincenzo is the author of *Buy Ketchup in May and Fly at Noon* and *Your Pinkie Is More Powerful Than Your Thumb* and founder of the Business Writers Group (BusinessWritersGroup.com).



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