



# Understanding Work Schedules

**A** work schedule tells you when to report for work. Employers use schedules to get work done in the least expensive way. Understanding your work schedule is an important part of any job.

After you have been hired for a job, it is important to learn the rules of the organization. One major rule of any organization is to follow the work schedule. You are usually taught how to read the work schedule when you start to work.

It is best to arrive at least 5 to 15 minutes ahead of the time the schedule says you must begin work. This will show that you are reliable and eager to begin your work day.

In some cases, you may be required to work a split shift, which requires that you work several hours, then take a break of more than an hour, and then return to work for several more hours. For example, you may work from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m., then leave and return at 5 p.m. and work until 9 p.m.

There are two kinds of work schedules:

- Some tell you when you have to work.

- Others tell you what job you will work that day, as well as when to do it.

Please answer the following questions about the work schedule on page 2:

1. What week is this work schedule for?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What shift does Joey have? What day?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Is Jill a cashier? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no
4. What does Jill do on Monday and Wednesday? \_\_\_\_\_
5. When does Mary work in the bread area? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Who works the drive thru on Wednesday? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Who works the deep fry area on Friday? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many days does John work in the grill area: \_\_\_\_\_  
Which days? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who works in the bread area Tuesday, Thursday and Friday? \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by  
**Rosemarie Hoffman**

Assistant Professor  
and Extension Individual  
and Family Developer  
Specialist, The Texas  
A&M University System

This is an example of a work schedule that tells you when and what you have to do:

**The Burger Bar  
Work Schedule  
July 21-28 Shift 4 p.m. - Midnight**

NAME	M	TU	W	Th	F	Sa
David <b>Cook 1</b>	Deep Fry Area	Bread Area	Grill Area	Bread Area	Bread Area	Deep Fry Area
Kathy <b>Cook 2</b>	Grill Area	Salad Area	Deep Fry Area	Grill Area	Deep Fry Area	Grill Area
John <b>Cook 2</b>	Bread Area	Grill Area	Salad Area	Deep Fry Area	Grill Area	Bread Area
Mary <b>Cook 1</b>	Salad Area	Deep Fry Area	Bread Area	Salad Area	Salad Area	Salad Area
Jill <b>Cashier</b>	Front Counter	Drive thru	Front Counter	Drive thru	Front Counter	Drive thru
Joey <b>Cashier</b>	Drive Thru	Front Counter	Drive thru	Front Counter	Drive thru	Front Counter

It is best to arrive at least 5 to 15 minutes ahead of the time the schedule says you must begin work.

Here is an example of a work schedule that tells you when you have to work:

John, Joyce, Jessie and Mary are full-time employees, and Jan is part-time. Each employee is required to report to

work 30 minutes before each shift. This will cover for their lunch breaks (most jobs require the employee to come in early or stay later to take care of time spent for meals).

**Fran's Beauty Shop  
Work Schedule - August 21-26**

	Day Shift 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.	Mid-day Shift 11 a.m.- 7 p.m.	Evening Shift 12 p.m.- 8 p.m.
Monday	John	Jessie	Mary
Tuesday	John, Jessie	Joyce	Mary
Wednesday	Joyce, Mary	John	Jan
Thursday	Jessie, Joyce	Jan	Mary
Friday	Jan, Jessie	Joyce	John
Saturday	Mary, Joyce	John	Jessie

Please answer the following questions about the work schedule:

1. What week is this work schedule for?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Who works from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does any worker work two shifts in a row? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What shift does Jessie work on Thursday? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What shift does Mary work on Friday?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What day is John off? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many days does Jan work?  
How many hours? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many days does Jessie work the day shift? \_\_\_\_\_  
Which days are they? \_\_\_\_\_

There are many different work schedules. Below is an example of a “shift work” schedule:

**Jason Chemical Plant  
Work Schedule - June 1 - 14  
Shift 7 a.m.- 3 p.m.**

<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Tu</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Th</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sa</b>	<b>Su</b>
Worker 1	off	Arnold	Arnold	Arnold	Arnold	Arnold	Off
Worker 2	Matthew	off	off	off	off	Matthew	Matthew
<b>WEEK 2</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Tu</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Th</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sa</b>	<b>Su</b>
Worker 1	off	off	off	Arnold	Arnold	Arnold	Matthew
Worker 2	Matthew	Matthew	Matthew	off	off	Matthew	Matthew

1. How many days in Week 1 does Arnold work? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who works on Thursday in Week 1?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How many days in a row does Arnold work in Week 2? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many days off does Matthew have in Week 1? \_\_\_\_\_

- Check the work schedule every day for any changes.
- If you need to be off on a certain day, let your supervisor know at least 2 weeks ahead of time.
- If for some reason you cannot go to work, call your supervisor at least 4 hours before you are scheduled to work. That way he or she can find a replacement for you. Don't have a friend, spouse or parent call and lie for you. If you are able, you should call.

When you read your work schedule, it is important to know exactly when and where you are to work and what work you are expected to do. Here are some helpful ideas for being successful in following your work schedule:

- Always write down your schedule after it is posted.

The work schedule is an important part of any job. If your schedule changes from week to week, keep a marked calendar at home to remind you and your family about your work time.

Let your supervisor know at least 2 weeks ahead of time if you need to be off on a certain day.

---

This publication was originally developed by Dorthy Taylor, former Extension Family Life Specialist, and Jeffrey J. Guidry, Assistant Professor of Health and Kinesiology, Texas A&M University, The Texas A&M University System.

Grant funds from the Southern Rural Development Center at Mississippi State University support the development of this publication.

---

Produced by Agricultural Communications, The Texas A&M University System  
Extension publications can be found on the Web at: <http://texaserc.tamu.edu>

*Educational programs of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age or national origin.*

---

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, Acts of Congress of May 8, 1914, as amended, and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. Chester P. Fehlis, Deputy Director, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, The Texas A&M University System.

5,000 copies, Revision