December 2013

How to Survive an All-Nighter

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Recommended Citation  
Brugioni, Michelle; Welch, Jordan; and Yee, Suit (2013) "How to Survive an All-Nighter," *Ethos: Vol. 2014, Article 18.*  
Available at: [http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/ethos/vol2014/iss2/18](http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/ethos/vol2014/iss2/18)

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how to survive an ALL-NIGHTER

BY MICHELLE BRUGIONI  DESIGN JORDAN WELCH  PHOTO SUIT YEE

Whether cramming for an upcoming test or finishing a project the night before it’s due, having to stay up all night is just part of the college experience; an erratic, feared rite of passage for those who pay college tuition. Mastering the art of not sleeping or functioning on minimal sleep and not only making it through the next day, but actually getting shit done, is the envy of most students.
“So go ahead and stay up late typing away at that term paper, memorizing formulas for your midterm or perfecting the final details of a big design project, just don’t drive or operate heavy machinery the next day.”

Mark Berry from the Mercy Sleep Center can give comfort and validation to the occasional all-nighter, but not without consequences. A serious lack of sleep over several years can cause high blood pressure, heart disease and complications with controlling diabetes. “The average college student should get between seven and eight hours of sleep,” Berry says. There is no healthy way to pull an all-nighter. However, if it is necessary, be sure to get plenty of sleep the next night. So go ahead and stay up late typing away at that term paper, memorizing formulas for your midterm or perfecting the final details of a big design project, just don’t drive or operate heavy machinery the next day. These tried-and-true survival tips will at least get you through the night.

SUPPLIES:

- Caffeine sources: soda, coffee, energy drinks, etc.
- Snacks that will keep you going all night—preferably a good contrast of salty and sweet—or some money for snack machines.
- Music is essential. Come with either a laptop or iPod charged and loaded up with plenty of good music to keep you awake. Listening to movies or YouTube videos can help keep you awake too.
- Comfy clothing is essential. Be wary of clothes that are comfortable enough to put you to sleep, though. You don’t want anything too soft or warm, or putting your head down could lead to some unexpected Z’s.
- Hair ties can be essential: Even if you start with your hair down it will inevitably end up in a bun or ponytail.
- Positive attitude. Nothing ever gets done if you think it won’t. Even when faced with the daunting task of not sleeping and being productive after midnight, keeping your eye on the ultimate goal at hand and telling yourself that you can get it done can work wonders.

PREPARATION:

Location is everything. The ideal spot has minimal distractions and a comfortable temperature for productivity. Just like with clothes, room temperature has the potential to make or break an all-nighter. Being warm can intensify drowsiness, so a slightly chilly spot is the best bet.

Bring everything you’re going to need for the night. You won’t get much done if you have to keep going back home to get things. If you can, remove your contacts. No one wants to peel contacts off their eyes at 4 a.m.

REMEMBER:

- It’s going to be a bitch.
- It’s going to suck and you’re going to hit a wall, but you need to push through it.
- Get up and walk around periodically to keep yourself awake and stretch your muscles to keep the blood flowing.
- Never do three or more all-nighters in a row.
- Everything is easier with friends.
- Ask yourself: Is this worth it? If you absolutely do not have to pull an all-nighter, don’t.

RECOVERY:

Sleep. Period. No alarms, just sleep. It’s also important to condition yourself back to a normal schedule. Finally, get yourself a nice treat like a cookie.