Shillington Student Survival Guide

The journey of a design student at Shillington could be loosely compared to running a marathon. Building up endurance will help to establish the right pace, perseverance and positivity will get you to the finish line and once you're there it's an all-encompassing feeling of pride and achievement.

Studying design won't give you blisters or heat exhaustion but it can occasionally leave you feeling a bit overwhelmed. In place of a cheering crowd, an energy drink and a motivating play-list we've assembled some design student tips to keep you fighting all the way to the end.

Let's talk how establishing a filing system early on can prevent a melt down in portfolio week, the importance of mindfulness, and a few other life hacks to ensure survival!

1. Embrace the caffeine

Despite the relationship between designers and caffeinated beverages often being considered a cliché, we fully welcome it. That’s why our first design student tip is embrace the caffeine. Whether it’s coffee or tea, the warming energy hit will fast become your best pal throughout the course. However, like every addictive habit the bills for a paper cup of heaven can quickly stack up.

With coffee delivery system Pact you can get the supply straight to your door, no need to take up precious designing time—be your own barista. If tea is your poison, check out Brew Tea Co. where you can choose from a selection of

delicious blends—beautiful packaging for your visual diary and the workplace of a Shillington Manchester Graduate Halah El-Kholy too!

Whether it’s coffee or tea that keeps you going, Keep Cup is perfect to drink it from. It provides that sense of comfort whether you’re working from home, at the studio, or commuting in between—it’s perfect for on the go. We have kitchens at all of our campuses too, so pop the kettle on.

2. Make time for exercise

Sure, you weren’t expecting a reminder to hit the gym on a list of design student tips. We get it. Exercise is probably the last thing in the world you want to do after a long day of

a designing , but it can actually be the best thing for you.

Whether it’s going for a run, a brisk walk or yoga in the park, it will transport you to another head space and deliver a real boost of endorphins. If regular exercise doesn’t appeal, why not give No lights No lycra a go—throw yourself around the dance floor, hidden away from any judging eyes.

3. Have headphones on hand

We’d suggest getting yourself a good pair of headphones for the days you really need to concentrate. Urbanears are a solid choice, they come in a variety of design conscious colours and even have an extra earphone port if your design neighbour fancies a listen of your playlist.

4. Subscribe to a podcast or two

Informative, entertaining, comforting. Whatever your preference, podcasts are perfect for the commute home. When your head is jam packed full of design and you need a bit of a break it’s an ideal distraction. Some of our favourites are, Stuff you should know, 99% Invisible and My Dad wrote a Porno. Trust us, if you’ve had a tough day, the smooth tones of Roman Mars’ voice are more calming than whale music.

5. Snack smart

Lets get serious for a moment and discuss snacks. Be honest, who doesn’t reach for the biggest bag of crisps on the shelf when a deadline is looming?

Pro design student tip: Crisps are delicious, but it’s better to munch on something with nutrients. Nutrients give you more brain power, which helps with creative thinking. That’s where the genius team at Graze comes in. With their pick ‘n mix style snack boxes you’ll be energized and entertained simultaneously. Snack heaven and some inspiration for your packaging project. Win Win.

6. Download some handy apps

Survival kit items don’t always have to come in physical form. There’s a tonne of apps out there for when you’re in need of a helping hand to stay organised.

Keep your tasks on the straight and narrow with Wunderlist or plan a project with Trello. Find more useful apps to streamline your day-to-day processes recommended by the Shillington Team.

7. Shield your eyes!

Here’s a design student tip you will thank us for well after you’ve completed your course. Students often find themselves working into the wee hours during portfolio time. It happens to the best of us, but watch out for the bright screen!

Avoid bloodshot eyes with ‘Flux‘—it’s perfect for dimming your screen to ‘candlelight’ so you can work away without reaching for the painkillers. Your eyes will automatically adjust so it’s perfect when you’re beavering away on all that lovely typesetting.

8. Stay on track with a calendar

During your time as a design student, organisation is a must. Practicing good habits early in your career will put you on the right track going forward.

Whether it’s a physical notebook, a hanging calendar for your wall or just a digital version on your phone—keep it updated. If you’re new to the calendar scene, having an organised schedule is something all too familiar with freelancers. Get inside their minds and pick up a few extra design student tips in our favourite quotes from Extraordinary Routines.

One place we can’t resist for buying a new planner is Present and Correct. The one stop shop for drool-worthy stationery—if

you invest in something aesthetically pleasing you’re more likely to use it right?

9. Keep an inspiring workspace

Refining briefs from home in the evening or practicing your short cuts on a lazy Sunday afternoon can often take a lot of discipline—especially when all you want to do is catch up on Netflix.

One way of staying in the zone is surrounding yourself with inspiring visuals. Whether it’s postcards from your travels, prints of tempting typography or just a really well curated bookshelf with the odd hanging plant or two—breathe creative energy into your workspace and you’ll always feel in the right

mindset to design.

10. Don’t be a desktop saver

If you can see your desktop background, read no further. If you can’t, engage.

Keeping this surface spic and span sets the tone for good file management which is paramount for any designer, and certainly one of our most important design student tips. Actively name your files and remember to keep all those versions, ‘final’, ‘realfinal’, ‘thistimeitsfinal’, ‘absolutelyfinal’ all in neat and tidy folders.

While it may feel laborious to begin it will soon become

second nature. You’ll be deliriously grateful to your former self when you can effortlessly track down a missing file minutes before a deadline.

11. Perfect your stationery game

Ideas come to us at the weirdest times don’t they? You could be racking your brain all day, then BAM, there it is. Having a notebook and pen within easy reach will mean you never forget to jot down an idea. We’ve listed 30 Amazing Stationery Supplies to help you start building a design conscious collection.

Pro design student tip—keep a notebook by your bedside table, studies show our best ideas often come to us write before we

drift off to the land of nod.

12. Get some fresh air

Being in an inspiring studio space is all well and good but sometimes you have to swap the recycled air for a bit of the real stuff. Stepping outside for 5 is the perfect remedy for when you’re starting to feel the drowze coming on. So as tempting as it is to stay on the sofa during your entire afternoon break, get yourself out there and clear your head, you’ll be 100 times more productive for it.

13. Stay inspired

It’s crucial to keep your inspiration levels up throughout your time at Shillington. Check out what’s new on popular design blogs, head to an inspiring talk with aspirational creatives or visit a recent exhibition.

To make things easier for our students we forecast design-focused events happening within all 6 of our campus cities each month, have a look over here. Try to mark your calendar with at least 1 cultural activity a week.

14. Listen to the professionals

During your time as a student you'll be visited by a few inspiring faces from the design industry for a talk. Despite how elated you felt watching them explain their work, it's easy to lose sight of this, especially as you approach the end of the course and the dreaded nerves kick in.

When you're in a moment of panic or doubt, remember to think back to that quote you wrote in your notebook or the slide in the presentation which gave you a rush of inspiration. You'll instantly rekindle that 'I can do this' feeling.

So you don't have to rely on your own scrawl, we have an archive of our global industry speakers in our Industry Talks

section. Have a peek when you need a creative lift.

15. Invest in a hard drive

Having a hard drive is imperative. Whether you’re studying for 3 months or 9 months it should be on your desk during every class.

There’s nothing worse than sitting down to catch up on some work at home and realising all the files are missing. Remember to save down after every class and you’ll dodge that painful feeling of regret.

We recommend Western Digital Passports, made especially for Macs. They even come with a handy password function so no one

can steal your content.

16. Treat yourself

Tom Haverford and Donna Miegle hit the nail on the head when they said “Treat Yo Self”.

There’ll be times when nothing satisfies like that 4 patty cheese burger, a glass or two of wine or a new pair of sneakers. Whatever your vice is sometimes it’s necessary to embrace. You’ll have earned it, trust us.

17. Set your alarm clock

Here’s a design student tip to heed immediately. Whether it’s physical or digital you’ll definitely require the assistance of an alarm clock throughout your time as a student. Are you the sort to set one every 5 minutes on the lead up to your get-up time? Or the type to rely on one discordant din on the strike of wake-up o’clock? Either way you’ll be grateful it’s there as we start at 8am, on the dot.

Remember, alarm clocks aren’t just handy for getting you out of bed in the morning, they can be a useful for keeping yourself on track with briefs during portfolio time.

18. Take a moment for your wellbeing

Working hard on something you care about is incredibly rewarding but can cause stress. Don’t worry, it’s normal. Whether you’re fresh faced to the industry or a seasoned pro, everyone experiences it.

Luckily there’s carefully designed apps out there which help bring you back to a better state of mind. We’re fans of Ustwo’s apps Pause and Moodnotes not only for their functionality but for their beautiful design.

Spencer Harrison, our part-time teacher from #ShilloMEL also

compiled this handy guide of Stress Less Tips for Designers.

19. Defeat dehydration

It’s scientifically proven that water helps sustain concentration, it battles fatigue and dilutes that lake of coffee you consumed earlier. It may seem obvious but upping the water intake each day well keep your mind stimulated and sharp.

There’s plenty of well designed flasks on the market that will remind you to hydrate. Our favourites include Bobble and Serax.

20. Get talking

As designers we can often forget to look at anything else in the room other than our screens, which while shows a good work ethic can isolate you from the rest of the world and leave you zombified at the end of the day.

Remember to take time to feed off those around you; whether it’s bouncing an idea off your neighbour, checking in with a teacher or just catching up with a classmate at break time—it will completely recharge your batteries.

21. Always save!

And for our last design student tip: always, always, always save. Hindsight is a wonderful thing but unfortunately it isn’t going to bring back that bit of design you spent 8 hours on. Cmd S. Cmd S. Cmd S.

If you’re enrolled on one of our courses and looking for ways to prepare, we have lots of useful resources to get you inspired ahead of starting with us. Stock up on reading material with our 50 Best Design Books or see what our teachers are reading in Shillington Book Club. We’ve also spoken with lots of our graduates to hear about their experience at Shillington and asked their advice for future

students—explore the archives over here.

Still thinking about studying with us? Come along to an Info Session. We have campuses in London, Manchester, New York, Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

The post Shillington Student Survival Guide appeared first on Shillington Design Blog.

https://www.shillingtoneducation.com/blog/shillington-student-survival-guide/