

Transcript from the Freelance Friday #EFAChat, December 19, 2014

Topic: Managing Busy Schedules

- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Welcome to the Freelance Friday tweet chat! Use hashtag [#EFAchat](#) to be included in today's transcript.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Today's [#EFAchat](#) is being moderated by Lucy Spencer.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) We'll use Q1, Q2, etc. for questions; please use A1, A2, etc. for your answers to each question.
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) Freelance editor in San Diego. Veteran journalist, etc. etc.
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) Will be tweeting as part of the monthly [@EFAFreelancers](#) chat for the next hour. Pls mute me or join in at [#EFAchat](#)!
- [Jaclyn McRae @jaclyn_mcrac](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Hi guys. I'm Jaclyn from Melbourne, Australia. I'm a freelance editor and speechwriter. [#EFAChat](#)
- [EAC/ACR ROA-OAC @rga_gac](#) Happening right now! RT [@EFAFreelancers](#): This [#EFAchat](#) will discuss how editorial freelancers can benefit from scheduling strategies.
- [Mollie @mohrediting](#) [#EFAChat](#) joining today from Winter Park, FL. Freelance editor and senior editor for [@anaiahpress](#).
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) Let's just say that having to install a new furnace right after ordering a new TV ... yes, please send work!
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) [@GLHancock](#) Oh boy. I'd definitely be scheduling as much as I could to pay off that furnace, esp. with winter days away! [#efachat](#)
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [@jamesfraleigh](#) Right! Well, really, all I need is one or two long novel mss to copyedit. [#EFAchat](#)
- [BookMachine @bookmachine](#) [@conciselyn](#) might like to join [#EFAChat](#)
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) I'm down to about six hours a day now, in two-hour segments. [#EFAchat](#)
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAChat](#) Q1 How much time are you setting aside for celebrations in the next three weeks? Or are you working through the holidays?

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A1 Working thru Xmas/NYE/Jan 1, then taking 1st week of Jan off. Got a lot of last-minute requests last Dec, so kept the net open. [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAChat](#) Q2 On a normal day, how many hours of editing per day is reasonable for you - actual work, not social/admin? 6? 8? 10?

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) Also: Workday varies by what I'm doing. Have pulled 8-hr days proofreading, but copyediting tops at 6 or 7, depending on content. [#efachat](#)

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) Often I do both in a day, and I'll do the one that seems less taxing first to get at least 6 hours out of the day. [#efachat](#)

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) When someone sends a rush order, I tack on a rush fee to the cost.

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q3: When you quote a delivery time, are you more likely to base it on your average hourly speed or do you add time for surprises?

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A3 Def. add time for surprises to my estimated turn time. I've had prod editors come in w. revised chapters, missing references... [#efachat](#)

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A3 [#EFAchat](#) I allow lots of extra time for surprises - like a furnace dying. Car trouble. Broken pipes. Illness.

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A3 Plus there are always surprises on my side: parental illness, equipment meltdowns, blah days where I can't make hours I'd want. [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAChat](#) Q2 Many experienced editors recommend scheduling not more than 6 hours of work a day - allow time for physical and mental breaks!

[Mollie @mohreediting](#) A2 It varies for me, but I agree with [@GLHancock](#) that two-hour spurts of editing are most effective. Otherwise my brain is fried! [#EFAchat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q4: What did you do the first time two clients asked you to review their projects in the same time frame?

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A2 That matches my experience. I can feel a difference in the eye, physical and analytical. [#efachat](#)

- [Jennifer Holmes @jenmededit](#) RT [@EFAFreelancers](#): [#EFAChat](#) Q2 Many experienced editors recommend scheduling not more than 6 hours of work a day - allow time for physical...
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A4 Don't recall exactly, but I likely felt awful at not taking one of them and scared they wouldn't come back. [#efachat](#)
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q5: Are you more likely to schedule future jobs, turn down work, or work longer hours when multiple requests start coming in?
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) A4 I juggle!
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A4 I have since tried to give preference to work from clients I haven't heard from as often, to get them back into the mix. [#efachat](#)
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A4 And if it's a first-time client, take their work if at all possible, even if I have to double up. [#efachat](#)
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A4 I'll give the client who I decline an idea of when I will be available, so they can try again then. [#efachat](#)
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) If you're just joining the [#EFAChat](#), welcome! Jump in at any time!
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A5 Honestly depends, for some of the reasons in my A4 As. I can proofread 2 jobs, or proofread & edit ... [#efachat](#)
- [Mollie @mohrediting](#) [#EFAchat](#) A3: Depends on workload, but typically both...I add at least 10% buffer on top of estimate (based on hourly speed).
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A5 ... but having two large books to edit can be a challenge. I've gotten better at single-tasking them within their schedules. [#efachat](#)
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q6: If you schedule future jobs, how long are clients willing to wait for your services? How far out are you booked right now?
- [Mollie @mohrediting](#) [#EFAchat](#) A4: Prioritize one project and give myself room on the turnaround time. I generally like to have my feet in a few projects anyway.
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) I tell most clients it will take 3 weeks to do their jobs, so I've never had a problem. All jobs are done on time, usually early.

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A6 Some have booked a few months in advance, which I've found tremendously flattering. [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [@jamesfraleigh #EFAchat](#) Single-tasking? So it's better to work on multiple projects one at a time, not half a day here, half a day there?

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Depends on the project. It's better for some books to crawl in and zip them up after me; others I def. split. [#efachat](#)

[Mollie @mohrediting](#) [@GLHancock](#) I like this method, too. Always best to exceed expectations by getting it to them early than try to cram it in last min. [#EFAchat](#)

[Allyson E. Machate @allymachate](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A2: Totally agreed. I aim for 4, and if I'm feeling good then I'll keep going. But I schedule for 4 JIC. [#EFAChat](#)

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) I've been known to alternate projects when one is easy & other intense. Good relief

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q7 Good question! Multiple projects: do you work on them consecutively or concurrently?

[Allyson E. Machate @allymachate](#) Totally! RT [@mohrediting @GLHancock](#) Always best to exceed expectations by getting it to them early than try to cram it in last min. [#EFAchat](#)

[Mollie @mohrediting](#) [#EFAchat](#) A5: Honestly, schedule future jobs. Most authors are fine with a longer turnaround time, unless it's a rush project, obviously. :)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q8: Do you tend to overbook so you don't have scheduling gaps, or do you underbook in case something goes into overtime?

[Allyson E. Machate @allymachate](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Q7: I do consecutively, but my associate likes to do two at a time, one in the AM and one in the PM. Not for me. [#EFAChat](#)

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A8 Neither. Everything comes out just right! [#efachat](#)

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A8 I'll slightly overbook. I know which clients typically submit a bit late. If I have a # of their jobs booked, I'll book others'. [#efachat](#)

[Allyson E. Machate @allymachate](#) That's awesome. How did you arrive at this wonderful place? RT [@GLHancock](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A8 Everything comes out just right! [#efachat](#)

[Mollie @mohreediting](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) [@jamesfraleigh](#) OH. I see what you mean. I do both. I like to split up the day, honestly. It's a nice change. :) [#EFAchat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q9: Sudden project cancellation: Are you more likely to reschedule other work, hustle smaller projects, or work on marketing?

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [@AllyMachate](#) Probably because I turn down most queries! I'm very selective about who I work with. So, I never have "too much" work. [#EFAchat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [@GLHancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) And that's how you know when you rock at scheduling your work! Great job!

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A9 I'll contact the last client I told I was busy, to get back on their radar. Or someone I haven't heard from in a while. [#efachat](#)

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) A9 Take a rest!

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A9 Or I might double my efforts on a job I already have, to open space for a day off. :) [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q10: Do you ever accept rush jobs, or are you too busy? Do you charge extra for rush jobs?

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A9 If I'm not occasionally going to the park or a long lunch or a matinee on the odd Tuesday, why am I here? :D [#efachat](#)

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) However, marketing is an endless job, so it's always there if I get a wild hair/hare. Which is right?

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A10 Yes. Sometimes rush \$ is offered out of hand, other times I'll have to ask for it. But if I'm full up I'll decline. [#efachat](#)

[Erin Wilcox @ewonice](#) Hi just joining the party here. I count on about 5 good editing hours in a full work day, but I do add time for surprises. [#efachat](#)

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A10 The extra money isn't worth it if it results in that job, plus the others I have in house, being done poorly. [#efachat](#)

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A10 Flat-out told one client that and she thanked me. Apparently she's used to folks just loading up & returning crap. [#efachat](#)

[Mollie @mohrediting](#) [#EFAchat](#) A9: Eh... I'd honestly try all of the above. I like that "illusion" of control a little too much, so I try to fill my schedule ASAP

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q11: Do you use digital tools to help schedule your work? If so, which ones?

[Mollie @mohrediting](#) [@jamesfraleigh](#) I like the way you think! Might as well take advantage of the perks of being your own boss. [#EFAChat](#)

[Erin Wilcox @ewonice](#) I use Office Time to track my hours on a project, which helps me book the right amount of time and quote on future jobs. [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Hi, Erin!

[Erin Wilcox @ewonice](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Hello! Been a long time. :) [#efachat](#)

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) Don't need to track time. When I'm working, client & I already have agreement. If I goof, I make less.

[Allyson E. Machate @allymachate](#) [@GLHancock](#) Ah. But the scheduling...have you tracked your work such that you know exactly how much time you need? [#EFAChat](#)

[Mollie @mohrediting](#) [#EFAchat](#) A11: Not to schedule, but to track hours I love the [@PomodoroTech](#). Anyone tried it for time management? Also use a [#bulletjournal](#)

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A11 Just Excel and a timer. :) This way I know there's 6–8 hr of work and not just time my butt's in the seat. [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q12: How often are you able to schedule vacations and time for continuing education?

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A11 [@mohrediting](#) Mine is a loose Pomodoro: 30 min in seat, 5 min standing/getting circulation going/getting away from screen. [#efachat](#)

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [@AllyMachate](#) Already did that when I bid on the job. That's how I charge - by the hour. [#EFAchat](#)

[Allyson E. Machate @allymachate](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A10: Occasionally, but it's rare. I'm usually too busy to squeeze stuff in unless it's a very short project. [#EFAChat](#)

- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A12 With occasional success. :D Srsly need to get better at this. Part of learning to make my "no" a "later." [#efachat](#)
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A12 Finally made it out to an [#ACES](#) meeting this yr, but need to get to [@EFAFreelancers](#) events more often. Incl Scrabble night! [#efachat](#)
- [Erin Wilcox @ewonice](#) Professional development is a big priority for me, so when a good opportunity comes up I take it and schedule work around it. [#efachat](#)
- [Erin Wilcox @ewonice](#) It's always a balancing act, of course, with funds and potential writing time to consider. And did you say vacation? What's that? [#efachat](#)
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q13 Out of every hour, how much is editing time and how much is stretching time?
- [Allyson E. Machate @allymachate](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A11: Using OfficeTime more consistently to get clear on how long diff. parts of projects take me. [#EFAChat](#)
- [Erin Wilcox @ewonice](#) I go to the AWP conference when I can, and this year I went to [@ViableParadise](#), which I recommend for all spec fic writers! [#efachat](#)
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [#EFAchat](#) A13 I am so, so bad about that. Need to have a timer go off to remind me to climb out of the recliner!
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A13 Literal stretching? Way less than there should be. But I try to stand or walk around for 5 minutes after every ½ hr. [#efachat](#)
- [Allyson E. Machate @allymachate](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A11 cont: Had few emergencies this yr that have me rethinking the time I allot for projects. Need buffer methinks. [#EFAChat](#)
- [Mollie @mohrediting](#) [#EFAchat](#) A13: Let's just say if I don't walk my dog on my lunch break, my attention span suffers. :)
- [Allyson E. Machate @allymachate](#) Me too, trying to do more of that next year. RT [@ewonice](#): Professional development is a big priority for me [#efachat](#)
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A11 [@AllyMachate](#) I hear you on the emergencies. Was lucky to have understanding clients while helping w parental hosp. runs. [#efachat](#)

[Mollie @mohrediting](#)

[@ewonice](#) agreed. I always try to make continuing education a priority. [#EFAchat](#)

[Erin Wilcox @ewonice](#)

[@EFAFreelancers](#) great question! I have a standing desk that allows me to stretch while I work a bit, but I've never tracked this. [#efachat](#)

[Mollie @mohrediting](#)

[#EFAchat](#) A13: Kind of a side note, but has anyone ever tried reading submissions or manuscripts on a Kindle to switch it up? Doesn't (1/2)

[Mollie @mohrediting](#)

(2/2) work for line edits but if you're evaluating a manuscript, I've found it helps me approach the work with fresh eyes. [#EFAchat](#)
A13

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#)

[@mohrediting](#) I scanned a just-arrived book MS on my iPod Touch once while in bed. Good enough to give me an idea of what lay ahead. [#efachat](#)

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#)

[@ewonice](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Seems like there would be an app that could prompt and log stretch breaks, beyond Google calendar alerts. [#efachat](#)

[Erin Wilcox @ewonice](#)

[@EFAFreelancers](#) I hope it counts! [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#)

It's time to end today's [#EFAchat](#). The written transcript will end here. Thanks for a great discussion - see you next time!