



"During Prison Guide: Advice from Those Who did the Time "

The purpose of this guide is to provide real-world information for those who have been incarcerated to help them not only survive but thrive during and after incarceration. ***Advice from those who did the Time*** is a collection of short statements of advice, woven with the threads of hard-earned wisdom, and shared by those who have defied the odds of imprisonment and have gone on to become productive and honorable returning citizens, family members and neighbors.

- Prison can be a Wise Man University or a Fools playground.
- There will be all sorts of things going on that are clearly illegal. Do your best not to notice it and move along.
- You will get through this, establish a routine, it will help make your time go faster.
- Work out - stay in shape - do some aerobic and strength training exercises - find good workout buddies.
- Avoid asking for favors - you don't want to be indebted to anyone. Don't hold anything for anyone.
- Typically, as long as you respect others, you should be respected.
- You can survive (and even thrive) in prison and come out even stronger. It's your choice!
- Take responsibility for your own choices that led you to this point.
- Don't try and be a tough guy, in the real world that doesn't play out very well.
- Maintain a low profile with staff. Necessary business but no idle conversation.
- Don't agree to be a lookout, don't join a gang.
- Do not associate with drugs.
- Treat everyone and everything with respect.
- Find a prison job that keeps you engaged.
- Help the older inmates when you can.
- If you have skills, like preparing a resume, writing a letter, or interpreting a complicated document, or translating something, help others.
- Keep laid back and think before you speak, Don't Snitch, Stay out of business that's not yours.



- Set goals and use your time wisely. I suggest self-improvement. You'll never have another opportunity like this unless you royally screw up a second time (yeah... I know that's nonsensical).
- Your mail, email, phone conversations assume it will be read or listened to by staff, guards, security, etc.
- Make sure other inmates aren't listening or reading your stuff.
- Stay clean - hygiene is very important in prison keep your body, sleep area, clothing, locker, in tip top shape.
- Take care of your mind, body and soul.
- Learn something new – A musical instrument, art, woodworking, ceramics, anything that's available.
- Many prisons have a library / Law Library. Take full advantage of it.
- Worship and pray in your own way - find God – if not, find a centering and focusing peace you can use to meditate, reflect, and you can count on to keep you whole.
- Stay in touch with your family and loved ones.
- Keep yourself busy, healthy and focused on productive behaviors. Do the time and don't let the time do you.
- Not everyone in prison is guilty of what they were charged for, but believe me, we are all guilty of something.
- Stay positive. Stay busy. Don't count the days, hours or seconds—it will drive you crazy.
- Start building your plan for your new life; the sooner the better.
- If they offer groups, go to them. They may be more helpful than you think.
- Reentry starts on day one of incarceration. Prison is easy by comparison. Being released can be much harder. So, prepare yourself for the journey ahead.