

**Your Ultimate Productivity
Checklist**

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HELPING YOU FIND THE WAY

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Intro

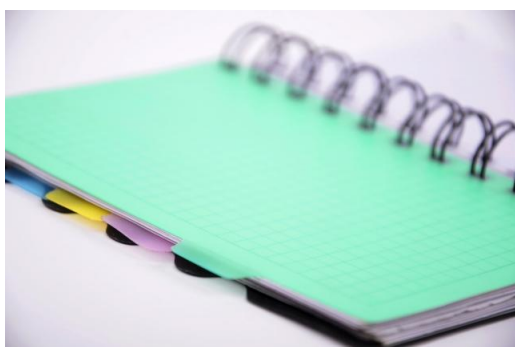
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We have more crammed into our lives than we can handle at times. Despite this, we always end up working in more, trying to squeeze everything we can out of every little bit of time we have available. Is it any wonder life can seem so stressful and overwhelming? When a deadline, or we find ourselves under more strain, even our sleep is badly impacted while we make up lost hours. That isn't the way for anyone to live.

It is for that very reason that productivity is so important. You have to properly organize your time and activities so that you don't end up lost in the tide, paddling to keep yourself above water. But how do you become more productive, and what can be done to eliminate some of those strains in your life that pull you down? Even organizing your life might just seem like more work at this point, which is the last thing you may think you need.

That couldn't be further from the truth. Spending some time to get organized is very important, and will help a lot. You just need a solid productivity list to help you along the way. This guide will serve as a checklist for the different parts of your life, including helpful tools you can use along the way.

Productivity In Your Work Life



Despite being the cause of some of the biggest stress you face, becoming more productive in your work life is surprisingly easy. Perhaps because it is already broken up into tasks, little tricks are often all that are needed for you to make more of your day.

In fact, it is often more a matter of focus and managing your time when it comes to being a more productive worker than it is anything else.

Having a set of handy tools at your disposal will be your best bet in this particular area. There are literally hundreds of apps, websites, plugins and programs out there for this on the web. Many of them are very similar, minus a feature or two. The most effective and well rounded ones in my personal opinion are:

- ★ [Google Drive](#) – Formerly Google Docs, this is still one of the best ways to collaborate on projects, in spite of many contenders hitting the market recently. Not only is it a simple way to keep track of project notes, reports, spreadsheets and anything else necessary for work, but it allows others to make changes, add content and share the document with others. While it isn't quite as effective with file sharing as, say, DropBox or Office Online, it is a simple tool that gives you what you need to cut down on face to face meetings and email attachments.
- ★ [MindMeister](#) – Brainstorming is a very necessary part of any project, even minor ones. Staying focused isn't always so simple when it comes to taking part in the activity, however. This is a great app for keeping you on track by letting you make visual mind maps that can be shared and edited by others. Have a group project to plan and want to come up with the details before you gets started? Do it remotely, no matter where you are. It also allows you to create presentations, and to access your maps from any device.
- ★ [Pocket](#) – Most people have to be online for their job nowadays. That means many distractions are lurking in the wings, just waiting for you to give in to procrastination. Don't allow yourself to be pulled from work just to read what that celebrity said during an

interview, or that poodle in Italy did to win an award. Put them away for later using Pocket. You save a copy of the articles with a single press of a button, then go back to it when you have the time.

- ★ **[LeechBlock \(FireFox\)](#)** – Have no willpower? You aren't alone. Completely eliminate distractions online by blocking certain websites or limiting how much time you can spend on them a day. Just put in the websites to block or how much time you are allowed to surf them, then set the day and time limits. It will stop you with a denial screen when you try and visit the sites during work hours.
- ★ **[StayFocusd \(Chrome\)](#)** – No, it isn't a typo. StayFocusd is a tool similar to LeechBlock for Chrome. However, it has a nuclear option that is very handy. It lets you block all your chosen sites for a certain number of hours you choose, and doesn't let you turn it off.
- ★ **[RescueTime](#)** – Find out just how much time during your workday you are wasting on Facebook and email. This tool tracks what time you spend where, and sends you weekly reports. It allows you to get a real and honest look at how you have been spending your time, then make changes to improve your productivity. Prepare to be shocked, because those little 5 minute breaks to Reddit are sucking up way more of your day than you think.

Productivity In Your Personal Life



This is where it gets more difficult. Work is a set time during the day, on set days, in which you do a set job. Your personal life can get a lot more messy, hectic and less consistent. Especially when involving the other people in your life, such as family and friends.

Trying to find ways to improve the time you spend at home or out and about might seem a lot more complicated than making things more efficient in the office.

So many tools exist for this purpose that it would be hard to go through even a fraction of them. You could probably name any number of them and they would be very good, very helpful, and could bring a lot to your life to help improve your time management. These are only the ones I use in my own.

- ★ [Todoist](#) – This is my primary organization program that I use for my personal life. Why? Because it is a to do list. That's it, just a very simple to do list. You put in what has to be done and when it has to be done by, and then you check it off the list as you do it. You can set reoccurring dates and tasks organize it into different categories, and customize it how you want. Their pro version lets you create notes, labels and alerts, but for me the free version works just fine. Plus, the list can be access in your browser, on their site, and on any other mobile devices you might have.
- ★ [Pinterest](#) – Admittedly, this is a very, very distracting site, so use it at your own risk. But I have found that it has some very useful applications. I have created pin boards that keep track of recipes and a whole month of meal plans. I have used it to access shopping lists. I have even gathered ideas for productivity that I use on a regular basis, as well as organization and amazing shortcuts.
- ★ [Don't Forget The Milk](#) – I used to use this one before I switched to Todoist. Why am I including it on the list if I don't use it anymore? Because it is a very helpful to do list tool that has additional features plenty of people will love. For example, it connects with Evernote, Gmail, Google Calendar and several other programs. But I prefer a very simple list, and so decided to let it go.
- ★ [Mint](#) – All of your financial accounts in one place, monitored for activity, and your budget accessible from any device. That is what Mint is all about and it is a real winner when it comes to managing your money. No more will you have to go from account to account, cross checking it with your spreadsheet budget to make sure you are alright for the month. It also monitors how much you have spent, and on what. So you will always know just where your money is going.
- ★ [Grocery Pal](#) – Don't waste a bunch of time going through weekly ads for deals you

might like, or coupons you can use. Instead, use this awesome mobile app that works by keeping track of deals at stores within a certain mile radius of you. It alerts you about special sales, coupons and deals, and you don't have to snip or print a single thing.

Setting Short Term and Long Term Goals



A tactic that can help in both your professional and personal life is setting goals for yourself to complete. Some are going to be for the short term, and some are going to take much longer.

But setting these goals gives you a much clearer focus that can really keep you on track and reduce obstacles. It is the reason goal setting is such an important tip in any productivity guide.

Some tips for setting goals:

- ❑ Keep things reasonable. Wouldn't it be cool if you could lose thirty pounds, gather ten thousand views a week on your brand new blog and learn a new language this month? It isn't going to happen, and you are setting your sights too high. Whether the goal is a long or short one, make it reasonable.
- ❑ Don't set too many. Overwhelming yourself with goals is a fast way to fall flat on your face. Set two or three small goals that will be simple to reach, and then one long term goal. As you strike goals off your list, add some more, always keeping it as a steady, but manageable, pace.
- ❑ Make sure it is something that will enrich your life. Don't set a goal if it won't have a benefit to your life in some way.
- ❑ Don't be afraid of failure. Sometimes you are going to screw up. It happens, so don't beat yourself up about it. Most of all, don't let it keep you from trying.

The Importance Of Balance



Like all things, your productive life and regular life need to be balanced. Otherwise, you will find that efficiency beginning to slip as you enter the burnout mode we all eventually find ourselves in.

The best way to keep that from happening is to follow some rules about balancing your work life, home life and personal time.

Taking time for yourself is 100% a necessary step to productivity. Small breaks, long breaks, holidays and vacations, time with your friends and family, these are all going to help you to destress and so be a more effective person when it counts.

You should also take care to manage your health, and treat your body well. Exercise regularly, eat well, don't skip meals or rely on a fast food diet, drink less caffeine, more water, and sleep seven to nine hours a night. Take a couple of hours a day to just calm yourself after the activity that has bogged you down. Read a book, take a bath, play a video game, watch some TV, go for a walk, talk with someone you love, enjoy time with a pet. Whatever you do in your freetime, don't feel guilty for taking part in it.

As for during the day, make sure you take frequent, small breaks. Every hour get up and walk around, and take your eyes off of any computer screens. Resist the urge to get out your phone, and instead take it to enjoy a lack of stimulation. You would be amazed by the difference this makes, and how much more ready you will feel to tackle your work when you get back.

Conclusion

Productivity is something we all want more of. Whether it is during work hours, or when we are finally home, everyone is constantly seeking out ways to stretch their time a little further. Since your life isn't likely to slow down any time soon, it is up to you to make the most of what time you have. This list of tools and tricks should help you along the way.

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