

Making an Effective To-Do List

Creating a daily to-do list can help you visualize what you need to do and structure your days. Because they give you specific things to complete, they're also really good at keeping you on track and organized. Remember, the strategies outlined here are only effective if they're working for you. If you find they're not working, try something else. Some things to note when making to-do lists:

Write it down

- Keeping what you need to achieve visible will help ensure you know what to do and can have the joy of crossing it off your list.
- Some people prefer paper lists, while others prefer electronic lists or apps. Use what you're comfortable with.
- There are countless templates, systems, and apps that you can use. Some of the ones we recommend are Microsoft [Tasks, To Do](#), or [Planner](#) (all available for free through your Office365 account) or [Trello](#).

Prioritize your tasks

- Prioritize what needs to happen first so that the most important things are crossed off your list.
- One way to prioritize is to use a matrix to determine what to do and in what order. One of the best examples is the [Eisenhower matrix](#), which helps you divide tasks into those you should: do, schedule, delegate, and delete.

Limit your list to 3-5 tasks per day

- Use your daily to-do list for tasks, not goals. A general rule of thumb is that a task should take you no more than an hour.
- If you didn't complete a task, move it to the next day's list. If you find you keep doing this, you may need to evaluate how many tasks you're assigning yourself.

Make time to schedule

- Try to find a consistent time each evening where you can take 5-10 minutes to evaluate what worked for you in the day and where you can plan things for the next day.
- Reviewing your to-do list is a great way to end the day because it helps you reflect on what you achieved while setting yourself up for the next day.