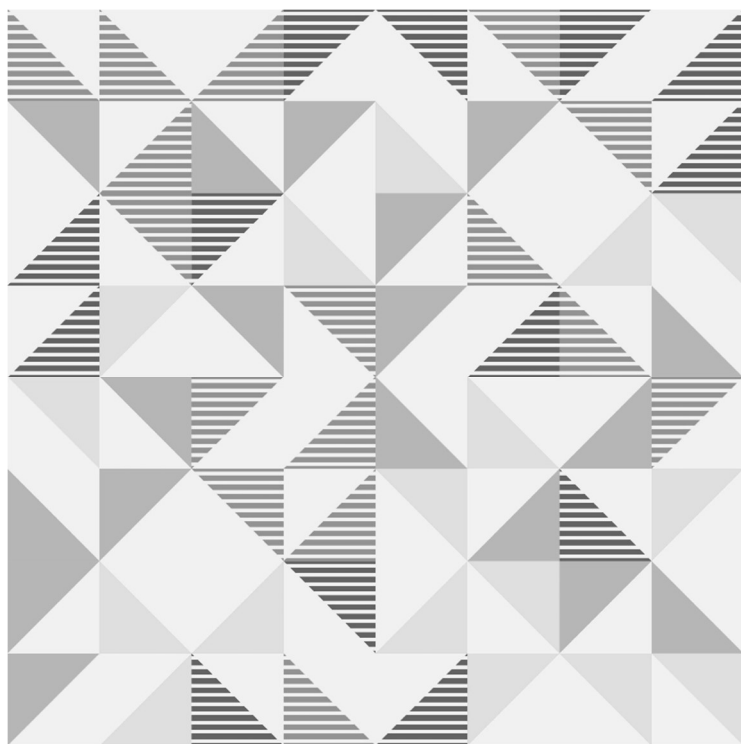


# The Productivity Workbook





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Use *Getting Things Done* to collect and organize all your **projects** and to generate your next **action** for each one.

Use *Personal Kanban* to track your **projects** and **actions** as **options**, to track your progress, and to limit how much you attempt to work on at one time.

Use *The Pomodoro Technique* to manage your daily time and focus on the **actions** on your Personal Kanban board.

Seneca, one of the most famous Stoic philosophers, once wrote the following two quotes in *On the Shortness of Life*.

*“It is not that we have a short time to live,  
but that we waste a lot of it.”*

*“Putting things off is the greatest waste of life:  
it snatches away each day as it comes and  
denies us the present by promising the future.”*

If you want to achieve your goals, you need to guard your time with even greater diligence than you would guard your personal property or your money. If you lost every penny you own, you could still get more money; but time is absolutely fixed.

## The Basic Process

Start each day by planning out your tasks on the **Daily Planner**. Write the task name and in the “Planned” column write down how many sessions you think it might take to get the task done. Split up the task if it will take more than 5-7 sessions. You can use this estimate to work out how many tasks to add to your day. Think about what key tasks you’d really like to achieve and place your top three items in the special space at the top of the planner. Other tasks go in the second list.

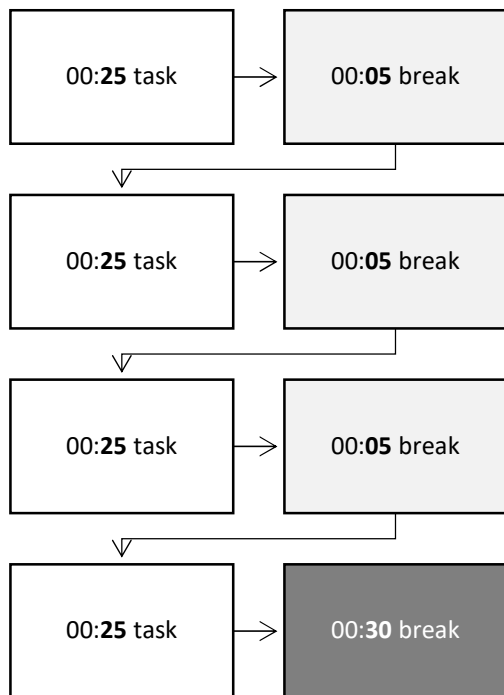
When considering your session limit, bear in mind that a great day could see you complete around 14 sessions. A realistic day is likely to have fewer sessions because of interruptions and unplanned work. Everyone is different and no two jobs are the same. You can track the number of sessions you complete each day to learn what number to use for your own planning.

When you are ready to focus on a task, set a **25-minute** timer and work exclusively on the task until it rings.

When your session is complete, mark down the session in the “Actual” column. Use the tally system to add each session, i.e. | || ||| ||||. If the task is complete, cross it out (and move the sticky note on your **Personal Kanban** board).

After each session, take a **5-minute** break. After four sessions, extend the break to **30 minutes**. There is a handy reminder of these breaks on the next page.

The breaks are an integral part of this technique as they help you maintain your focus.



## Managing Interruptions

Try to defer all interruptions until after the session. Once you complete the session, you can deal with missed calls, emails, and other distractions *before* you take your break. Don't set your break timer until you're ready to get away from your desk. What you do with your break is up to you, you can go for a walk, meditate, or get a coffee; anything that isn't *doing more work*!

If something urgent comes up, cancel your timer, and don't record the session. You only want to record the number of uninterrupted 25-minute sessions you achieve as this will help you plan your day around your personal version of reality. Deal with the interruption and then come back when you are ready to focus again, setting your timer for a new full 25-minute session.

## Managing Unplanned Tasks

There will almost certainly be unplanned tasks that you discover along the way. If they don't need to be done right now, switch to **Personal Kanban** mode, or **Getting Things Done** mode to manage the unplanned work. If it must be dealt with today, add it at the *bottom* of your daily planner.

## Managing Unfinished Tasks

For each unfinished task, you can choose to include it when you plan your day tomorrow or push it back out into your **Personal Kanban** system. Simple.

## Weekly Review

Review the work you completed each week and reflect on how you might improve your productivity. This is also an opportunity to revisit your options and work out your next actionable steps.

Turn the page to start your productivity journey!



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