

Taming the TODO

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Some Methods

Big PIMs

Evolution, groupware...

E-mail

is e-mail is e-mail

~/TODO

text file of tasks (flat / tree)

Web lists

simple scripts, groupware

Request tracker

e-mail and web

Custom hacks

personal personal
information managers

Taming the TODO

Make it easy to record a task.

Don't get overwhelmed.

Fill in the cracks.

Hack your system.

Make it Easy to Record a Task

- ☐ 1. **Make it easy to record a task.**
- ☐ 2. Don't get overwhelmed.
- ☐ 3. Fill in the cracks.
- ☐ 4. Hack your system.

Context switch = bad (distracting)

Fix: stay in the same app, or use scripts

E-mail	mail client features
~/TODO	shell scripts
Web lists	bookmarklets
Request tracker	e-mail or bookmarklets
Custom hacks	planner.el plugging ^_^

Make it Easy to Record a Task

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Metadata = good (less manual input)

Grab data from environment

More information? Hyperlinks

E-mail	headers: references, subject, from, etc.
~/TODO	tough luck: manual input =(
Web lists	bookmarklets
Request tracker	headers: references, subject, from, etc.
Custom hacks	example: picking up lots of information from buffer

Don't Get Overwhelmed

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Break tasks down

Concrete

Bite-size

Doable

E-mail

tough luck: mailbox flood =(

~/TODO

task trees, outlines

Web lists

detailed lists, task trees

Request tracker

file small requests

Custom hacks

example: picking up lots of information from buffer

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Keep your list short

Task dates are optional

Start dates are useful

Be ruthless – say no, procrastinate, weed out tasks

E-mail	keep your task inbox uncluttered, be ruthless
~/TODO	mark important tasks
Web lists	detailed lists, task trees
Request tracker	close requests
Custom hacks	anything goes

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Option: work with schedules

Set aside specific times for tasks

Mark tasks as scheduled

Follow schedule as much as possible

Fill in the Cracks

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Review your tasks

Read task list daily

Make sure you check all tasks every so often

E-mail	look at your task inbox daily, use good subjects
~/TODO	put it in your init scripts
Web lists	make it your homepage
Request tracker	make it your homepage
Custom hacks	put it in your init scripts

Fill in the Cracks

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Keep track of time

Watch out for deadlines

Review old tasks, junk irrelevant ones

E-mail	remove old tasks, find a way to deal with deadlines
~/TODO	script magic
Web lists	some have features to make this easier
Request tracker	great with task age, not so good with dealines
Custom hacks	anything goes

Hack Your System

- ☒ 1. Make it easy to record a task.
- ☒ 2. Don't get overwhelmed.
- ☒ 3. Fill in the cracks.
- ☐ 4. **Hack your system.**

Start small, then tinker

Export your data: custom reports

Import?

Share

Tasks: benefits, concerns

Process: get great ideas

Summary

Make it as easy as possible.

Don't get overwhelmed.

Fill in the cracks.

Hack your system.

Share.

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