

What You Write Down Gets Done

By Sarah Welch and Alicia Rockmore



It's funny how scribbling a few things down on a sticky note will make you feel more organized. It's as if just making a simple list is that first little step to getting things in order. But then look at that, you're so disorganized, you lose your list. Or you have four separate lists going on at once, and you need a list of all your lists. Well, it turns out that even the organizational task of making a list needs a little organization. For example, a better list means, 1) keeping the right lists, 2) knowing when to make a list, 3) knowing what to keep a list of, and 4) getting help crossing things off your list. Once you've figured out how to make the perfect "To Do" list, though, think how great it will be to cross "Organize 'To Do' Lists" off your "To Do" list.

Sarah on "Scattered Lists, Scattered Brain."

"There's nothing as frustrating, or as easy, than losing a "To Do" list. You always forget something the second time around, and it's usually the reason you started the list in the first in the first place. To avoid this annoyance, keep your lists in one notebook or binder, so they're not scattered, and more importantly, you're not scattered. A pre-organized book like Buttoned Up's CrossItOff list, available at Target, helps you keep track of all the different "To Do's" that need to get done, all in the same convenient place."

Alicia on "Help Them Help You."

"One reason your "To Do" lists may be so long is that you're simply taking on too many tasks. A great way to cross items off is to simply ask others to do them. Granted, there are certain things that only you can accomplish, so don't ask people to help do things that you'll just have to go back and re-do. Instead, choose tasks that others either could do easily, or tasks they should be doing themselves anyway."



Alright, one more list of ways to make a better list.

1. Regularity

The scattered feeling that accompanies the dozens of free-floating lists you make can be solved by a little organizational regularity. That means establishing a pattern for how often you make your lists, (daily/weekly), where you keep your list (notebook, legal pad, binder), and the time and place you write your list (Sunday night, Monday morning, etc.). Knowing when/where/and what of your lists will help keep them centralized, both in your home, and in your brain.

2. Follow the 80/20 Rule

The 80/20 rule states that in any pursuit, if you take care of a few important things (20%), you will solve 80% of your problem. So, when making your "To Do" lists, highlight the top three most important things to do each day/week. You'll find that by getting these done, you'll get a better sense of the true importance of the rest of the items on your list, which you can then tackle as needed.

3. Delegate

When you make your master "To Do" list, there's a tendency to take on the needs of the whole household. Fortunately for you, there is that whole household ready and (with some help) willing to take on some "to Do's" themselves. It is important not just to delegate different tasks to others, but also to keep track of what exactly was delegated. A notebook like CrossItOff.list contains sticky notes in duplicate so you can remember what you asked others to do.

We are the co-founders of Buttoned Up, inc., a company dedicated to helping stretched and stressed women get themselves organized (along with everybody else they're responsible for too!). We welcome your thoughts! Please send ideas and questions to us at: yourlife@getbuttonedup.com or visit us at www.getbuttonedup.com