Accomplishing More: Daily Calendar and Task Structure

A simple combination of paper and technology can help you stay organized throughout the week and remember your to-dos.

Paper Calendar simple wall hanging or desk calendar that is posted in a public area

Why: for recurring events, special occasions, family gatherings, meals, permanent appts, etc.

How: color code! use a box of markers/crayons color

Important Dates Use color to outline the calendar box of specific dates/days so they stand out. You can use a different color* for each category: the weekends, birthdays/anniversaries, important dates to remember.

Children Activities If children look at the calendar, use a specific color* for kids' activities and write in pencil information they need to know. Keep it simple. This is a reference for them, not your set time tabled calendar.

Meals If you plan meals in advance, write the menu on each day in pencil. This holds you accountable and gives the family a view into the week ahead. Pencil in at least three meals per week, even if it will be ordering pizza, so you start getting used to thinking ahead.

*Note: keep the color-coding simple and broad. If it's too detailed, you'll be stressed looking at the calendar. Each child does not need their own color unless you are a very detailed person.

Digital Calendar Gmail or alternative that has a calendar app to shares across devices

Why: track appointments, schedule on the go, and sync across devices.
To be sure you arrive at the right place at the right time and have reminders of important tasks.

How: through a Gmail email address or (other preferred platform) to use the calendar features. You don't have to use this email for all your correspondence, but it gives you access to sync devices.

Add Account On all your devices add the email address the calendar will be hosted by, and allow permission for your calendar to appear on the device(s). When you add events, on any device it will sync.

Color Code In Gmail, you can assign a color to different types of events or calendars. I recommend having broad categories and assigning colors such as: work>green (think you make $), blue>personal appts, orange>husband's work, purple>kids appointments. Of course this is different for everyone and I recommend you keep it simple!

Determine Sharing You can share your calendars with other Gmail users so that your events appear on their calendar. Determine who will get permission to view your events based on the categories you color-coded above.

Add events Begin to add your events and appointments to the calendar. It's easiest to do it from a computer, but you can add from any device. Input time, date, set reminders if needed, indicate if recurring, etc. Be sure to SAVE! Birthdays can be added from the contact page and will appear on the calendar. You can adjust settings in Gmail to show all national holidays automatically.

For events or tasks you need to remember, you can set reminders in your calendar or in the reminder app on your phone.

Notebook to jot down reminders, to-dos, ideas, and lists

<u>Why</u>: so you have one place where you write all your information and thoughts, rather than miscellaneous sticky notes and scraps of paper.

<u>How</u>: purchase a small or mid-sized notebook that has lined paper and is spiral bound. 6x9" is a great size if it stays at your desk most days, but smaller is ideal if you want it to fit in your purse. Phone apps work as an alternative, if preferred. [Wunderlist, Remember the Milk, Errands, etc.]

Future Lists
There are many things to accomplish, but they aren't all urgent tasks. This is a list of all the general things you need/want to get accomplished at some point in the future. Write it down so you don't forget, but don't put it on your active to-do list.

Active List
This is the list you work from each day filled with tasks you plan to/need to get accomplished. There should be between 3-5 tasks per day. No more. The list has tasks on it that can be completed in one setting. Therefore, it doesn't say "organize photos," because that may never get done, but it could say "organize one box of photos," because that is a task that can realistically be completed and crossed off. Create your list so you can realistically be able to cross the tasks off and have a sense of completion at the end of the day. On slower days, be sure to add an item from your "Future list."

Reminder & Notes
Use the back portion of the notebook for notes, brainstorming, or any other things you want to remember. This is your go-to location, so if you write a note down about a gift idea for your son, you'll remember where to find it! Evernote is a great app for notes as well.

Prepare & Plan Look ahead at the beginning of the week to map out your schedule and tasks.

Set realistic expectations as to what can be accomplished on days when you already have set appointments. If you are scheduled with meetings from 8a-5p, you need a shorter active to-list. Begin planning your daily tasks at the beginning of the week, learning to anticipate your needs. At the beginning of the week, start creating tentative to-do lists for each day so you can start slotting out when you'll get tasks done. This way, when unexpected plans arise, you can see how to adjust your tasks and time. You can do this in your notebook if it's big enough, or on a separate sheet of paper. Example below.

Accomplishing more: WEEKLY OVERVIEW

Limit of 3-5 essential tasks per day that can be completed in one setting

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
DAILY TASKS						
MEAL						

Sample

The Proper Place • www.properplaceorganizing.com