



gtd[®] Finding Tools You'll Love

Choosing a tool to complement your Getting Things Done® (GTD®) habits can seem difficult because we think we'll only be successful if we find the PERFECT tool. In reality, GTD practitioners change tools throughout their life as their system evolves. The key is to quickly pick a tool after adopting GTD—so it can start to support your new habits immediately. Use the questions on the first page as guidelines to help you pick the right tool; the app matrix on the second page provides a quick breakdown for many of the most popular apps.

1. Do I already have a tool I can use?

Many times, people are already using a tool that they like; they just haven't considered expanding their current tool to fit their new GTD habits. If you already have a tool (e.g., program, app, paper, etc.) that you use regularly, we recommend that you experiment with it for a couple of weeks and test whether it supports your new habits. For example, many people find that a word processing doc has worked well to track their lists in the past and will also work well with their new habits. If you already have something you use and like, give it try.

2. How much do I want to spend?

Not all tools are equal, but everyone needs or wants different capabilities. There are apps that are completely free. While other apps are free for the basic program but have an in-app, one-time upgrade fee or have a monthly subscription model for advanced features. You want to make sure that whatever tool you choose will have the capabilities and features that you need to support your system. You may not want to spend too much until you decide which tool works best for you.

3. How simple or complex would I like it to be?

Some people track fewer next actions and projects, so they can use a very simple paper and pencil system. Others have more going on, and they need a tool that matches their complex reality. When choosing a tool, focus on ease of use. Some tools are really robust and, as a result, require more time to set up and master. The ones with simpler options will be easier to navigate, but they may not offer all of the features you'd like. At first, choose a tool that is fairly easy to use so that you don't unwittingly create barriers in your GTD system. Ultimately, your tool should match your system without being too complex.

4. Where and when will I do most of my organizing?

There are apps that install on every device you own—or may even think of owning some day. Consider where you'll be when you're doing most of your organizing (e.g., in your office, at home, on the go, etc.). Look for tools that make it convenient to put your things where they belong without slowing you down.

5. Where and when will I need to access those things I've organized?

It's almost more important to know the answer to this question than the answer to the last question. If you're on the move regularly, you'll want to have a way to access your lists from wherever you are; you will most likely want it to be mobile and sync with your other devices. If you tend to be in your office when you access your list, then you may want a different tool.

“A great hammer doesn't always make a great carpenter; but a great carpenter will always want to have a great hammer.”

David Allen

GTD Tools Matrix: This is a compilation of many popular apps that can be used to manage lists. These apps have a variety of different capabilities, features, and fees associated with them. For apps that have in-app purchases to upgrade features, it will be noted below. For many people, a tool can be as simple as a pen and paper. However, for those who would like to use a more high-tech tool to make their lists, here are some options to consider. They all have a mobile version.

Application	PC	Mac	Connects projects and next actions	Desktop Cost	Mobile Cost
Microsoft Outlook	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Reminders (Apple)	No	Yes	No	No	No
Microsoft OneNote	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Evernote	Yes	Yes	No	Freemium	No (In-App)
OmniFocus	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Microsoft To-Do	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Google Tasks	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Google Keep	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Todoist	Yes	Yes	Yes	Freemium	No (In-App)
Remember the Milk	Yes	Yes	No	Freemium	No (In-App)
Things 3	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Nirvana for GTD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Freemium	No
Workflowy	Yes	Yes	No	Freemium	No
Any.do	Yes	Yes	No	Freemium	No (In-App)
Trello	Yes	Yes	No	Freemium	No (In-App)
Asana	Yes	Yes	Yes	Freemium	No
Nozbe	Yes	Yes	No	Freemium	No (In-App)
Achievement Blueprint	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

GTD® and Getting Things Done® are registered trademarks of the David Allen Company, used with permission by VitalSmarts.