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iPhone®
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Our focus with this Guide is to show you how to create a seamless GTD® system using the built-in applications on the iPhone.

If you are new to the iPhone, this Guide should be an excellent starting point for you to build a solid foundation for optimizing your productivity using the built-in applications. If you already have an established system in the iPhone, use this Guide as an opportunity to fine-tune or simplify, if you have found you've underused or overbuilt your setup.

We are aware that there are many applications available that do similar functions. You do not need to use all of the built-in applications to be successful with GTD on the iPhone. By all means, experiment with the applications that will work best for you. For example, you may find there is a more robust Reference application that you would prefer to use, such as Evernote®, instead of or in addition to the built-in iPhone Notes application. Or, you may find that the Reminders app for list management does not work as well for you as another one for your lists.

Whatever tools you choose, be careful not to overcomplicate your systems to the point where you can only maintain them when you are at your peak of mental clarity. It's too easy to be out of that mindset and have the whole system fall apart. Your GTD tools should be complex enough to manage your workflow, but simple enough that if you were sick in bed with the flu you could still easily maintain them.

Don't worry about using every feature in your applications. There is likely far more built in than you will ever need. Focus on what makes a difference for you.

We should note that this Guide does not focus on all of the technical aspects of the iPhone and all of the options for syncing. Apple Support or your IT department will be your best resource for that.

The primary focus of this guide is about applying GTD to the applications available on your iPhone now—without requiring you to purchase or download anything new. You have a wealth of applications at your fingertips.

OK…let's get started!
To get the most out of your iPhone as a tool for your GTD practice, let’s review the fundamentals of the Getting Things Done® approach, so you understand how the methodology and tools will intersect.

What is GTD?

GTD is the shorthand brand for “Getting Things Done,” the groundbreaking work-life management system and bestselling book by David Allen, which provides concrete solutions for transforming overwhelm and uncertainty into an integrated system of stress-free productivity.

GTD’s Five Phases of Mastering Workflow

• **Collect** – Capture anything and everything that’s grabbing your attention
• **Process** – Define actionable things into concrete next steps and successful outcomes
• **Organize** – Sort information in the most streamlined way, in appropriate categories, based on how and when you need to access it
• **Review** – Step back to review and update your system regularly
• **Do** – Make trusted choices about what to do in any given moment

Three Stages to Intergrating GTD

1. **Understanding** – You understand the distinct differences in the five phases of mastering workflow. You understand a project versus a next action. You know how to transform what you’ve collected by asking the key processing questions, clarifying what something is, and what you want to do about it.

2. **Implementation** – You have installed at least the basic gear to support a GTD system, including ubiquitous collection tools, functioning reference systems for your non-actionable information, and seamless buckets with “clean edges” for tracking your projects and next actions.

3. **Behavior Change** – The five phases of mastering workflow are second nature to you. You have changed the way you think and work and are achieving stress-free productivity on a regular basis. When you “fall off” you know what to do to get “back on.”

This Guide will leap forward to the Implementation stage, by configuring your iPhone as an organizing tool for your projects, actions, and reference. Success at the implementation stage depends on your understanding of GTD. If you are committed to GTD and experiencing stress-free productivity, don’t shortchange yourself by skipping the “Understanding” stage.

1 The *Getting Things Done* book is available from any major bookseller or our [Online Store](#).
Using the Reminders Application to Manage Project and Next Action Lists

The Reminders application is an excellent option for managing the lists in your GTD system. The Reminders application simply comes with one list named “Reminders.” We recommend you customize the lists in Reminders to match the set of lists recommended in the *Getting Things Done* book, which we will describe in more detail over the following pages.

The Most Common GTD Lists

There are 10 lists recommended in the *Getting Things Done* book that are a good starter set for most people.

1. Agendas
2. Anywhere
3. Calls
4. Computer
5. Errands
6. Home
7. Office
8. Waiting For
9. Someday Maybe
10. Projects

Sorting your next actions by context (lines 1-7) is recommended, because when you are choosing what to do, context will always be your first limitation. For example, if you are at work, you don’t want to be seeing (and having to take the time to skip over) actions that require you to be at home to do. Contexts should map to the people, places, and tools you need to get work done.

Setting Up Lists in Reminders

Let’s go ahead and set up the 10 suggested lists in Reminders now. You can always go back to customize these later, after you’ve experimented, to discover what will work best for you. We encourage you to give these lists some time, in order to see the value in sorting by context, if this concept is new to you.

1. Open the Reminders Application on your iPhone

![Reminders Icon]
Marking an item complete or deleting it is up to you. If space is not a consideration on your iPhone, you may want to keep a record of everything you complete, as a backup, if that would be useful for you.

**Using Due Dates**

In Reminders, due dates are assigned with the setting Remind Me on a Day, within each entry. To view items due today, tap on the Menu icon and tap Today.

**Using Siri® with Reminders**

You can also add items to your Reminders lists using Siri, if available on your iPhone. Simply bring up Siri by pressing the Home button and speak your command, such as “add buy a new car to my projects list” or “add figure out server thing to my inbox list” and Siri will respond to the command and allow you to confirm your new entry:

You may also want to experiment with using Siri for timely location-based reminders. For example, when you want to be reminded of something to do when you arrive at a specific location, such as “Remind me to water the plants when I get home.” Siri can also read out loud to you what’s on your Calendar or Reminders lists. For example, try speaking “Read my Errands list” or “Read today’s calendar.”

**Using the Mail Application to Process and Organize Email**

The master key for managing email is the hardest habit for many to change—working from a regularly empty inbox. It takes less psychic effort to operate from a zero base than to leave anything sitting in the inbox. That doesn’t mean that the inbox in email is kept at zero—just that it gets there on some regular basis (at least once a week in the Weekly Review). The problem is that most people do not have a system for managing their emails beyond the inbox area, so if they can’t move on or finish dealing with the email right then, they will leave it in “in” as the safest place.