



**Doing More with Less:**

**3 Money-Making Time  
Management Hacks for  
Mompreneurs**

**Course Book**

[TheMomprenneurHQ.com](http://TheMomprenneurHQ.com)

# Course Book

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## Introduction

Do you ever find yourself at the end of each day feeling frustrated and thinking, "What exactly did I do all day?"

Do you find this happening often?

If the answer is yes, you're not alone. Small business owners, solo entrepreneurs, freelancers, and others who are self-employed struggle with this feeling all the time. It can feel like a huge accomplishment to finish the day knowing you were productive.

For most of us, it never feels like we have enough hours in the day. But the reality is that you do have the time you need — it's just being taken up by non-essential tasks that are overburdening you and getting in the way of what's important.

Despite your best efforts, you seem to be going nowhere. It's as if you're running in place on a treadmill: no matter how hard you push yourself, you'll never go anywhere.

If you work for yourself, you especially can't afford to throw away precious minutes in your day.

The question of how to balance time for work and family comes down to managing your time more effectively.

This is as easy as mastering **3 simple strategies** that you can apply to all of your work – every day, every week, and every month.

The key is to think of these strategies as 3 'P's that follow a step-by-step order:



1. Prioritize
2. Plan
3. Produce

In this short course, you'll learn the best practices for each of these steps and how to implement them effectively.

Follow the 3 P's of time management every day and you'll experience a huge boost in your productivity; you'll get off that time treadmill that goes nowhere and jump onto a clear path to achieving your goals.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Start by clarifying your business goals:

- Review your current business goals and write them down in your Action Guide, dividing them up based on short-term and long-term.
- Set specific milestones and deadlines for each goal.

2. What current time management issues are you facing?

- Identify areas where you're wasting time
- Note why you think these are an issue
- Highlight issues you want to focus on resolving as you go through this course.

## Step 1 - Prioritize

Learning the best way to achieve and manage your goals is key to boosting productivity. We all know how to make a “to-do” list, but this isn’t enough. You need to figure out which items are essential, and which aren’t important at all.

Start by making a list of everything you have to do today. Don’t worry about priority now; just get everything down.

How many items do you have? If you have more than seven or eight, you need to trim your list. Take out any tasks that you perform every day, like checking email. You can also take out anything that will happen regardless, such as a phone call you’re expecting.

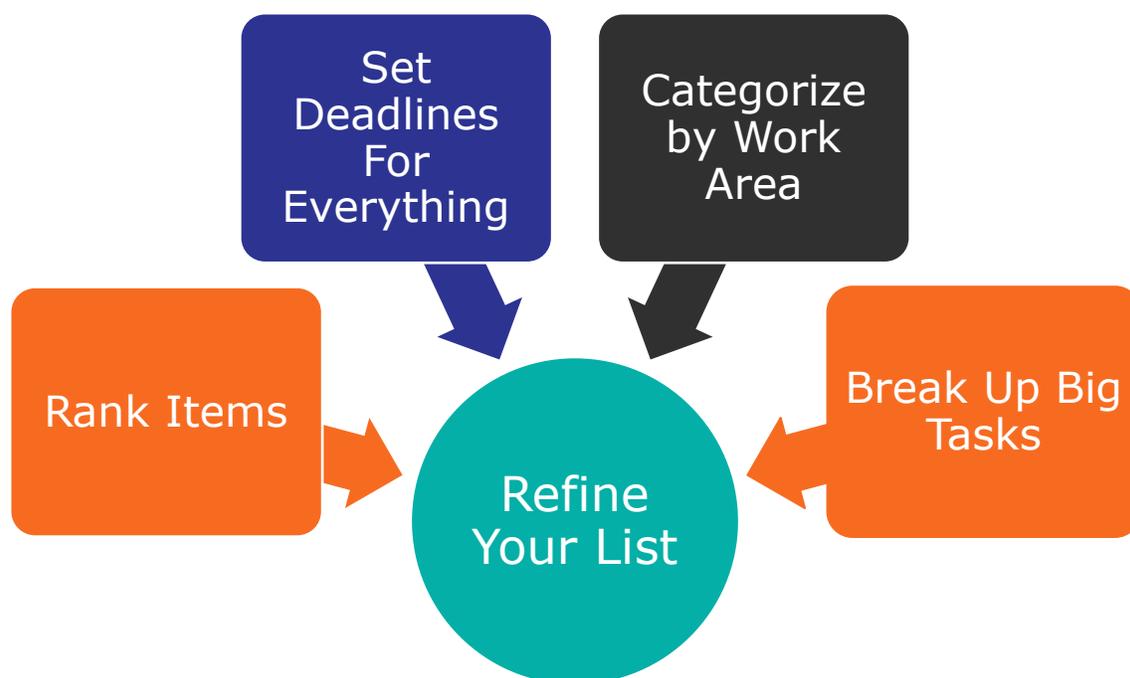
Look at your list and ask yourself, “If I do just one thing today, what should it be?” Put this at the top of your list.

Now, look back at the other items and repeat for the second task. Keep doing this, and eventually you’ll end up with a list of things you have to do in order of importance.

One way to prioritize without getting bogged down in unnecessary tasks is to consider the direct result each task will have on your business. Which will directly or indirectly impact your income and goals? These are your high-impact tasks and should be your highest priority.

## Tips for Refining Your To-Do List

We've covered the simplest method for arranging daily tasks, but sometimes this isn't enough. Here are some tips for further refining your list:



**Rank Items.** Create a scoring and ranking system. For example:

- 1-Needs to be done today
- 2-Should be done today
- 3-Doesn't need to be done today

Plug your items into these categories, and then prioritize within the category. This is especially helpful if you have many small things to do.

**Set Deadlines for Everything.** Set a deadline for everything you have to do, even if there really isn't any time pressure. Make the deadline specific to not only a day, but also a time of day. If one task is "due" in the morning and another in the afternoon, you know the morning task is more important.

**Categorize by Work Areas.** Some people categorize by work-related or personal tasks. You can then focus on one list at work and the other after work. You could also break it down into smaller areas of work.

**Categorize by Time.** If you have different tasks to complete in the morning versus the afternoon, you can create categories by time of day, or small to-do lists for each part of the day.

**Break Up Big Tasks.** For anything that takes longer than a day, break it up into daily milestones and put these into your to-do list.

Remember that the goal is to have a simple system that works for you. Use whichever methods make prioritizing easier for you.

## The Backburner

Ideally, you should have three to five tasks on your daily to-do list. You have to break the habit of thinking that you need to do everything. Be ruthless in throwing out tasks that aren't essential right now.

So, what do you do with the items you put on the "backburner?"

If your backburner tasks can't be thrown out, then try one or more of the following tactics:

Choose a day

Choose a time each day

Delegate

Make a secondary list

- Choose a day and time when you'll take care of each of these items.
- Set aside some time during the day when you go over these less important things, such as at the end of a workday when you're still at your desk or computer.
- Delegate these tasks to someone else who can carry them out for you.
- Make a secondary list of tasks to get done in case you finish your main list early and have time left over.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Create your to-do list either in your Action Guide or your tool of choice, such as a pad of paper, planner, or digital notebook (like Evernote).
  - Start with a full list
  - Choose the one thing you'll do today, if you could just do one
  - Repeat with the remaining list based on your initial priorities
2. Look at your list and ask yourself which will bring you the greatest income with the least effort. Move this up in your list.
3. Go through your list again and look for items you can remove or delegate.

## Step 2 – Plan

**N**ow that you have your prioritized to-do list, it's time to plan out how you'll complete it in the most efficient and effective way possible.

### Time Block Your Tasks

Think about time as a flexible resource that expands or contracts based on the limits you set. What if your first task eats up more of your time than you expected? To prevent this from happening, you can plan a block of time for each task. Once you reach the end of that block, you'll decide whether to continue by expanding the time limit or put off finishing it for the next day.

For example, you might decide that the most important thing today is to finish writing copy for your landing page. So, you set aside two hours to do it in the morning. At the end of that two hours, you're not quite done. You've gotten stuck in the details or refining the wording, and it's going to take at least another hour.

You might look at the time and your list and decide to make finishing your copy as the first priority tomorrow, when your mind can focus with renewed energy. Then, proceed with the next item on your list.

## Find Your Natural Rhythms

We all have times of the day when we're most productive and finding your "best hours" can help you solve problems or connect with other people. Try to schedule tasks during these optimal times of day.

Maybe your most creative time of day is late morning. If so, schedule tasks like content creation for the hour or two before lunch. If you're at your most social in the late afternoon, set this time for writing important emails or holding meetings.

If you work from or at home, and your children still sees their mother every time they enter the living room, it can be very difficult to get anything done. One of the best ways to handle this challenge is to work with your children's circadian rhythm, or natural sleep pattern. We talk more about that in "Babies, Business & Boundaries: The Mompreneur's Secret to Mastering Work-Life Harmony."

## Plan for Interruptions

No matter how well you plan, some things are likely to take longer than you thought. There may be interruptions or problems you hadn't anticipated that you must deal with right away. To allow for the unexpected, you have to pad your to-do list schedule with extra time blocks.

Even if things don't take longer than expected, padding your schedule still has an advantage. You'll be done with your work more quickly than you projected, which means you can finish your day sooner or get started on tomorrow's tasks.

To plan for interruptions, try the following:

### Overestimate



### Buffer



### Plan for catch-up



**Overestimate:** When setting time limits on the items on your list, overestimate the time it will take to complete them. Don't schedule a morning or afternoon too tightly or you'll be under constant pressure and will inevitably start running behind. And if you're always running behind schedule, you'll end up back on that treadmill of always trying to catch up.

**Buffer:** Add a buffer of time in your schedule between blocks of work. For example, if you're dividing up your time into 2-hour blocks, schedule in a 20 to 30 minute buffer with no specific task in between each 2 hour block.

**Plan for Catch-Up:** Another idea is to schedule specific "catch-up time", such as just before lunch or at the end of the day. And if you don't need it, you can use this time to take a break.

Remember also that you can always put off an item until the next day if it's going unexpectedly longer and you need a fresh mind to tackle it.

## Batch Tasks for Better Efficiency

Sometimes, it's not efficient to work on each task every day. Instead, you might take certain items and "batch" them by setting aside a longer block of time or even a full day to work on them.

For example, you might publish a weekly video or podcast. It takes time to set up equipment, record, edit, and produce the content each time. However, if you only have to set up everything once, you can save a significant amount of time. In this case, you might reserve Fridays for video production. Related tasks such as scripting and editing can be done then, or added to other days' to-do lists.

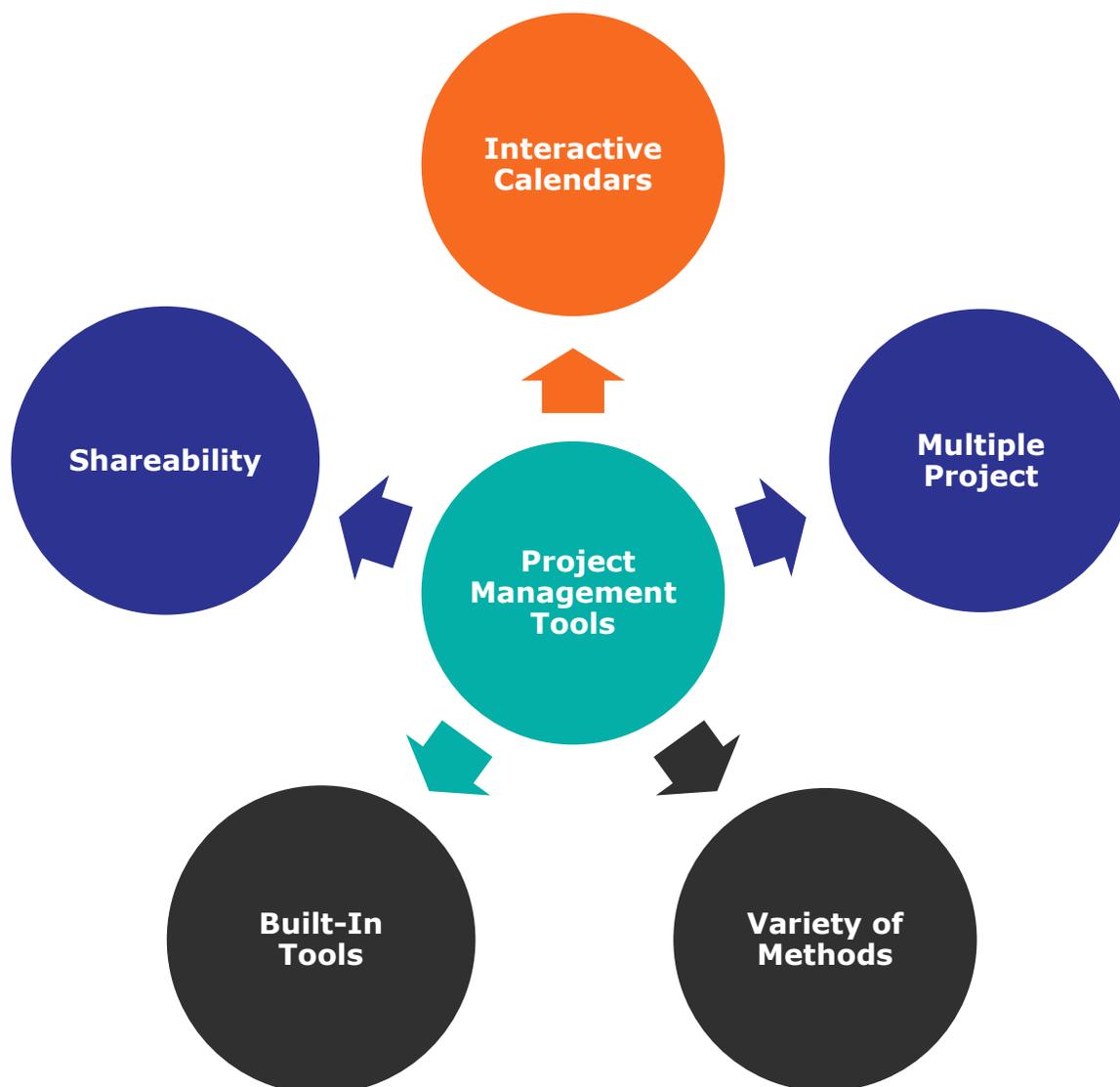
If you have a large number of client calls to make, it might be better to schedule them on two separate mornings rather than trying to space them out day-by-day. This is also a good strategy for tasks where you need to get "in the zone" – where you need to prepare your mindset to tackle the task appropriately.

Taking an afternoon to cook meals or a morning to iron and pull together outfits, can save a heap of time in the long run.

## Use Project Management Tools

Any system for managing the tasks you have to do is fine as long as it works for you. But consider using a project management system to make keeping track of everything easier.

Project management systems include features such as:



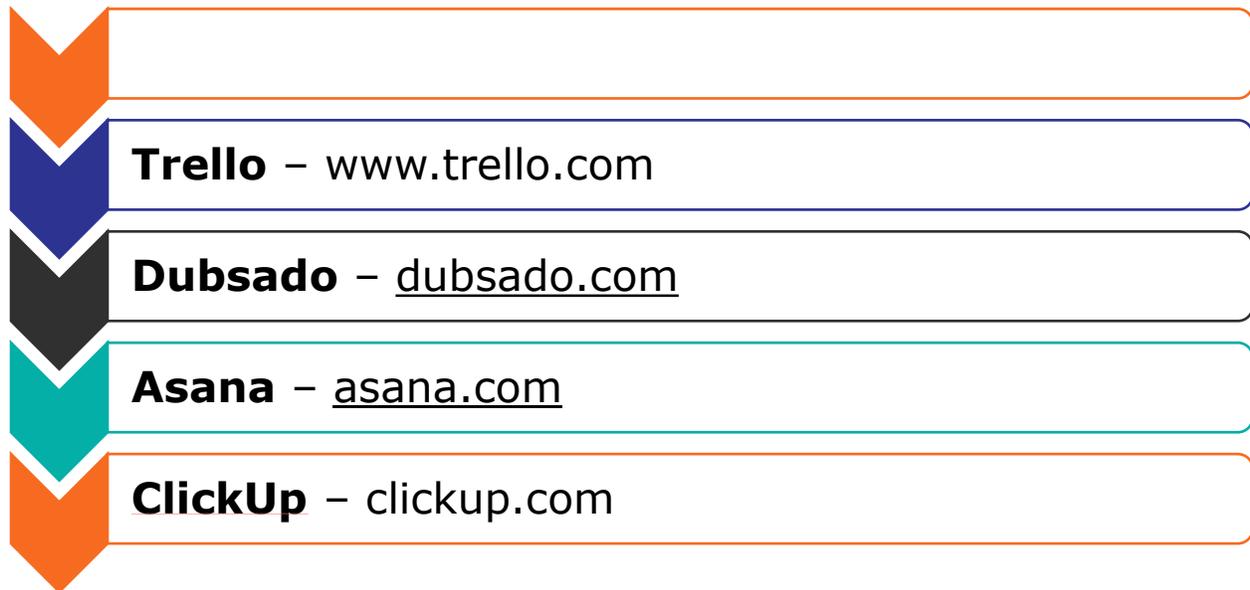
- **Interactive Calendars.** You can manage your schedule easily and customize what's included and how it displays.
- **Multiple Projects.** With several projects, whether short or long-term, you can see where you are in each immediately.

- **Variety of Methods.** These programs have to-do lists, time management, and other methods to help you plan.
- **Built-In Tools.** They have tools to help you with tasks that might be your weak points, like planning a budget.
- **Shareability.** Since they're online, you can share with team members easily and access anywhere you have internet.

There are many free and premium programs. It's best to try out free programs first. A simple free program may be just what you need.

If you're considering paying for a premium project management program, don't buy extras that you don't need. Take advantage of free trials and make sure it's right for you before you buy.

Some of the most highly-rated systems right now include:



Trello – [www.trello.com](http://www.trello.com)

Dubsado – [www.dubsado.com](http://www.dubsado.com)

Asana – [asana.com/](http://asana.com/)

ClickUp – [www.clickup.com](http://www.clickup.com)

Don't get too complicated with project management tools. Remember that the whole point is to make things easier. You may be able to get by just using an online calendar.

## Getting Ready for Tomorrow

At the end of each day, look at your list and get ready for tomorrow. If there are tasks you didn't get to today, put them on your list for tomorrow.

Ideally, you should plan out your entire week in advance to maximize your time. Then, at the end of each day, you'll refine the next day's schedule to take into account any changes needed or unexpected tasks that have come up.

About once a week, or at whatever pace works for you, review long-term projects and check in to see how you're doing. Look at the system you've implemented and see whether it's working or not. These systems are highly personalized and made perfect through trial and error, and constant revision.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Take the one item from your To-Do List that you decided was most likely to impact your income and list each task you need to do in order to complete it. Use your project management tool or a pencil and paper – whatever works for you.
2. Next, take each task and choose a day and productive time of day to tackle it. Schedule it on your calendar, batching tasks where it makes sense to do several related things in one day or longer block of time.
3. Plan the rest of your week based on the concepts and tips in the module, including any recurring daily tasks as well. For items that you'll do in blocks, set aside that block of time on your calendar. Remember to:
  - Overestimate how long a task will take
  - Add buffer time between blocks
  - Include free or catch-up time

## Step 3 - Produce

Now that you've set your schedule up for success, it's time to execute on your plans and produce results. You have a calendar with blocks labeled for each task, plus buffer areas in between tasks so that you can catch up if need be. Carefully complete each task, making sure not to neglect any part of your project.

One note on buffer time: it should be used as a last resort. Don't waste this time just because you have it marked off on your calendar. There will be occasions when you really need it. If you don't need it, use the time effectively to get more work done or recoup your energy.

As you go through each day and take care of your to do list, various things may trip you up or distract you from your priorities. Here are some best practices to keep you on track:



## Watch the Clock

Keep an eye on the time so that you don't run over your allotments. The best way to do this is using a timer. An ordinary kitchen timer will do, or the timer on your phone. Set it so that you can focus on your task, and the alarm will let you know when it's time to move on.

## Take The "Is This Necessary?" Test

Before starting each task, ask yourself whether it's truly necessary. Is it something that will help you get toward a specific goal? Is it something you can delegate to someone else or automate? Try to eliminate tasks before you start them, especially if it's something you hadn't already planned on doing and which has come up unexpectedly.

## See It Through

If you decide to work on a task for one hour, stick to that one hour. Don't stop in the middle or start doing something else. You considered priorities thoroughly when you made your schedule, so see it through. If you feel that a task is wasting time or doesn't need the block allotted, make the necessary adjustment for next time.

## Limit Distractions

Arrange your work environment so that there are no distractions. Turn off phone notifications and stay off social media. If you're working from home, set up distractions for your child(ren) during blocks of time that require your focused attention. Let others know you're busy if you don't want to be distracted. If something comes up or you're interrupted, tell the person you'll handle it later.

## Don't Be a Perfectionist

Sometimes, when you're focusing on getting things done, perfectionism can hold you back. Try to turn off that voice in the back of your head and remember that you can always go back later and tweak or edit. There's always something that can be improved, so aim for 'good enough' rather than perfect.

## Make Use of Waiting Time

If there's a delay in completing a task, try to use this time productively. For example, you're waiting for an update on an app before you can do your work. While it's updating, see if you can make some headway on another task or part of the task. This isn't multitasking per se, but just a way to be more efficient.

## Look for Shortcuts

Always look for shortcuts that you can use, like templates or scripts. Think about what processes and workflows you do routinely that can be automated to make things go more quickly.

## Action Steps:

1. Download a timer app or find a kitchen timer that you can use to stay on track.
2. Once you've gone through the first day with your new system, reflect on how it went, asking yourself:
  - What did you get done?
  - What did you *not* get done that you were supposed to?
  - What distracted you?
  - What helped you work faster?
  - Which tasks needed more than you blocked?
  - Which tasks needed less time than you blocked?
  - Are you trying to do too many things?
  - Is anything taking longer than it's worth?
  - Are there any tasks that would be better done at different times of day than you did them today?
  - Was there a better time of day that worked with your child(ren)'s schedule?
  - What kind of shortcuts could you use and where can you find them?
  - Can you delegate anything?
  - What changes do you need to make?
3. After your first week with the 3P system, reflect on what you've done and the progress you've made towards your goals. After several days of using the system, you should have a solid understanding of what changes can be made for better efficiency.

## Conclusion

With a systematic approach, you'll get everything you need done with time to spare. No more feeling that time is slipping away and you're stuck at the same level, getting nowhere in your business.

For every mother who is a business owner or working mom, finding the balance between your family and work life can be challenging. For most of us, time doesn't seem like it has the capacity to go fast enough. But for many, the day is being filled with non-essential tasks that are taking up space and making it difficult to move forward. The secret to succeeding at a productive day is understanding what will work best for you and then implementing a strategy like the 3P system.

MompreneurHQ offers a holistic approach to Business Coaching in that we also focus on mind and body wellness. We seek to help aspiring mom entrepreneurs start, grow and scale home-based virtual businesses by providing outstanding resources, detailed training programs and strategies to achieve work-life harmony.

If you are a mom looking for a community of boss moms who will support you as you pursue your goals and achieve the elusive work-life balance, join our free Facebook™ group [The Mompreneur HQ](#).

You're raising a family, building a business and you aim to win at both - we're here to help you. See you on the inside!