

Step 1: Capture

Capture is the first step in the process of Getting Things Done®; it's how you identify all the things that have your attention. Pull out a pen and paper and use the questions below.

The goal of this exercise is to make a list of everything you have in your head. You might be surprised by how much you have in there - most people usually are. This process might take five minutes, or it might take two hours. However long it takes, this should be a very focused, concentrated effort to see how empty you can get your head.

Professional

1. What's cluttering up your workspace that doesn't need to be there?
2. What projects that have been started but not finished?
3. What projects do you need to start?
4. What outstanding commitments do you have; what promises have you made to other people?
5. Who's waiting on you for something right now?
6. What are you waiting on to come back from other people?

Personal

1. What outstanding projects do you have?
2. What do you need to buy?
3. What do you need to fix?
4. What do you need to do for family members?
5. What outstanding commitments do you have; what promises have you made to other people?
6. Who's waiting on you for something right now?
7. What are you waiting on to come back from other people?

Calendar

1. Look back over the last week or two to be reminded of outstanding items.
2. Think about upcoming events (professional and personal); what do you need to do to prepare?

Step 2: Clarify

What's the next action?

What's the project?

To get a sense of the power of those two questions, take your list from Step 1 and, for each item on the list, answer the question, "What's the very next action?" Write it down. It needs to be a very granular, specific, visible physical action.

Remember, you don't need to list all of the actions for each item. When you know the next step, it lets your mind relax and gives it room to work.

For example:

- In Step 1, you captured "Mom".
- What's the very next action? Call sister.
- If this action doesn't close the loop, what is the larger project? Plan Mom's birthday party.

Do this for each of the items in your Personal, Professional, and Calendar list.

Item on your list	What's the very next action?	What's the project?
Mom	Call Sister	Plan Mom's birthday party

Step 3: Organize

Take some time and create the major organizational lists discussed in the video. You will find some examples in the organizers below to help you get started.

Calendar (things that can be done in the future)	
<i>Pick up Mom from the airport on June 26 at 1:00 P.M.</i>	

Next-actions (things that can be done as soon as you can do them)	
<i>Office</i>	<i>Email Bobby about new client list</i>
<i>Phone</i>	<i>Call Melissa about Friday's meeting.</i>
<i>Computer</i>	<i>Software update</i>
<i>Errands</i>	<i>Pick up dry cleaning.</i>
<i>Agendas</i>	

Waiting (things you are waiting for)

Participants list from Jake

Projects (things you clarified in Step 2)

Mom's birthday party