

# How to get things done

## When you struggle with motivation, organisation and focusing

### Planning

Planning helps you work out what exactly you need to do – and in what order

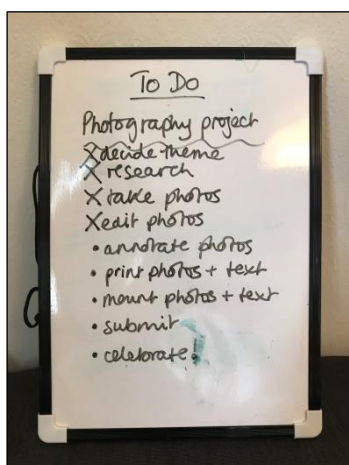
It's easier to get motivated if you know what you will do as your first step

Try to break down the big task into smaller parts

It's easier to do this if you write it down. Choose a way to do this that works for you, for example...

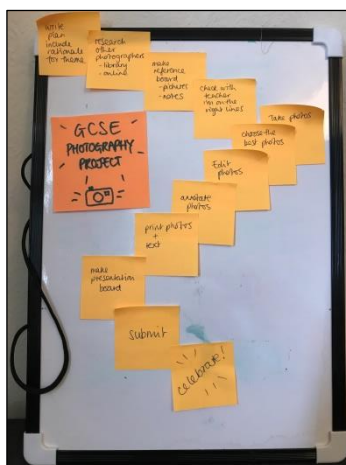
#### A list

Bulleted lists often work well, you can put a cross through each bullet as you finish each task



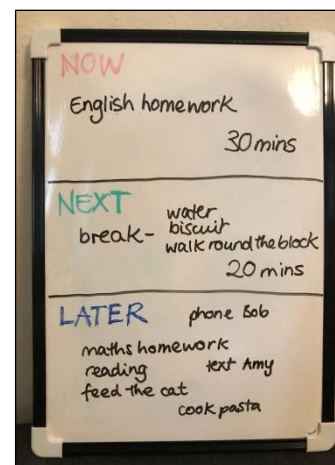
#### Sticky notes

You can arrange these in a 'timeline' so you can plan the best order for your tasks



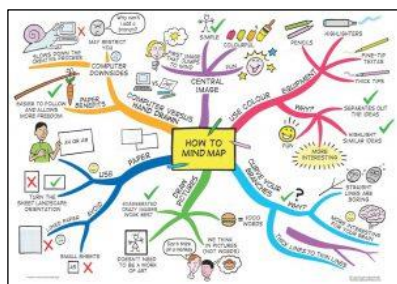
#### Now, next, later board

Helps you plan your day as you go

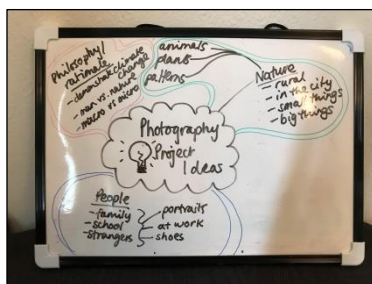


Mind Maps – another great way to plan, record and remember...

things you need to remember



ideas



things you need to do

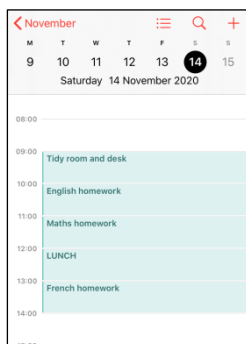


Check out this video by the pioneer of mind Maps, Tony Buzan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5Y4plsXTV0>

### Diaries or calendars

Decide the days you will do certain tasks and write them in your diary/calendar.

Some people find writing in a paper diary helps them remember more easily. Some people use the diary on their phone or tablet – as you can also set yourself reminders

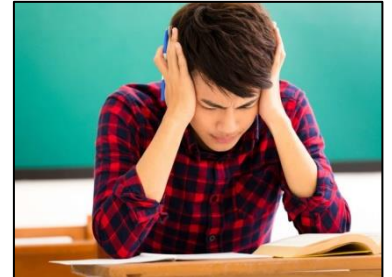


## More top tips

If you go to school or college, go to the library to write up your notes or do your homework before you go home. In this way you will be less likely to forget to do it - and you will probably focus better and be quicker to finish

### Talk to your teachers

- If you feel confident enough, you can do this yourself. If not, you could...
  - ask a parent or carer to support you – they could arrange the meeting and also come with you
  - write an email – this can be easier if you find talking tricky
- Write yourself a list of things you want to ask and tell your teachers. Think about...
  - What helps you
  - What you find difficult
  - What does not help you



### For example

- Do you sometimes struggle to follow and remember everything teachers say?
- Is writing and listening at the same time tricky for you?
- Do you need instructions to be clear and simple – and one at a time?
- Do you need prompts and reminders to focus?
- Would it help to sit somewhere different?
- Do you get embarrassed if it is obvious you are being helped?
- Would it help if teachers gave the same help to everyone?
- Would it help if teachers gave you hand-outs showing all the information they told you in class?
- Would hand outs with written instructions help you?
- Is classroom noise and activity distracting?
- Could teachers allow you to do written work in a quiet area, such as the library?
- If fidgeting helps you focus, can teachers allow you to have a quiet fidget toy or to doodle in class?
- Would short breaks for movement help you to keep focused? E.g. a walk up and down the corridor

### Working at home...

- If you have your own room – perfect
- If you have to share space with others – agree how you can get the space and quiet when you need it
- Keep the door shut and ask family to leave you in peace – put a notice on your door
- Tidy your workspace – to make it comfortable and reduce distractions
- Set a timer to limit how long you take – as it's easy to get distracted away from the tasks you need to get done
- Reduce visual clutter and noise – these things can be distracting
- Limit how many things you stick to your wall
- Try using headphones. Some people find listening to music helps. Choose music that works for you. Some people find music with lyrics too distracting
- Put your phone out of reach – or at least turn off all notifications / put it on silent
- Buddy up - meet or call a friend who also needs to work - encourage each other
- Many people find it easier to get on with the job if someone else is there for moral support



**A great video with practical advice on focusing and achieving goals from the amazing inventor + musician Martin Molin (Wintergatan)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eLUDaulxudM>



# 9 REASONS TO USE VISUALS

www.northstarpaths.com

@kwiens62



- VISUALS ARE PERMANENT  
(SPOKEN WORDS DISAPPEAR)



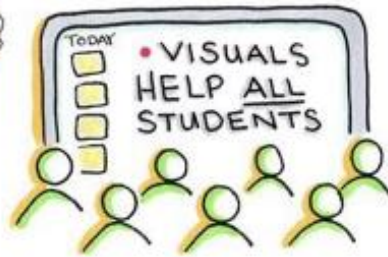
- VISUALS ALLOW TIME  
FOR LANGUAGE PROCESSING



- VISUALS PREPARE  
STUDENTS FOR TRANSITIONS



- VISUALS HELP KIDS  
SEE WHAT YOU MEAN



- VISUALS HELP ALL  
STUDENTS



- VISUALS HELP  
BUILD INDEPENDENCE



- VISUALS ARE TRANSFERABLE  
BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTS  
AND PEOPLE



- VISUALS HAVE NO ATTITUDE  
• NO TONE • NO FRUSTRATION  
• NO DISAPPROVAL



- VISUALS HELP  
REDUCE ANXIETY

Kindergarten 2017



# Now, Next, Later Board

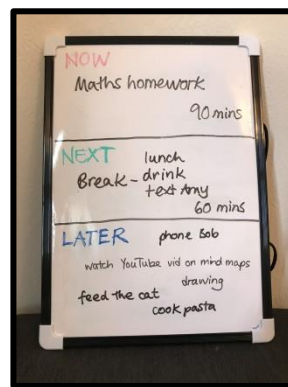
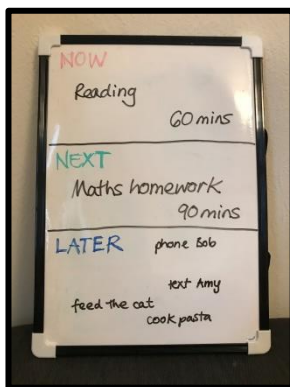
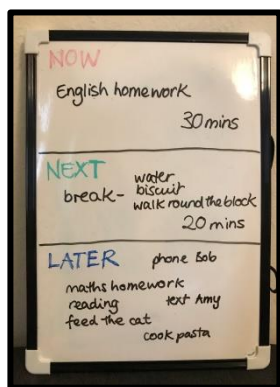
## You will need:

A small cheap whiteboard – plus suitable pen/s and eraser  
A timer - not essential but many people find this helps.  
You could use the timer on your phone or a kitchen timer



## Using a board like this is useful if...

- You have lots to do and you are struggling to know where to start
- You struggle to get motivated – and you do not want to do the things you need to do
- You struggle to stay focused – and you get distracted by doing or thinking about other things
- You struggle to finish things – and you might tell yourself you will finish it later but forget to do this
- Having a completely fixed timetable makes you feel anxious – and you feel like you need some control
- You get anxious when you feel uncertain about your day – and you want to know what will happen
- You need to get better at knowing how long certain activities take to do



## How to use a now, next, later board

- Use a whiteboard marked into 3 sections: now, next, later
- Write all the things you want to do or could do in the 'later' section
- Choose the first activity you want to do and write it in the 'now' section – write how long you want to spend on it
- Write the next activity you want to do in the 'next' section – write how long you want to spend on it
- Start the 'now' activity – use a timer to remind you when to finish
- When you've finished the 'now' activity clean the 'now' section on your board.
- In the 'now' section write the activity from the 'next' section (and the time).
- Clean the 'next' section and choose an activity from the 'later' section
- Write this in the 'next section'
- Clean it from the 'later' section
- Don't forget to add in some breaks for eating, drinking and moving!
- Don't forget to add in some activities you really like doing. This can be a reward for your hard work and can help you keep motivated.
- If you remember more things you need or want to do, add them into the 'later' section
- Continue like this until your working day is finished. Although, some people like to use the board to plan their free time too!
- Any activities left in the 'later' section can be done tomorrow!

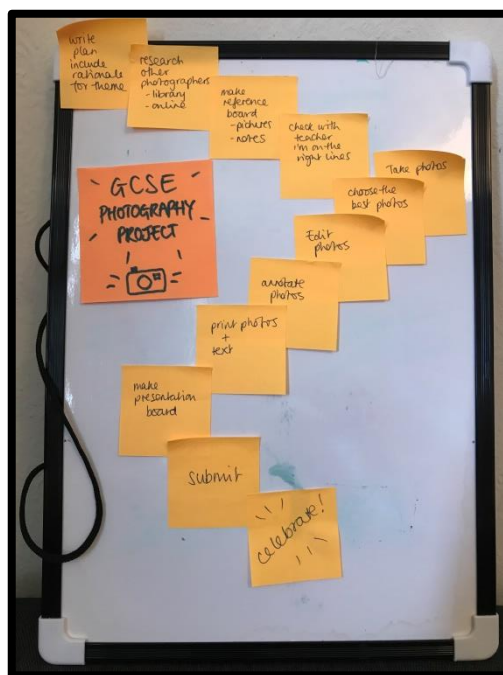
# Sticky Note Timeline Project Planner

## You will need:

- Sticky ('Post-it') notes, pen/s
- A board or large piece of paper to stick them on

## How to make and use your sticky note timeline project planner...

- Write the title of your project or big task on a sticky note
- Maybe decorate it in some way to make it stand out
- Think about each smaller task you need to do for the project – maybe make a list or a 'mind map' on a piece of paper
- Write down each smaller task on separate sticky notes
- Arrange the sticky notes on your board on piece of paper
  - Start with the thing you need to do first at the top
  - Put the thing you need to do last at the bottom
  - them
- The sticky notes are removable – so you can fiddle around and rearrange them if you change your mind!



## Other ideas to try...

- As you complete each task you could
  - remove the sticky note onto another board to make it clear what is finished and what is yet to be completed
  - use a pen to cross out the job you have finished
- Write dates or times on tasks that have a certain deadline
- Use colour schemes to make it eye catching and memorable – and to show tasks in different categories