



Tackling Unproductivity

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The Problem/s:

Stop Gaps

- You have no idea where to start.
- You have ideas but are not sure how they relate to one another.
- You feel as though you do not have the words.

Environmental

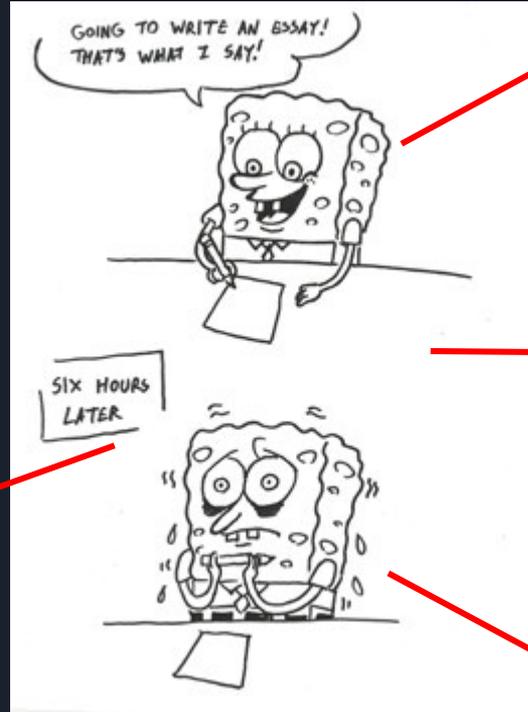
- You do not have the space to write.
- You are bombarded by distractions.

Behavioral

- You procrastinate.
- You cannot seem to stay on task.
- You do not have the time.

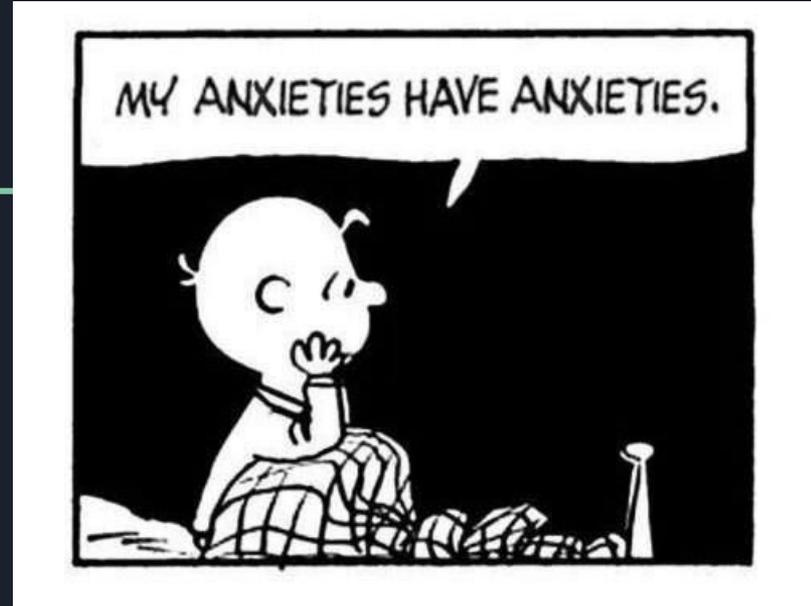
Mental

- You do not think of yourself as a writer.
- You dislike writing.
 - You have anxiety around writing.
- You are afraid of feedback.
- You fear your writing is not good enough.



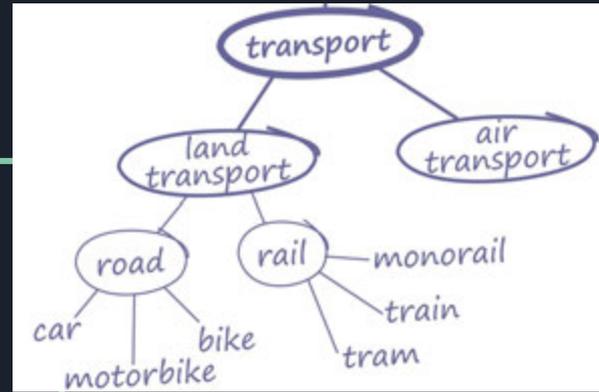
Writing Anxiety

- Find a ritual that works best for you.
 - The time of day.
 - The place.
 - The sounds.
- Keep a writing journal that chronicles writing successes.
- Discuss your writing with others.
- Write your draft out of order.
- Spend 15 minutes thinking about why you are anxious about writing, write it down, and put it aside or destroy it.



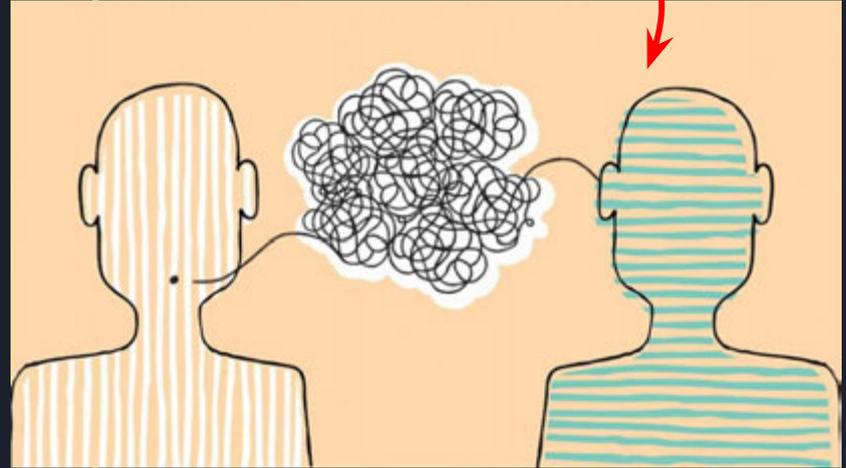
Mind Maps

1. Start with a word or topic or idea.
2. Make as many associations as possible.
3. Draw lines to connect those ideas.
4. Perhaps color code lines.
5. Add keywords.
6. Perhaps add images.



Role-play: Imagine you are explaining the topic to someone who is a non-specialist:

- Your Sibling
- Your mother
- Your grandmother
- Your best friend
- Your younger niece or nephew
- A stranger on a plane or on the street
- A person interviewing you



Free Writing

- Write for a specific amount of time without stopping, for instance 10 minutes.
- Pick a theme and write until you cannot stop.
- Make a list.



- Do not:
 - Be concerned with grammar.
 - Be concerned with punctuation.
 - Be concerned with spelling.
 - Stop writing.
- If you get stuck:
 - Write "I do not know what to write" until time is finished.
 - Rephrase or rewrite the your last thought.

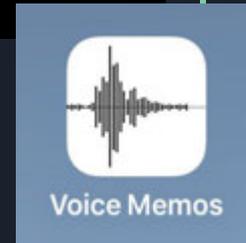
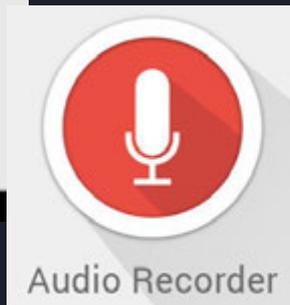
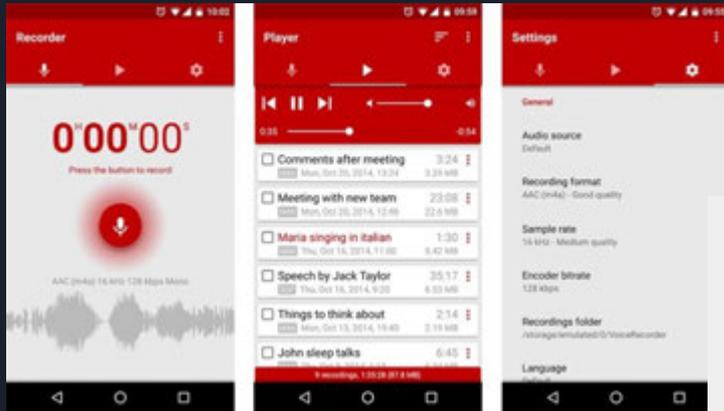
- Old-school: Pen and paper



Speak and Record

- Have a conversation with yourself:
 - Record yourself talking from beginning to end.
 - Talk about all the pieces of the project.
 - Play it back and transcribe.

- Speak with colleague, your advisor, or a writing coach:
 - Ask them if they mind being recorded.
 - Tell them your project.
 - Answer their questions.
 - Play back later and write down your discussions.



- Speak with a person with whom you are close:
 - Person: Parent, grandparent, friend, partner, etc.
 - Ask them if they mind being recorded.
 - Tell them your project.
 - Answer their questions.
 - Play back later and write down your discussions.

The Pomodoro Technique

Six steps in the original technique:

1. Decide on the task to be done.
2. Set the pomodoro timer (traditionally to 25 minutes).
3. Work on the task.
4. End work when the timer rings and put a checkmark on a piece of paper.
5. If you have fewer than four check marks, take a short break (3–5 minutes), then go to step 2.
6. After four pomodoros, take a longer break (15–30 minutes), reset your checkmark count to zero, then go to step 1.



What to do About Distractions

1. Stop the pomodoro.
2. Postpone distraction until after the pomodoro.
3. If it is a thought or other distraction:
 - a. Write it down for later.
 - b. Later set aside time dedicated to that task.
4. If it is the phone or internet: Disconnect!
 - a. <http://selfcontrolapp.com/> (Mac Only)
 - b. <https://freedom.to/> (Windows, Mac, iOS)
 - c. <https://gottcode.org/focuswriter/> (Windows, Mac, Linux)
 - d. <https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/stayfocusd/laankejkbhbdhmiplfmgcngdelahlfoji?hl=en> (Chrome Extension—Block Specific Websites)

“We Do Not Need to Be Friends!”

- You notice a gap in your argument or you need a reference.
- Add a notation in the essay or highlight the section and add a note.
- Continue writing.
- Pick a specific day or time to fill in the blank.
- Before researching decide how many sources you need.
- After reading those sources, ask yourself:
 - Do I need to explore more?
 - Is this topic pertinent for my larger discussion?
 - If the answer is no: You do not need to be friends.



- Highlight the reference.
- Write it down on a sticky note, piece of paper, or notepad.
- Everytime you see the source referenced make a tally mark next to it.
- If it is referenced 3 or more times during your reading, then choose a time for research where you will acquire this source and others.
- If it is referenced less than 3 times: You do not necessarily need to be friends.

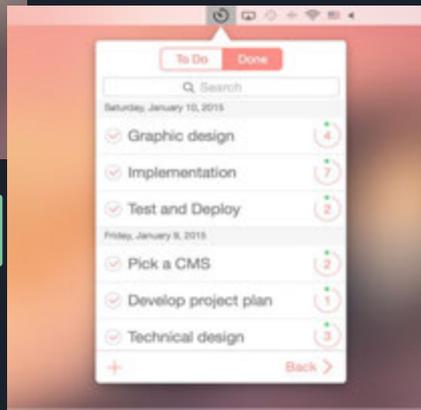
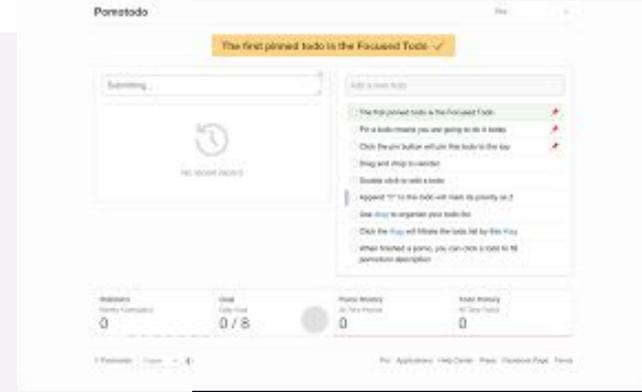
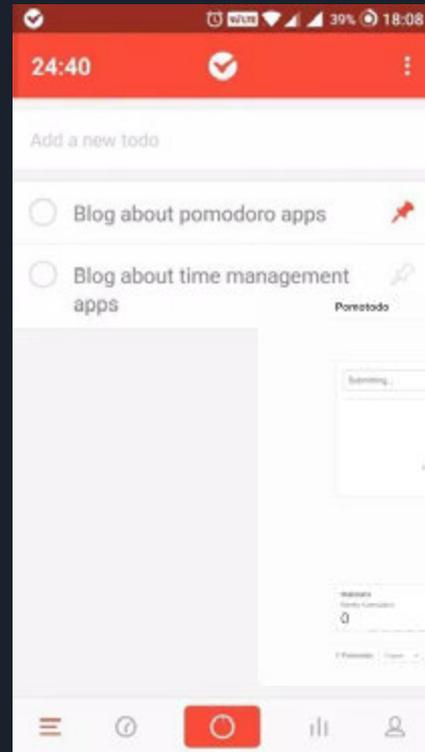


S.M.A.R.T. Goals

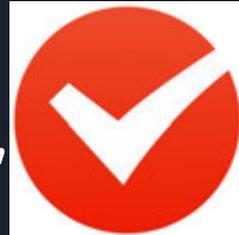
- Specific—clearly defined and identified
- Measurable—quantifiable, either in paragraphs, sections, pages, and/or time
- Attainable—able to be achieved and realistic
- Relevant—appropriate for your goals for the semester
- Time-bound—a target date



BeFocused
Available: iOS



Pomotodo
Available: Android,
iOS, Windows, Mac,
Web



Computer Version

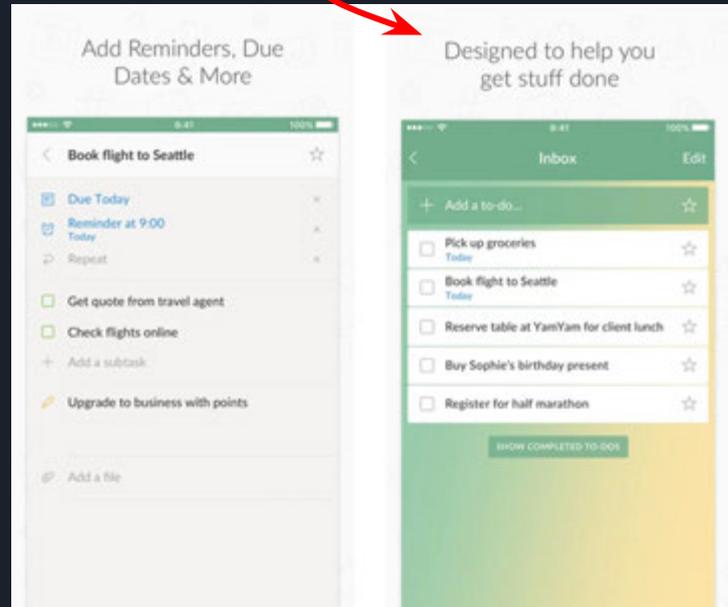
Wunderlist

Android, iOS, Windows, Mac, Web

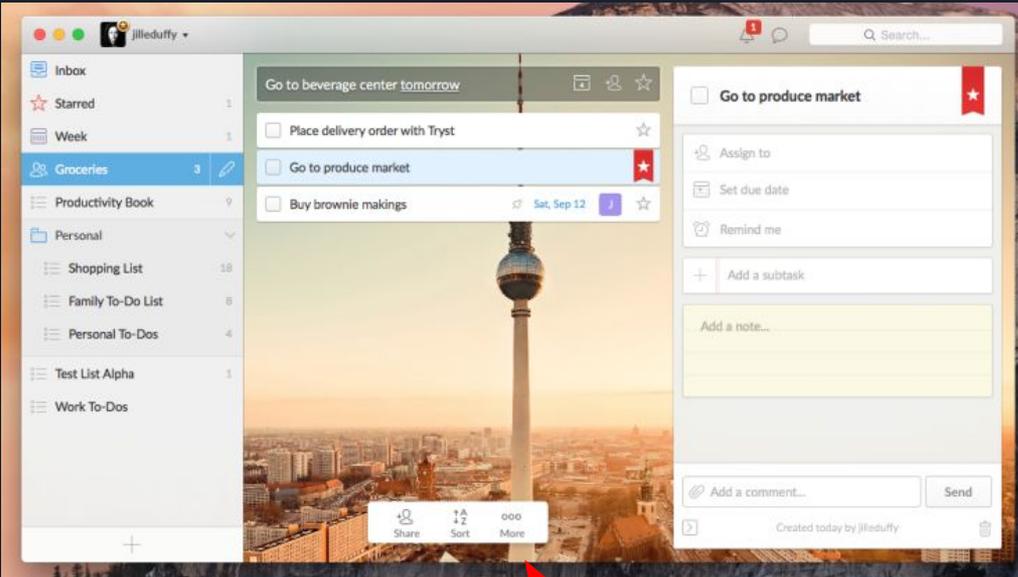


Wunderlist

App View: Android and iOS

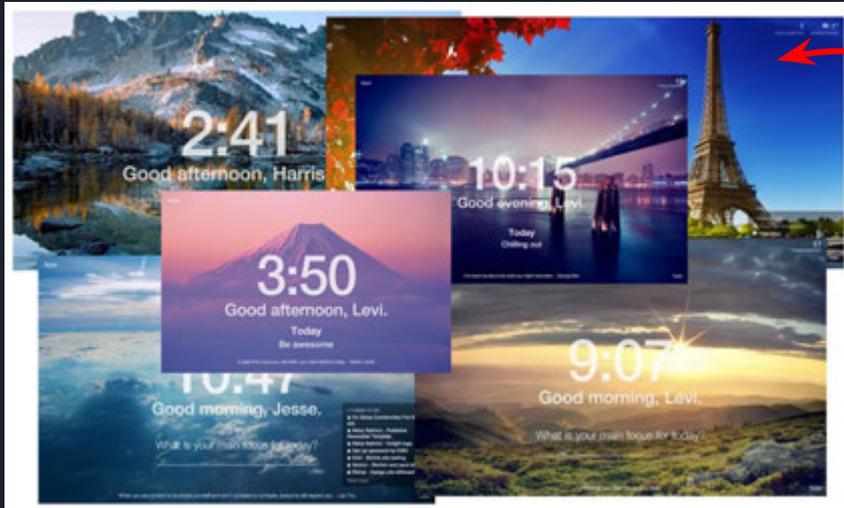


Full Screen View: Windows, Mac, and Web

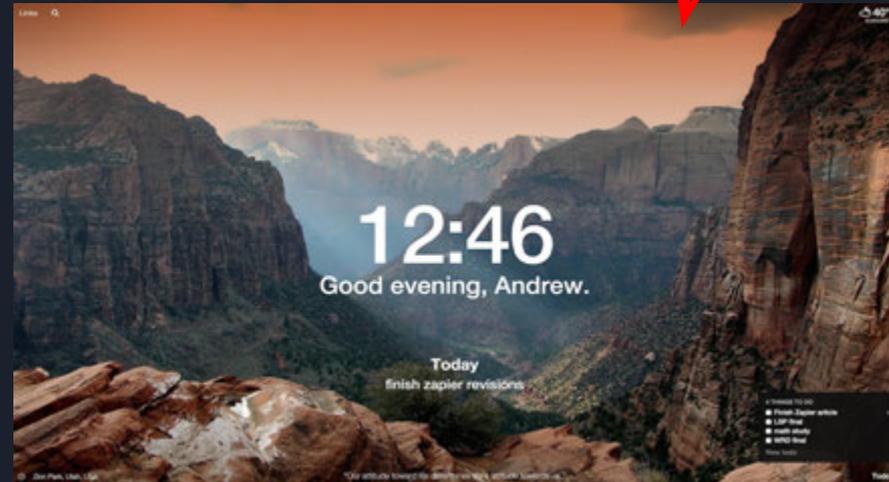


Momentum

Available: Chrome Extension and Firefox Add-on

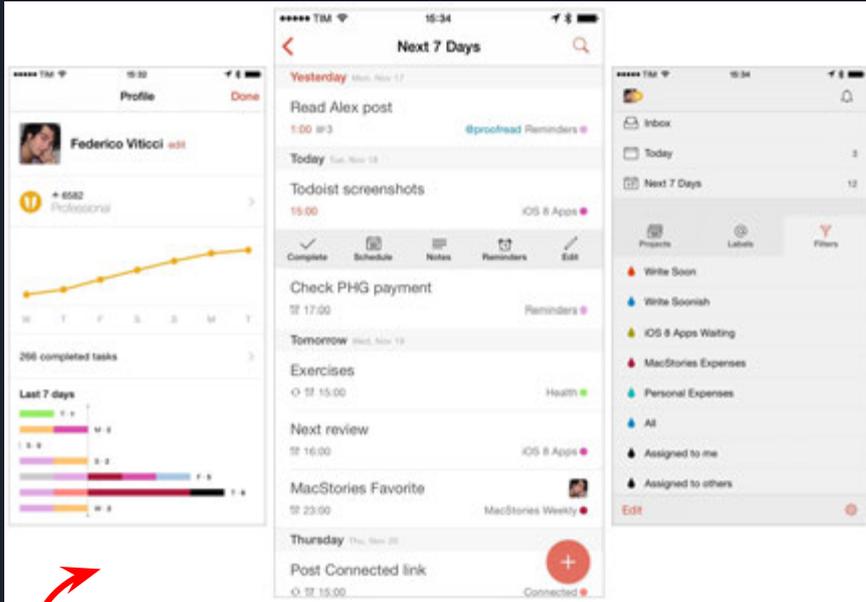


The Standard View

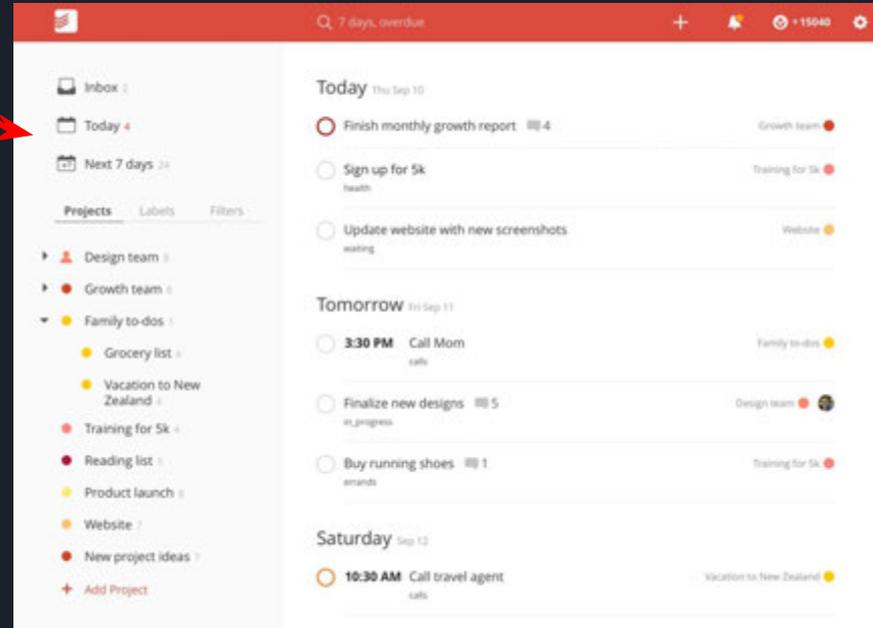


Todoist

Available: Android, iOS, Windows, Mac, Web



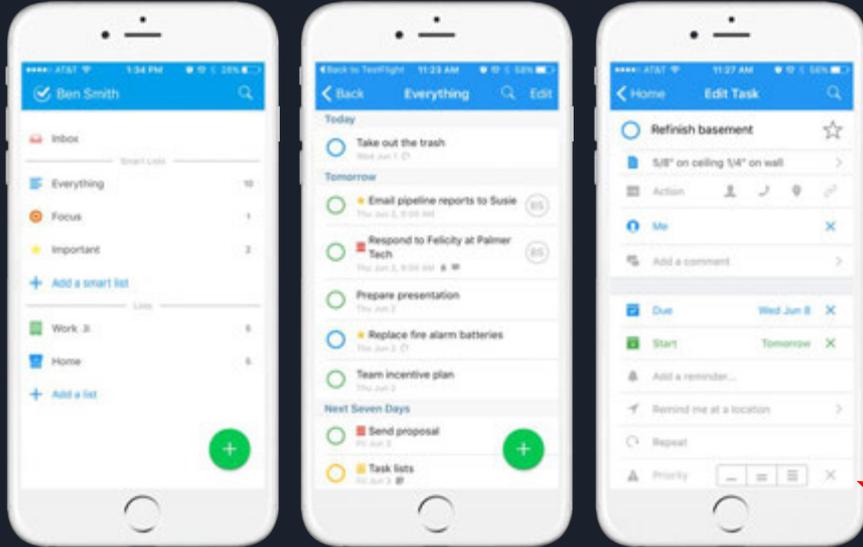
Full Screen View: Windows, Mac, and Web



App: Android and iOS

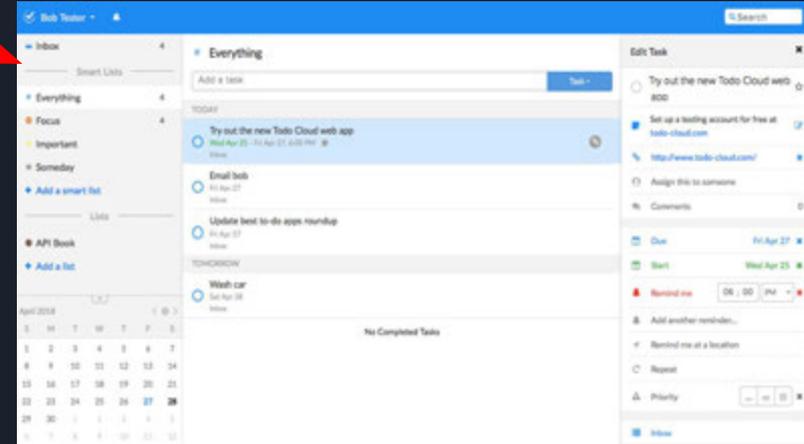
Todo

Available: Android, iOS, Mac, and Web

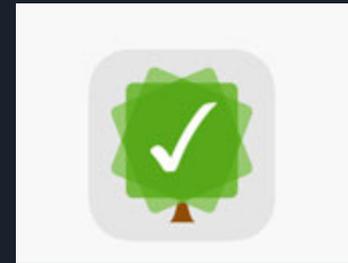


App View: Android and iOS

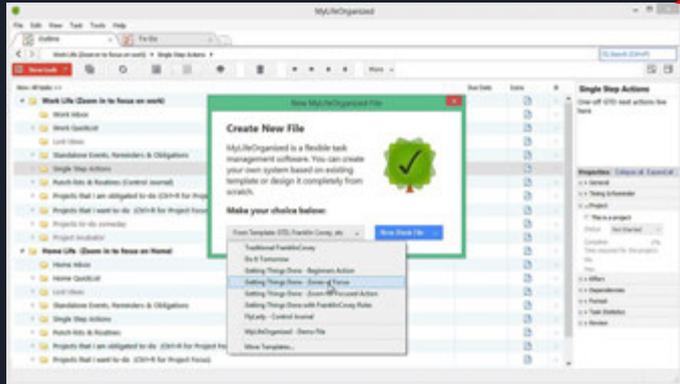
Full Screen View: Mac and Web



MyLifeOrganized Available: Android, iOS, Windows



Full Screen View: Windows



App View: Android and iOS



Next Week: The Writing Process

- Homework—Think about when you write:
 - What is your process for completing a piece of writing?
 - Has this process been successful? Why or why not?
 - What do you like about the process?
 - What would you like to change about the process?
 - What areas do you think could be improved?
 - Does the process contribute to or ameliorate stress?