

ACE Quick Guide to Time Management Tools

Benefits of Using Time Management Tools

Using time management tools and blocker applications effectively can help you to:

Stay focused	Meet deadlines	Avoid procrastination (the habit of putting off work until the last minute)
Stay productive	Reduce stress	Minimise the risk of burnout

(Patzak, Zhang and Vytasek, 2025)

Types of Time Management Tools

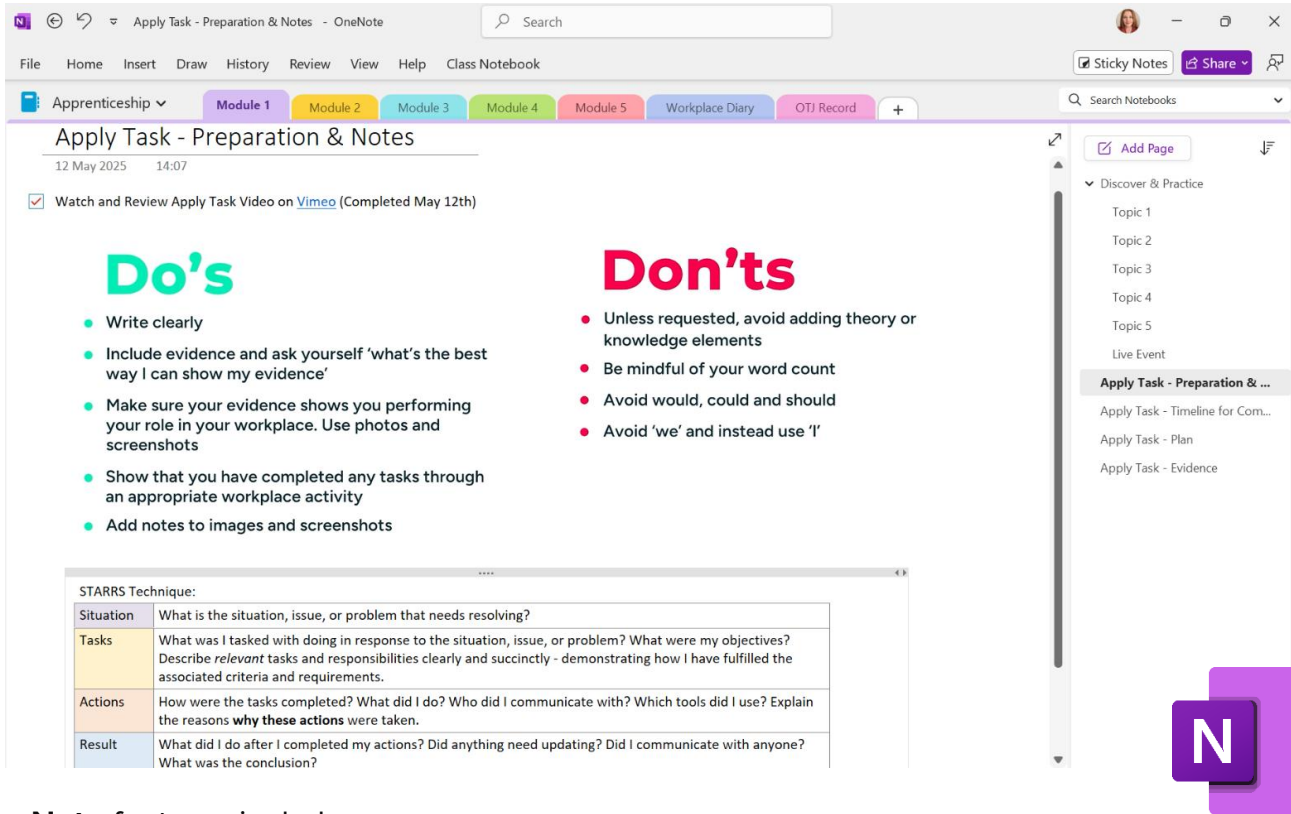
Notetaking Tools	Capture, organise, and revisit information for learning, projects, and reflection. They allow learners to keep apprenticeship and work-based information in one place. <i>Example: Keep detailed notes for each module and live event.</i>
To-Do List Tools	A digital system for recording, organising, and tracking tasks that need to be completed, helping learners stay organised and productive with a busy schedule. <i>Example: Break down larger tasks and projects into manageable steps.</i>
Blocker Applications	Help learners retain focus by limiting access to distracting websites, apps, or notifications while working or studying – reducing procrastination and increasing focus. This can be particularly valuable for learners balancing full-time work and study. <i>Example: Promote focused study/work sessions (Pomodoro-style).</i>

ACE Tips for Using Time Management Tools

	Use tools in conjunction with each other as required to improve the quality of your self-study time . You decide which are useful for your purpose! Reward yourself when you tick off a completed task!
	Use notetaking applications to help store and produce more effective notes . Colour code different sections and topics, and date your work so that you can easily locate the information at a later date.

Notetaking Tools

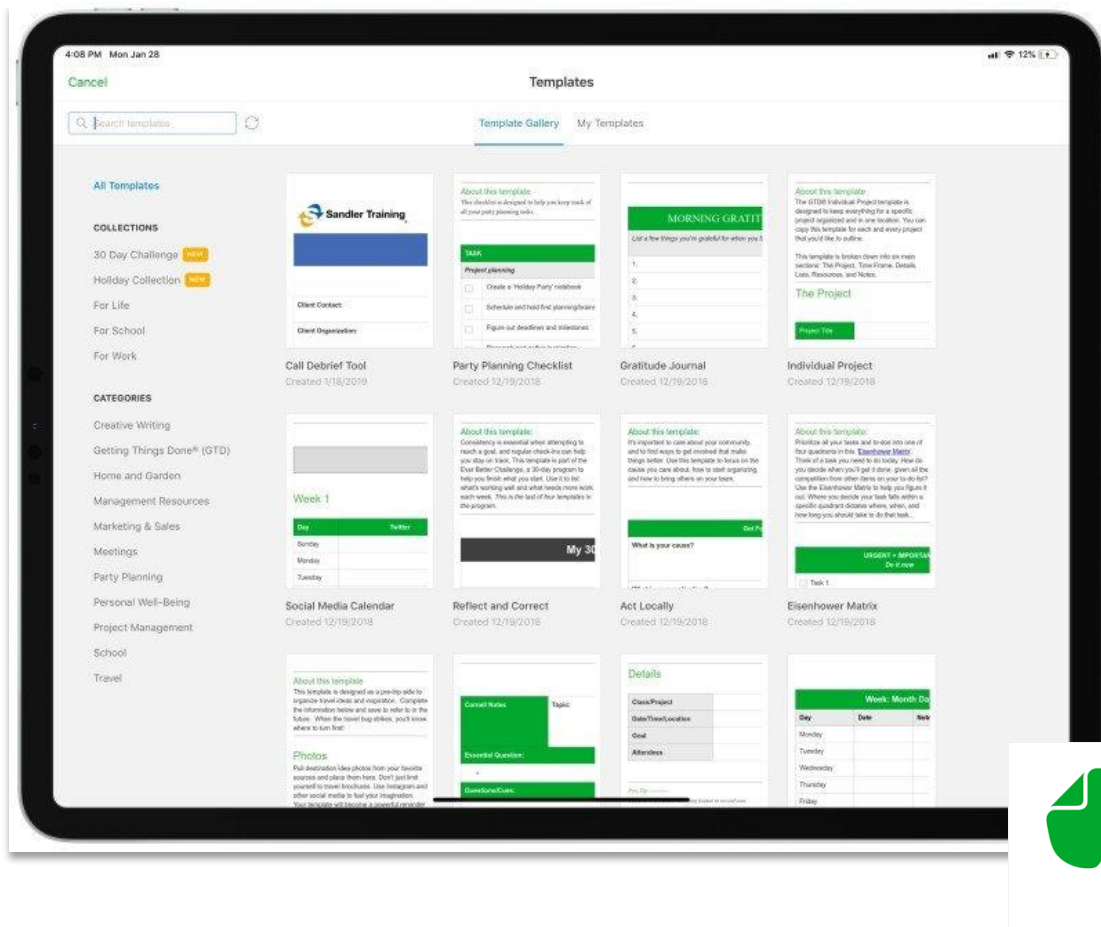
OneNote is a digital note taking application.



OneNote features include:

1	Centralised organisation – Keep all live event and work-based learning notes in one digital notebook, colour-coding sections for different modules or projects.
2	Task tracking with checkboxes – Stay on top of deadlines and daily tasks with to-do lists that boost motivation.
3	Audio recording and voice notes – Record your preliminary ideas, meetings, or reflections and play them back when needed.
4	Handwritten and typed notes – Combine writing, drawing, and typing; useful for visual or neurodivergent learners.
5	Attach files, images, and links – Keep important resources, screenshots, or handouts directly with your notes.

Evernote is a note-taking and task management application.

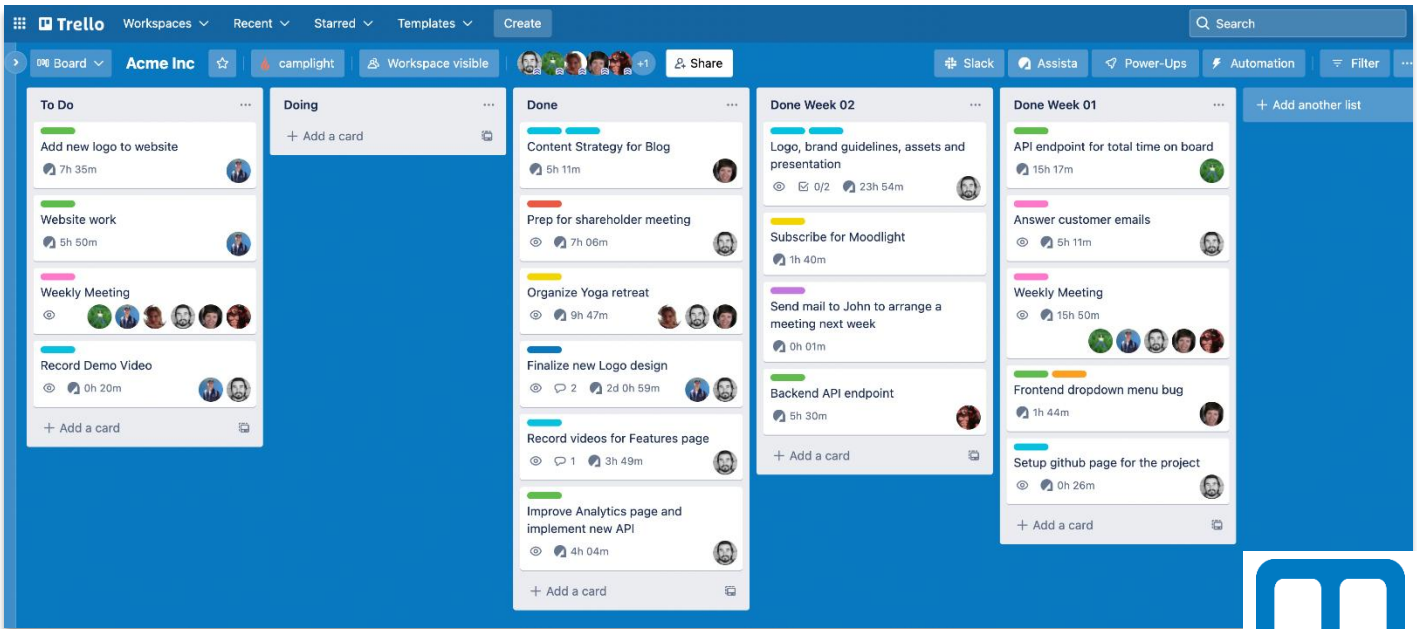


Evernote features include:

1	Capture and organise learning across environments – Like OneNote, Evernote allows you to create both to-do lists and separate notebooks for different modules and projects, keeping your apprenticeship and work-based learning clearly structured.
2	Set task reminders and deadlines – Add time-based reminders to your notes and action points from meetings or personal goals, supporting better self-management when juggling study and work.
3	Capture photos, handwritten notes, diagrams, or whiteboards – Take photos of workplace diagrams, workshop whiteboards, or paper notes. Evernote makes the content searchable, even if it is handwritten.
4	Some workplaces prohibit full versions of the Microsoft Office package – If so, Evernote is a good alternative to OneNote.

To-Do Lists

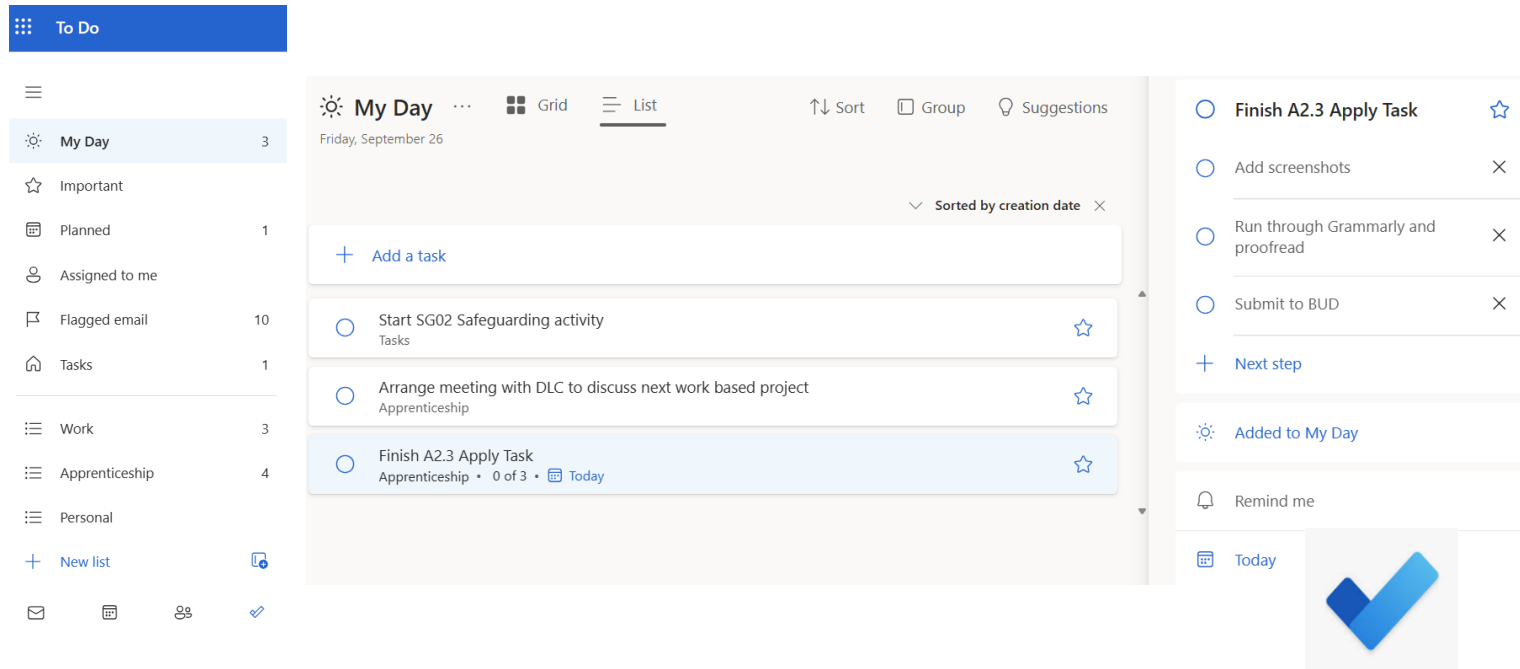
Trello is a visual project management with strong collaboration features for group work and multi-stage projects.



Trello features include:

1	Visual project management tool that uses boards, lists, and cards to help teams organise and prioritise tasks. It is designed to be flexible and adaptable to different workflows.
2	Supports project-based learning – Customise to-do lists, moving each sub-task from 'Doing' to 'Done' as you progress. Ideal for planning Apply tasks and work-based projects step-by-step.
3	Deadlines and reminders – Add due dates to tasks and get notifications to help stay on top of your commitments.
4	Reduces mental load – Beneath each list, you can add a card, including any additional information required to complete the task, such as descriptions, checklists, attachments, and submission dates. This keeps everything in one place, reducing stress and improving focus.
5	Attach files and links – Store key resources, documents, and links directly on task cards for easy access.

Microsoft to-do is a straightforward, personal task manager.

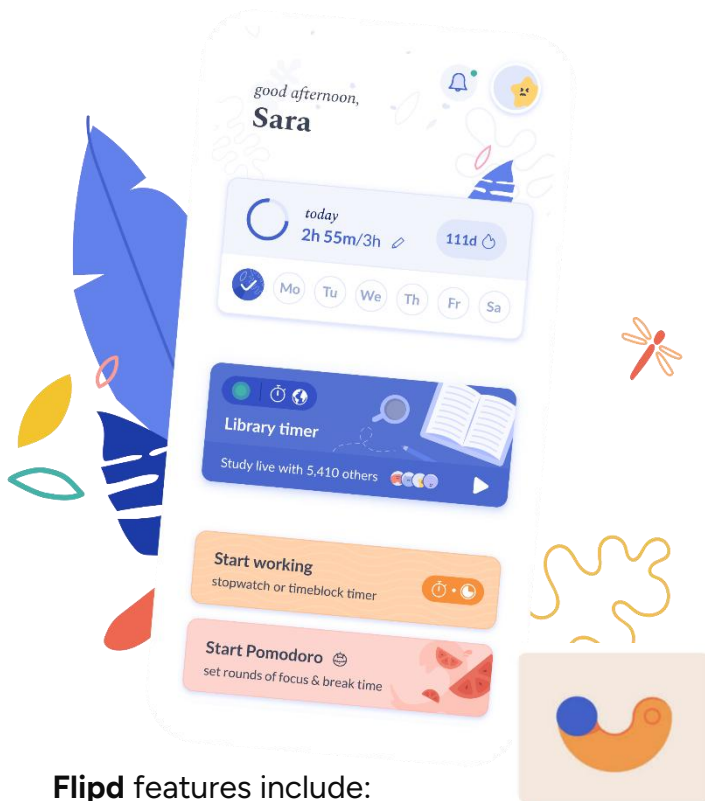


Microsoft To-Do features include:

1	Organise tasks across work and study – Can be used to create separate lists for apprenticeship work, workplace projects, and personal commitments, keeping everything in one place.
2	Set deadlines and reminders – Each task can have a due date, time, and recurring reminders, helping you to stay on top of work, meetings, and submission dates.
3	Prioritise effectively with ‘My Day’ – This feature allows you to choose the most important tasks to focus on daily, reducing overwhelm and improving efficiency.
4	Boost accountability and tracking – Checking off completed tasks provides a sense of achievement and motivation, supporting long-term productivity.
5	Break down larger projects into steps – Tasks can also include sub-tasks, making larger tasks and projects easier to manage in smaller, actionable chunks.

Blocker Applications

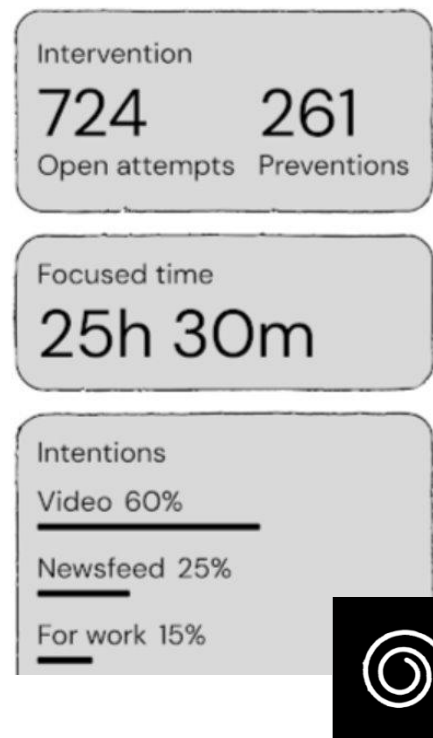
Flipd is a blocker and focus app that combines task management with distraction control.



Flipd features include:

1	Intervenes when specific apps are opened during 'focused time' to help resist digital distractions while studying.
2	Provides data on device usage, reinforcing mindful usage during study time.
3	Combines task planning with focus sessions , letting you plan tasks and stay focused through timed sessions.
4	Learners can create custom block lists during study time, reducing temptations from social media, games, or other digital distractions.
5	In-built Pomodoro timer , useful for breaking large tasks into manageable chunks.

Ascent is a distraction blocker app designed to help users stay focused and build healthy digital habits.



Ascent features include:

1	Temporarily hides or locks access to distracting apps , helping you stay focused during study hours.
2	Encourages productive study sessions by using time blocks .
3	Tracks how long you stay focused, helping you reflect on your habits and make improvements.
4	Limits which apps are accessible helping remove temptations. Useful for managing deadlines and progress.
5	Includes wellness features like guided breaks and mindfulness reminders, supporting a healthier work–study–life balance.

Reference List

Patzak, A., Zhang, X., and Vytasek, J. (2025) 'Boosting productivity and wellbeing through time management: evidence-based strategies for higher education and workforce development', *Frontiers in Education*, 10, pp. 1-12. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2025.1623228> (Accessed: 25 September 2026)

Rothwell, B. (2022) *Time Management for Apprentices, Undergraduates and Postgraduates: How to Balance School, Work and More*. Available at: <https://www.thebusybeck.com/time-management-for-apprentices-undergraduates-and-postgraduates-how-to-balance-school-work-and-more/> (Accessed: 25 September 2026)

Additional Resources

1. [OneNote Tutorial for Beginners](#)
2. [Evernote Basics: Creating and Using Notes](#)
3. [A students guide to using Microsoft To Do app](#)



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