

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
Stay productive	Reduce stress	Minimise the risk of burnout

(Patzak, Zhang and Vytasek, 2025)

Types of Time Management Tools

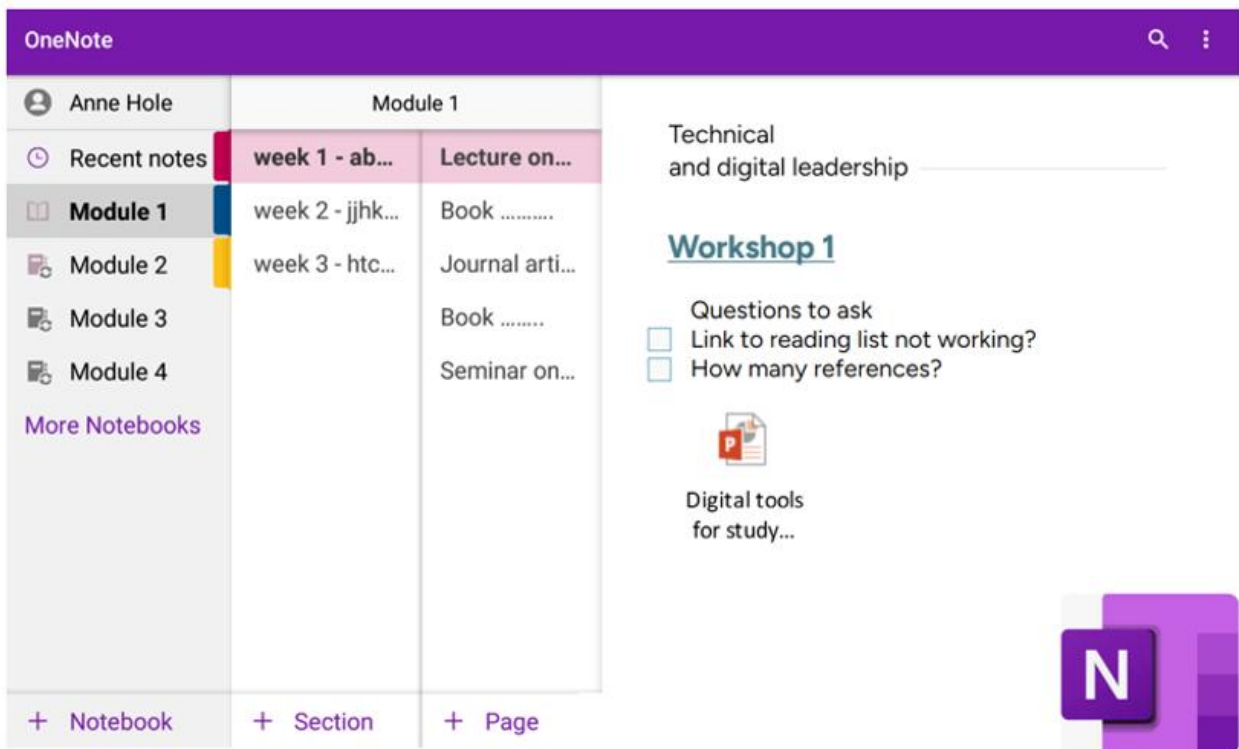
1 – Notetaking Tools	<p>Capture, organise, and revisit information for learning, projects, and reflection. They allow learners to keep academic and work-based information in one place.</p> <p>Example: Keep detailed notes for each class.</p>
2 – To-Do List Tools	<p>A digital system for recording, organising,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

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 later.

Notetaking Tools

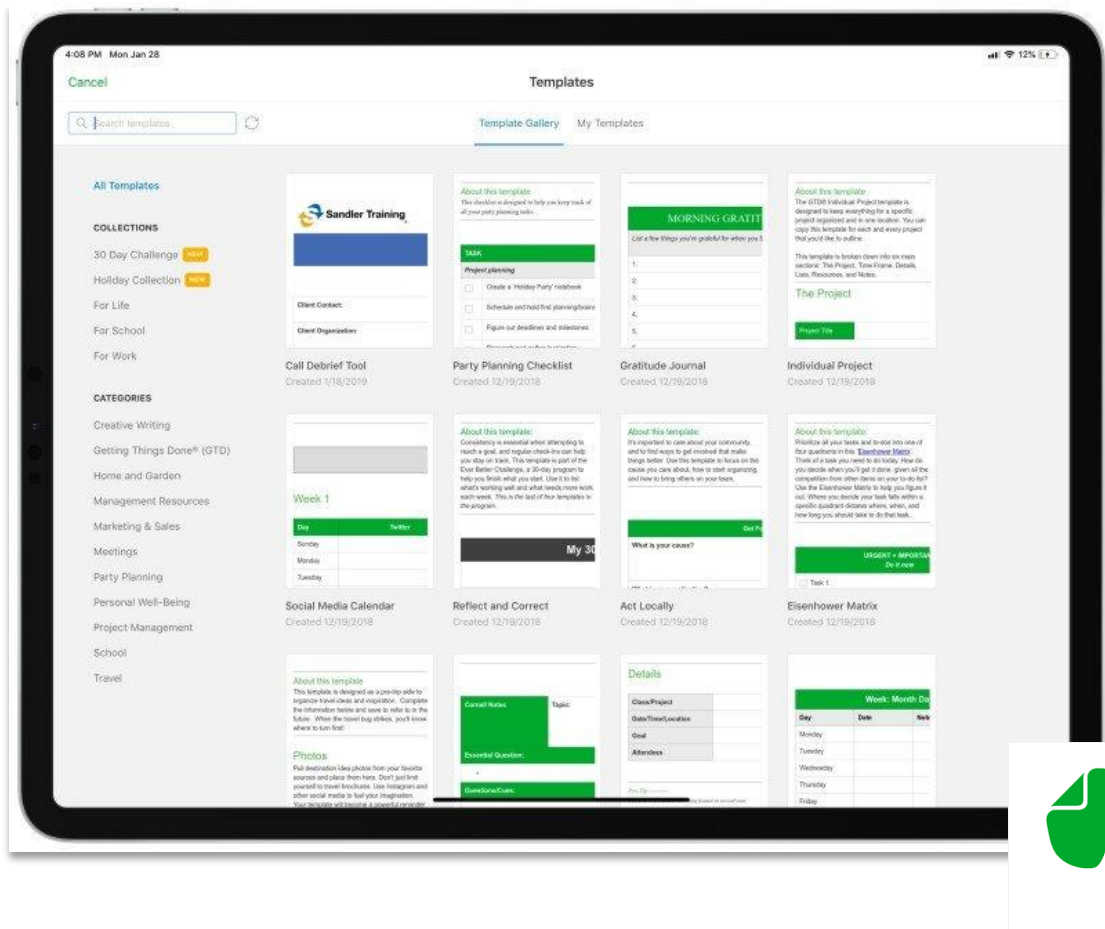
OneNote is a digital note taking application.



OneNote features include:

1	Centralised organisation – Keep all university and work-based learning notes in one digital notebook with sections for each module or project.
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 lectures, meetings, or reflections and play them back when needed.
4	Handwritten and typed notes – Combine writing, drawing, and typing; great 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.

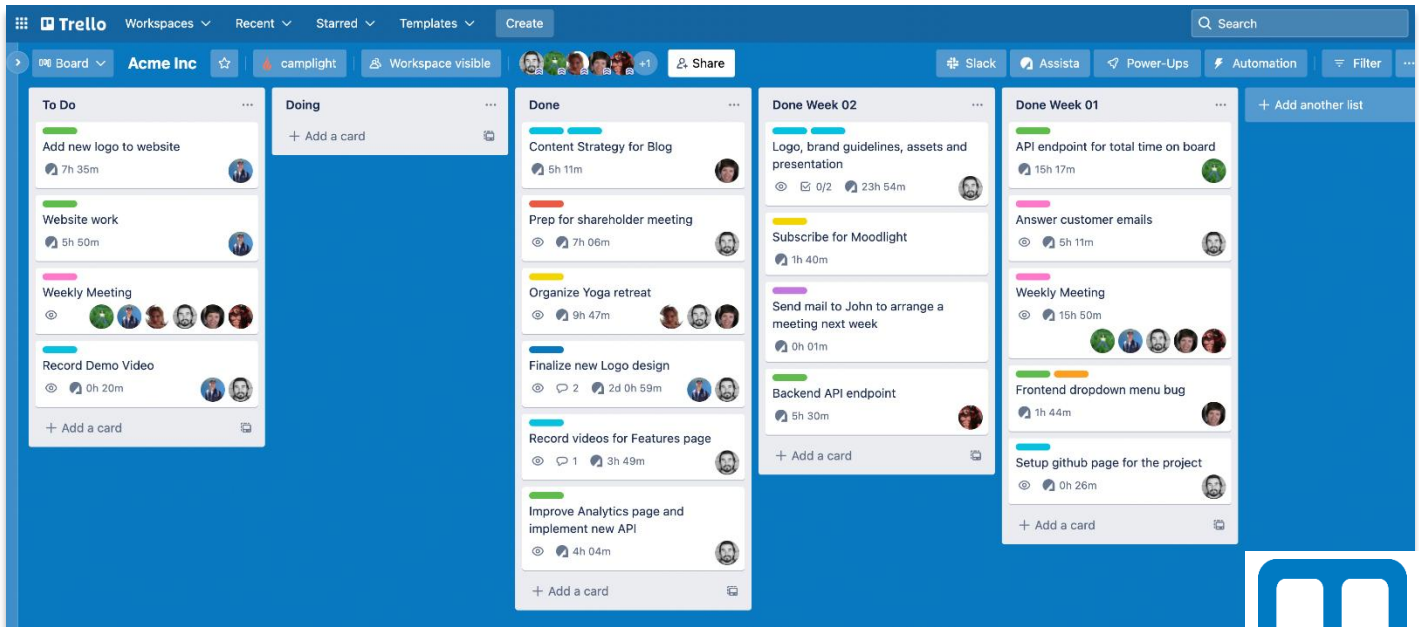


Evernote features include:

1	Capture and organise learning across environments – Like OneNote, Evernote allows you to create separate notebooks for university modules, keeping academic and professional learning clearly structured, and create to-do lists.
2	Save and annotate web-based research instantly – Use the Evernote Web Clipper to capture online articles, case studies, or industry standards (e.g. compliance frameworks), then highlight or comment directly for assignments or discussions.
3	Set task reminders and deadlines – Add time-based reminders to lecture notes and action points from meetings or personal goals, supporting better self-management when juggling study and work.
4	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.
5	Some workplaces prohibit full versions of the Microsoft Office package – If so, Evernote is a good alternative to OneNote.

To-Do Lists

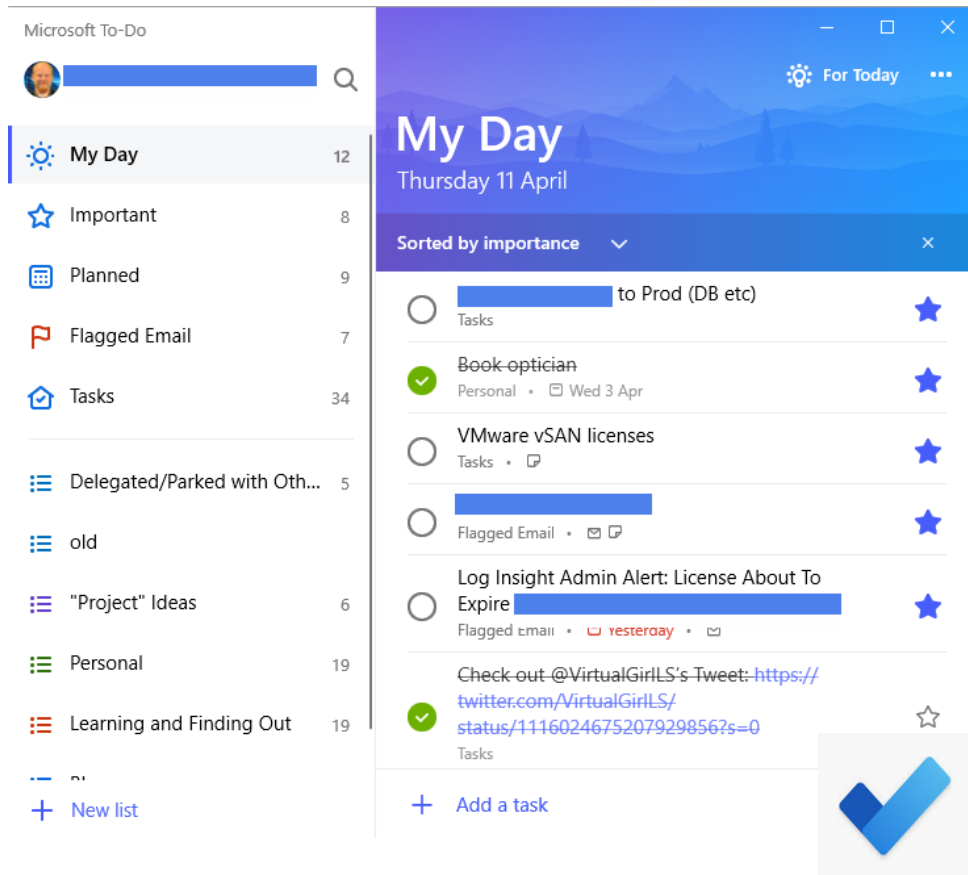
Trello is a visual project management with strong collaboration features for group work and multi-stage projects.



Trello features include:

1	Visual project management tool that uses boards, lists, and cards to help teams organize 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 assignments, research, 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 university and work 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.

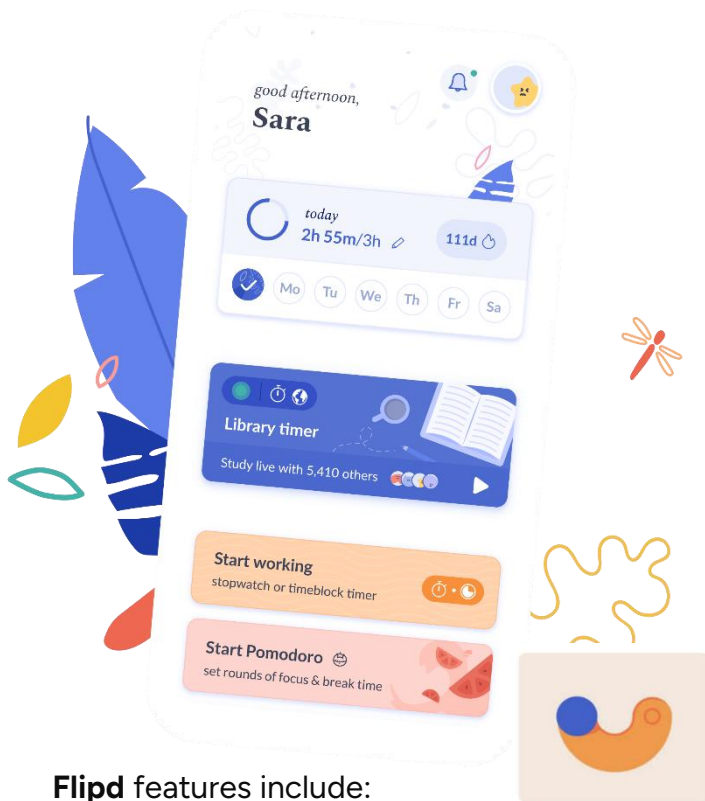


Microsoft To-Do features include:

1	Organise tasks across work and study – Can be used to create separate lists for assignments, 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 learners stay on top of coursework, meetings, and submission dates.
3	Prioritise effectively with 'My Day' – This feature allows learners to choose the most important tasks to focus on daily, reducing overwhelm and improving focus.
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 include sub-tasks, making big projects like reports or EPA portfolios easier to manage in smaller, actionable chunks.

Blocker Applications

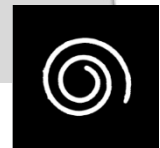
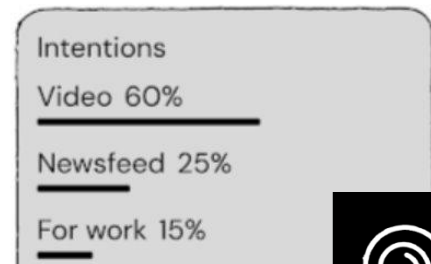
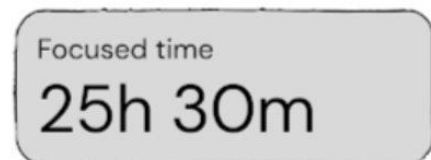
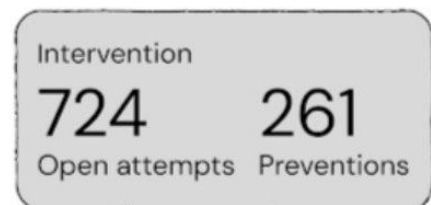
Flipd is a blocker and focus app that combines task management with distraction control.



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: 13 August 2025)

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: 13 August 2025)

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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