

Adult ADHD Skills Library:

Weekly Planning for ADHD: A Simple System for Staying on Track

Skills Practice Sheet

LESSON: Weekly Planning

SL-004

Many adults with ADHD begin the week with good intentions but struggle to turn those intentions into a realistic plan. Appointments, work responsibilities, errands, personal goals, and unfinished tasks may all compete for attention at the same time.

Weekly Planning is an evidence-informed strategy that helps move the week out of your head and into an external system you can see.

The goal is not to schedule every hour or complete everything on your list.

The goal is to know what matters, decide when important work will happen, and have a plan you can return to when the week changes.

Use This Skill When...

- ☐ I start the week without a clear plan.
- ☐ I have too many things competing for my attention.
- ☐ I regularly underestimate how much I can accomplish.
- ☐ I overload individual days.
- ☐ Important tasks get pushed aside by urgent tasks.
- ☐ I forget appointments, deadlines, or follow-ups.
- ☐ My tasks are scattered across calendars, email, notes, apps, or memory.
- ☐ I keep carrying unfinished tasks from one week to the next.
- ☐ I want more structure without creating a complicated planning system.

How to Do It...

Step 1. Look at the Calendar First

Before deciding what you want to accomplish, review what is already scheduled.

Fixed commitments this week:

- Work / Meetings:
- Appointments:
- Family / Personal Responsibilities:
- Deadlines:
- Exercise / Important Personal Commitments:
- Other:

Reminder: Your available time is what remains after your existing commitments—not every open hour you can see on the calendar.

Step 2. Capture What Is Competing for Your Attention

- Write down everything that is taking up mental space.
- Do not organize it yet.
- Tasks, errands, follow-ups, unfinished work, responsibilities, and things you do not want to forget:

Reminder: The goal is to empty the mental whiteboard, not create the perfect task list.

Step 3. Choose This Week's Priorities

Not everything on your list needs to become a commitment for this week.

Choose 1–3 major priorities.

Major Priority #1

Major Priority #2

Major Priority #3

List Smaller Responsibilities That Need Attention

Ask yourself: What does this week realistically have capacity for?

Not: What would I like to get done if everything went perfectly?

Step 4. Turn Priorities Into Actionable Blocks

Use Task Chunking (SL-003) before scheduling large projects.

Priority / Project:

Next Specific Action or Chunk

Time Block

Day: _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Location: _____

Reminder Set? Yes/No

Remember:

- Do this for EACH Priority you defined in Step 3
- Weekly Planning asks: What matters this week?
- Task Chunking asks: What exactly should I do?
- Time Blocking asks: When will I do it?
- Five-Minute Activation asks: How do I get started when the time arrives?

Step 5. Leave White Space

Look at your week again.

Have you scheduled every available opening? Yes/ No

Where can you leave room (Block out white space) for tasks taking longer than expected, transitions, interruptions, fatigue, or unexpected problems?

Schedule that Buffer / Open Time / Catch-Up Time (If Needed)

Reminder: White space is not wasted time. It helps make the rest of the plan realistic.

Step 6. Create ONE Place to Look

When you ask: *"What am I supposed to be doing?"* **Where will you look first?**

My Weekly Planning Home Base

- Digital calendars? Paper planner? Calendar + one task list?

Example/Recommendation: Google calendar can have multiple calendars visible on one calendar. Each with their own color. Work/Family/Personal/Fitness/Etc.

Step 7. Review and Reset

Choose one point during the week to briefly review your plan.

Review Day: _____

Review Time: _____

During the reset, ask:

What changed?

What still matters?

What needs to move?

What can I drop?

Remember: Adjusting the plan is part of planning.

Success?: Success means:

- I reviewed my calendar before making plans.
- I captured the tasks competing for my attention.
- I chose a limited number of priorities.
- I gave important work a place on the calendar.
- I left some buffer in the week.
- I knew where to look when I got off track.
- I reviewed and adjusted the plan when something changed.

Success does not mean completing everything you planned.

Success means you knew what mattered, had somewhere to look, and adjusted when life changed.

Practice Log

At the end of the week:

Did I know what my priorities were?	Yes / Sometimes / Not Yet
Did I look at my plan when I got off track?	Yes / Sometimes / Not Yet
Did I leave enough room for unexpected events?	Yes / Somewhat / No
Did I overload the week?	Yes / Somewhat / Not
What worked well?	

What got in the way?

What took longer than I expected?

What should I plan differently next week?

Weekly Planning Practice Log

	Planned the Week	Chose Priorities	Scheduled Important Work	Reviewed / Reset
Week 1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Week 2	☐	☐	☐	☐
Week 3	☐	☐	☐	☐
Week 4	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evidence-Informed Resource

This practice sheet was developed by **Peace & Prosperity Psychiatry, APNC** using evidence-informed principles from research on adult ADHD, executive functioning, working memory, time perception, organizational skills, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), external planning systems, and time-management interventions. Weekly Planning as presented here is a practical clinical application of these research-supported principles. The exact seven-step system has not been established as a stand-alone ADHD treatment. For a complete discussion of the evidence and instructions for using this skill, see the companion lesson: **SL-004 Weekly Planning for ADHD: A Simple System for Staying on Track**

References

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