



Choosing the Right Planner

Choosing the right planner for you and your lifestyle is very important, especially if you are busy, have a lot on your To Do List and/or have Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD or ADD). This is true no matter what profession you hold and no matter what your age. By third grade, even elementary school students need some type of planner or way to keep track of assignments.

Recently, I have been asked by a couple of different people for recommendations on selecting a planner. Because planners are so personal and everyone is so unique, I cannot give a one-size-fits-all recommendation.

- If you have determined that you need a better system of planning (or just need to start one!), I first recommend that you decide what planner characteristics are important to you.
- After you have done this step, you can take your list with you to the store or have it next to you while you search on-line. This will help narrow your search and end up with a planner that really works for you.
- If you currently use multiple planners, try to consolidate into one.

At the end of this article, you will find a checklist that you can use to develop your list of what is important. Place a check mark next to each characteristic you would like to have in a planner and indicate an A, B or C priority next to each characteristic you check.

- A = planner must have this
- B = would be nice for planner to have this
- C = not so important to me

After you have picked your characteristics, it is time for shopping. A couple of sites to investigate are www.FamiliesWithPurpose.com, www.FranklinCovey.com and www.DayRunner.com. If you are interested in electronic planners, be sure to review free sites (i.e. Google Calendar) in addition to all of the devices that are available. Once you have selected your planner, work with it for at least one month before evaluating its effectiveness. If it doesn't work for you after trying a new planner for at least a month, you may want to consider something different.

The right planner can make a big difference in getting more done. Please let me know how the check list works for you. Good luck with your planner search!

Planner Characteristic Check List

- _____ Month-at-a-glance view
- _____ Week-at-a-glance view
- _____ The ability to see each day separate from all others.
- _____ Spiral bound so I don't lose any pages.
- _____ Binder format so I can add and remove pages as needed.
- _____ Zippered binder so I don't lose any pages.
- _____ Electronic with no need to print
- _____ Electronic with the ability to print a To Do List or appointment schedule
- _____ Paper
- _____ To Do List available for every day
- _____ To Do List for the whole month
- _____ To Do List for each week
- _____ Room to plan for multiple roles (i.e. Employee, parent, spouse)
- _____ Calendar and To Do List integrated into one planner
- _____ Calendar and To Do List separate from each other
- _____ Small size for easy portability
- _____ Large size for ease of writing and room for more items
- _____ Medium size as a compromise between small and large
- _____ Time slots for meetings and appointments all day
- _____ Specific time slots included in the Calendar section
- _____ Pockets for other items such as cell phone or wallet
- _____ Wall calendar format
- _____ Portable format
- _____ Attached strap so it can be carried like a purse or briefcase
- _____ Price is no object
- _____ Budget = \$ _____
- _____ Add your own characteristics here: _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____