Productivity Tools

> ## *Amateurs sit and wait for inspiration, the rest of us just get up and go to work.*
>
> ## *- Stephen King*

You don't have to use all the best productivity tools and apps to get work done. Pick a tool that fits your needs and incorporate it into your workflow! If you're always trying to chase down the latest and greatest tools to get your work done, you're already distracting yourself. Less is more.

I created this list to help you narrow down your search and maybe try something that you have never seen or used before. Some tools and apps I have pulled from other lists and some are my personal favorites.

Read on and find out ways you can stay productive while socially distancing and working from home!

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Work Productivity Tools

SLACK
(COMMUNICATION)

This tool is a staple of communication in the office at **TeamBuildr** and many other offices around the county. Yes, ideally we should all be speaking face to face, but the issue is that sometimes work needs to get done and human interaction can be distracting. Slack is a super smooth chat app that's free, fast and can handle anything you throw at it (think sharing files, images, videos and even GIF's).

CLOCKIFY
(TIME MANAGEMENT)

Clockify is a time tracking software. It helps you keep track of all your time and gives you an insight into your performance in terms of productivity. You can track time automatically or add it manually. After you've finished tracking time, you'll be able to conclude whether you're productive, or spend too much time on trivial activities (ie. reddit).

ASANA
(TASK MANAGEMENT)

A work management tool designed to help teams organize, track, and manage their work in one place. Asana allows you to assign tasks to each team member, set the deadline and communicate with each other thus eliminating long and messy email threads where some important communication can get lost somewhere along the way.

GOOGLE DRIVE
(FILE MANAGEMENT)

Google Drive makes team collaboration and consultations regarding a project easier and faster. With it, you can create documents, edit, and share them with your team members. This tool is perfect for collaborative projects, because all team members can work on the same documents at the same time, from their devices.

SKYPE
(COMMUNICATION)

It's built for both one-on-one and group conversations and works wherever you are – via mobile, PC, Xbox and Alexa. With Skype, you can have meetings and create great things with your workgroup, share a story or celebrate a birthday with friends and family, and learn a new skill or hobby with a teacher. It's free to use Skype – to send messages and have audio and video calls with groups of up to 50 people!

FREEDOM
(TIME MANAGEMENT)

Procrastination can take away a lot of your time, but, by turning to Freedom, you'll minimize the time wasted on your phone and various websites. You can use it on your Windows, iPhone, Mac, and iPad, and later sync all your setting updates across these devices. Freedom allows you to block entire websites, apps, create block-lists, and schedule blocks to start automatically.

BUFFER
(SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT)

What makes Buffer stand out from other social media automation tools is that it is simple and straight-to-the-point. It doesn't give you a lot of choices which most of the time complicate things more than it can help you. Automate all your social media posts using Buffer through your desktop or mobile device.

BRAINFM
(FOCUS)

Studies showed that environment - specifically background noise - can positively or negatively impact productivity. Although listening to a podcast while working can seem productive, the reality is that research says multi-tasking creates sub-par work. So how do you optimize for an optimally productive environment? Start with noise. **BrainFM** curates sounds and music that are specifically chosen to help humans be more productive!

GRAMMARLY
(WRITING)

Grammarly is a free *must-have* writing assistant. This app checks your grammar, spelling and provides context-based phrase suggestions to improve your messages, documents, articles and anything else that contains words. It's one of the best tools out there not only for writers but for everyone.

STAYFOCUSED
(TIME MANAGEMENT)

StayFocused is a free Chrome extension that blocks websites that consume your time. Tell this extension app which websites are affecting your productivity and it will block you from accessing them while you're working. StayFocused can be customized not only to block a site but also specific page contents, such as videos, games and other forms of media that might consume your time.

POMODORO TIMER
(TIME MANAGEMENT)

"Dread work" is considered anything that is easily achievable but keeps getting put off (ie: that email that's been sitting in your inbox for 2 weeks). Productivity experts say the best way to tackle this is to simply **start**. The Pomodoro timer is a well-known productivity interval that has been shown to improve your productivity. Set the timer to 5 minutes for that "dread work" and you'll find out that 5 minutes turns into 25!.

Life Productivity Tools

ALARM CLOCK
(TIME MANAGEMENT)

Alarm clocks have been in use for centuries because they solve a real problem—ensuring we wake up on time. Their utility is undeniable, and many of us would probably have a hard time making it to work every day without one. Alarm clocks can also be helpful for keeping sleep schedules regular. Waking up around the same time each day is beneficial for our internal biological clocks. Using an alarm clock frequently (Pro Tip: use Siri) can help keep your schedule consistent and normalize your sleep patterns.

NOISE MACHINE
(SLEEP HYGIENE)

I recently invested in getting an actual noise machine and it is a game changer. I am just naturally a light sleeper so not only does it help me fall asleep, but it helps me stay asleep resulting in a better nights sleep. I got a little mini travel one so I can take it anywhere off Amazon for ~$25 but there are also a ton of free apps that help you choose what kind of sounds you want to fall asleep to. Think of this more as an all-around life tool!

YOUTUBE
(VIDEO MANAGEMENT)

Going down the rabbit hole of watching kids crash Zoom classes isn't productive but using the mobile YouTube app to easily import videos can be! You can import and edit any videos from your mobile device right into your account. Perfect for getting those exercise demos up right away!

STRAVA (OR ANY MILEAGE TRACKER)
(FITNESS)

If you didn't track it, you didn't do it right? Whether you are training for a marathon or you are just getting started, tracking your mileage and times is a great way to stay motivated and show your progress! With Strava you can track running, biking, and swimming and you can also follow others and offer encouragement and comments, adding a social element to your training.

HEADSPACE
(MENTAL HEALTH)

There are thousands of studies that have shown mindfulness meditation can positively impact mental and physical health. Whether it's by reducing stress, improving sleep, increasing focus, or improving relationships, research shows mindfulness works. While the research on mindfulness, especially digital mindfulness programs, is still growing, there is evidence to support the use of mindfulness training for many outcomes.

BLUELIGHT BLOCKING GLASSES
(SLEEP HYGIENE)

Blue-screen/blue-light glasses feature tinted lenses with anti-glare protection which help limit your exposure to blue light, which is found in your cell phone, certain light bulbs, and even sunshine. They can help alleviate eye discomfort and help improve sleep habits. By wearing blue-screen/blue-light glasses while on the computer and taking other steps to limit your exposure to blue light, you can improve your overall eye health.

SMARTWOD TIMER
(TIME MANAGEMENT)

I love timing my workouts. This app comes with 4 different interval options - AMRAP, For Time, EMOM, & Tabata - but then it still allows you customize the intervals to whatever you choose. This is personally the best one I have ever found that doesn't cost anything!

FACETIME/GOOGLE DUO
(COMMUNICATION)

Especially during these socially distancing times, it's important to stay in touch with friends and family (or dating). The ability to see each other while talking just helps you connect on a deeper level or it will just help you from going crazy if you live alone!

CALENDAR
(TIME MANAGEMENT)

I almost always use a calendar for work and meetings but I often find myself forgetting to use it for social events - leading me to double book or just simply forget. Calendars are a simple and effective tool to help keep us productive and maximize our day. The important part is practicing the habit of using a calendar, and following through with your activities according to the time blocks you assign yourself.

VIDEOSHOP APP
(VIDEO MANAGEMENT)

Just a great free tool to use if you need to edit videos! You can trim, clip, slow clips down, or speed them up. You can also change the format in which you export it - this comes in handy if you want to post videos on your instagram story.

MINT
(FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT)

Personal finance software should make your life simpler, not more complicated, and it should be customizable for your particular life, goals, and needs. You know you've found great software when your financial life becomes easier over time by managing expenses, income, bill and savings all in one place.

CANVA
(DESIGN)

Canva is a super simple and fast graphic design tool (this PDF was created in Canva!). Even if you're not a designer, you're going to love this tool. It's powered by a drag-and-drop interface and comes with access to photos, graphics, fonts, and lots of beautifully designed templates which takes your presentations to the next level!

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Absorb what is useful, reject what is useless, add what is specifically your own.

- Bruce Lee

TEAMBUILDR