REMEMBER IN March when we thought that working from home would give us the opportunity to learn an instrument, get super fit, or renovate the basement? Yeah...most people are apt to dawdle away gained time.

"The biggest mistake is not having a plan," says Craig Jarrow, founder of **Time Management Ninja**. The foundation of time management is a to-do list. That's not some 50-task monster checklist. Every day, try to home in on your top five priorities.

"What stops people from being productive isn't that they're not doing enough, it's that they're trying to do too much," says productivity coach Grace Marshall. Instead of giving anything 100 percent, you're giving everything 10 percent.

A paper to-do list is super visible, and gives you the satisfaction of crossing things off, says Jarrow. "But apps have superpowers paper does not." Apple's **Things** app lets you create individual tasks (like errands), or larger projects with sub-tasks (like vacation planning), and assign deadlines; then it integrates your calendar to show you what's on deck.

Just note, "if you overestimate how much you can get done in a day, you can underestimate how much you can do in a year," says Marshall. That's how fitness, self-care, and time with friends and family fall by the wayside. Plan for those up front by scheduling vacation time in the beginning of the year, or penciling in workouts every other day.

"People see stopping in the moment as a waste of time, but making space for these things over the course of the year actually makes

STOPPING IN THE MOMENT ACTUALLY MAKES YOU MORE PRODUCTIVE.

you more productive, because it prevents burnout," Marshall explains.

It can also make you more accountable. Maybe you have a coworker you check in with every morning to share your plan for the day, or a running buddy you text every time you pound the pavement. Even a free app like **Habit List** can track healthy behaviors (like reading daily) so you can build momentum and get that same sense of accomplishment as crossing something off a to-do list.

The most important thing: Stop living in your email, says Jarrow. Tools like **Sanebox** can filter your inbox so you stop experiencing that Pavlovian response to react to every single notification the second it pings.

"Try only checking it three times a day," he says. You'll be shocked how quickly you forget what it's like to be chained to that "new message" alert.
—ASHLEY MATEO

Schedule social events and recreation like you would work meetings to master your time.

JARREN VINK