

HOW TO USE A PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

The prioritization matrix is a simple concept with dramatic results, helping us understand what needs to be done first, what things can wait for later, and what things we shouldn't do at all. It's a simple framework that is used to group tasks into four main categories: do now, do next, do last, and do never. These are often displayed visually in a 2x2 grid, where one side shows how important something is and the other conveys how urgent it is.

Step 1: Make a comprehensive list of all action items

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Step 2: Sort into the four quadrants

Do First: High Importance, High Urgency

Things that are both important and urgent will fall in your top left quadrant, meaning they're the things that you should do first before anything else.

Do Next: High Importance, Low Urgency

Things that are important to you but have some flexibility in when they are done should be kept in your top right box. This is a critical distinction from the above because it's not time dependent.

Do Last: Low Importance, High Urgency

Next come things that aren't that important, but have a timeline attached to them. Placing these in the bottom left quadrant means we are making a judgment call that if time permits, we will do them.

Do Never: Low Importance, Low Urgency

These things reside in our bottom right section of the matrix, meaning they're at the very bottom of our to-do list. These are things that you should consider taking off your list entirely.

	HIGH URGENCY	LOW URGENCY
HIGH IMPORTANCE		
LOW IMPORTANCE		

Step 3: Consider which items should be removed entirely

Take a step back and ask yourself if there are things in any of the quadrants that could be eliminated entirely. Question your assumptions around them. If we are able to remove things right off the bat, we shorten our list dramatically.

Consider the following for each item:

- Does this item align closely with my goals?
- What would happen if I did it later?
- Do any of these require the other tasks to happen first?
- If I could only do one of these, which would I choose?
- How does this compare relative to the other tasks in this quadrant?

Step 4: Rank items in each quadrant

Once you've sorting things into their respective boxes, focus on the items in each quadrant and rank them relative to each other. Which ones are more or less important compared to others on that quadrant's list?