Head too full *to think?*



Less overwhelm. More **clarity.**

Get it all onto paper and see what matters most. You're not lazy. **Page 13** shows why you get stuck.

- Can't start? Make the first step so small you can't say no. *page 5*
- Can't think straight? Write it all down. *page 6*
- Everything urgent? Pick 1 job. *page 9*
- Losing track of the week? Plan it in 10 minutes. *page 10*



Written by
Ollie and Clare

OCCO
LONDON

Overwhelmed? *Start here.*

This guide is for when your head is too full to think. A busy mind tries to hold too much at once. That's overwhelm.

This guide gives you 4 ways to get unstuck. Each one comes from a tool we make and use ourselves.

Each one comes with an explanation and a filled-in example. Use the one you need, when you need it.

How it works

1. **Find the method that will help you most. Page 3** lists 4 ways a busy mind gets stuck. Pick the one that sounds most like you.
2. **Try its method.** Follow the filled-in example. Each method takes 10 to 15 minutes.
3. **Then give the job 5 minutes.** Set a timer and do its first step.

Each method works on its own, like a tool in a toolbox. Use one today and another next month.

You don't need to use them every day. There's nothing to fall behind on.



Who we are
Ollie and Clare, the founders of OCCO London. We both have fast, busy minds, and we both burnt out working in London. That's why we make these tools.

What this isn't
It isn't a course, a daily habit or treatment. If you're struggling to cope, go to **page 12**.

Before you start

1. Put your phone in another room.
2. Get a pen and any sheet of paper.
3. Now turn to **page 3**.

What's overwhelming *you today?*

Pick the row that sounds most like you right now. Go to its page. That's the method that will help you most.

Overwhelm	Sounds like	Try this method	Page
I can't start	• I know what to do and still can't start. • I leave small jobs for days.	**The Could Do Pad Page** *A list short enough to begin* 10 minutes	5
My head is too full	• I can't think straight. • Worries and ideas keep coming back all day.	**The Morning Mindset Page** *Clarity on what matters most* 10 to 15 minutes	6
Everything feels urgent	• I don't know what to do first. • I do the easy jobs first. The important one gets left.	**The Priority Pad Page** *Clarity on what to do first* 10 minutes	9
I lose track of the week	• It's Thursday before I notice the week has gone. • I never find time for my big goals.	**The Weekly Planner Page** *See the whole week at once* 10 minutes	10

Can't pick a row? Start with the Morning Mindset Page on **page 6**.

Something else going on?

I can't stop thinking at night 11

I'm struggling to cope 12



Fix *it.*

4 methods, one for each row on **page 3**. Go to the page your row sent you to.
Each method takes 10 to 15 minutes.

I can't start: the Could Do Pad Page	*5*
My head is too full: the Morning Mindset Page	*6*
Everything feels urgent: the Priority Pad Page	*9*
I lose track of the week: the Weekly Planner Page	*10*

Make the first step *small.*

10 minutes

On any paper: write 1 big job, 3 medium and 5 small. It's our Could Do Pad layout.

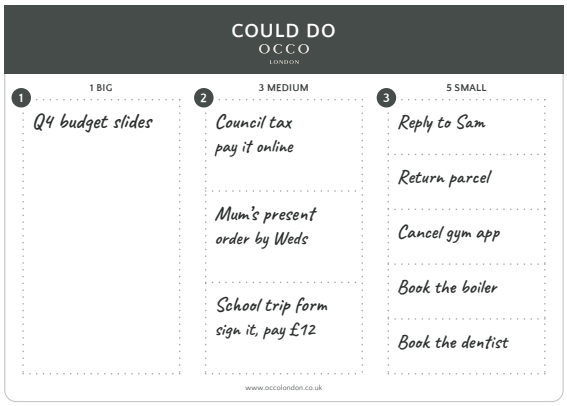
How to fill it

1. **1 big.** Write the one job that matters most today. Often it's the one you've been putting off.
2. **3 medium.** Write 3 jobs that matter today. Each takes about 15 to 60 minutes.
3. **5 small.** Write 5 jobs that take under 10 minutes, like calls, forms or replies.
4. **Then start the big one.** Make its first step a 2-minute job, like opening the file. Do it now, or pick a time, like 9am.

The research that backs it up. Deciding exactly when you'll start, like 9am, makes you more likely to do it. A large review of studies found this. Source: Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 2006, review of 94 studies.

Pairing a boring job with something you enjoy helps. In one study, people could only listen to audiobooks they'd picked while at the gym. They went to the gym 51% more often at first than people given no audiobooks. Source: Management Science, 2014.

Filled in: a Tuesday



Still can't start the big one? Find the reason

Too big	Cut its first step until it takes 2 minutes.
Unclear	Write the one question you can't answer yet, and who can answer it.
Boring	Pair it with something you enjoy, like a podcast saved for this job only.
Scary	Do only the first part. For example, just open the email.
Missing something	Get that first. Sometimes the first step is finding the password.



Could Do Pad £15

Next time you can't start, the boxes are already there. You get a list short enough to begin.

Get the Could Do Pad

90 days to try it

★★★★☆

"This little pad has revolutionised my working schedule and helps me daily to carve out what I need to do first..."

Mathew Turner, from our product page

Start with *what's good.*

Both pages: 10 to 15 minutes

On any paper: write 5 good things, then what's in your head. It's the left-hand page of our Morning Mindset Journal.

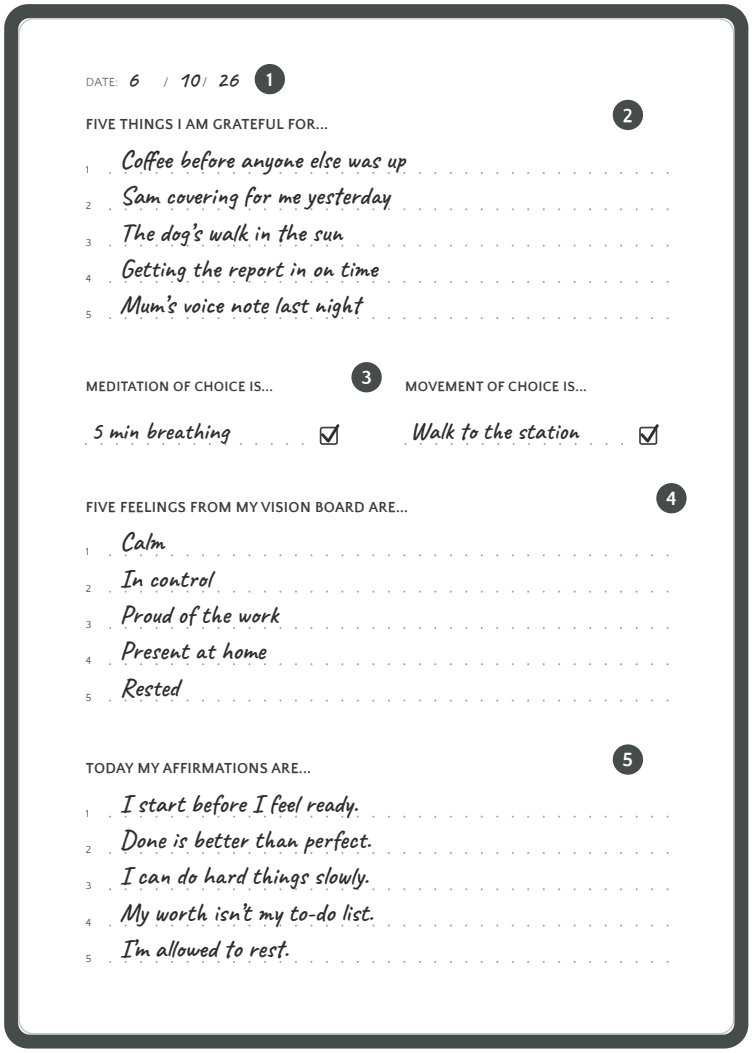
How to fill it, top to bottom

Fill in every section. Each one does a different job, so try not to skip any.

1. **Date.** Write the date you use it. Missed days don't matter.
2. **5 things you're grateful for.** Small things count, like a coffee before anyone else was up.
3. **Meditation and movement.** Write what you'll do, like slow breathing or a walk to the station. Tick the box next to each one when it's done.
4. **5 feelings from your vision board.** Write how you want your life to feel, like calm, in control or rested. You don't need a real vision board. **Page 8** explains what one is.
5. **5 affirmations.** Write 5 short, kind lines about yourself, as if they're already true. **Page 8** shows how.

The research that backs it up. In one study, people listed what they were grateful for each week. After 10 weeks, they felt better about their lives than people who listed hassles. A later review of many studies found it gives a small lift in mood. Sources: Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2003. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 2016.

Inside the journal: the left-hand page, filled in



Then turn the page
The writing page is next, on **page 7**. It matters most.

Pages 6 and **7** are one day in our **Morning Mindset Journal**, an undated A5 hardback. Use it on the days you need it. Skip days and it lasts longer.

Write down *what's on your mind.*

Both pages: 10 to 15 minutes

On any paper: write everything in your head, as it comes. It's the journaling page of our Morning Mindset Journal.

How to fill it

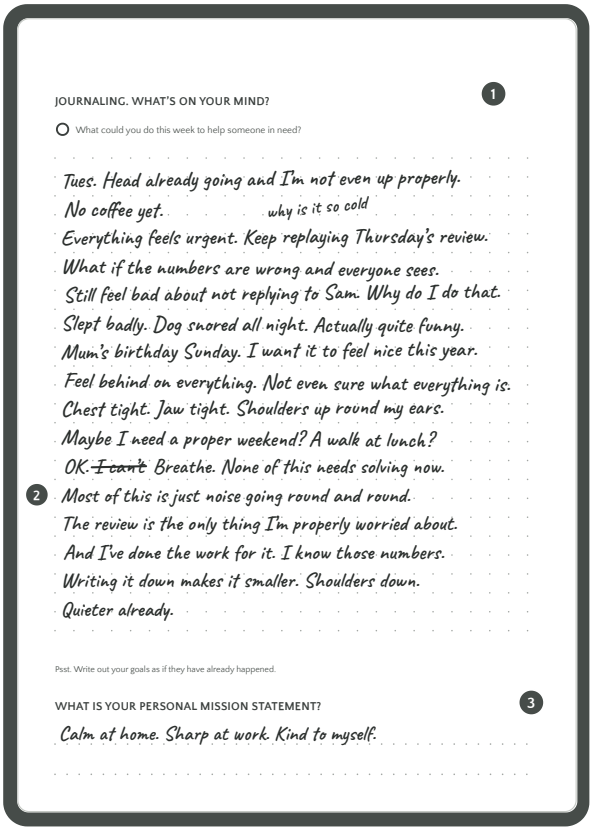
1. **Write whatever's in your head** in the dotted box, as it comes. Half sentences are fine. This is the most important step.
2. **Keep going until you run out of things to write.** Take as long as you need. It isn't a to-do list, so nothing here needs doing.
3. **Finish with your mission statement** at the bottom. One line on who you want to be. More on this: **page 8**.

   Not sure what to write? Start with how you feel. You don't have to answer the small printed question at the top.

Reading the example. It starts messy and jumps between topics. Then it calms down. That's normal.

The research that backs it up. Once a thought is on paper, you don't have to keep remembering it. Research shows this frees up your memory for other things. Source: Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 2016.

Inside the journal: the right-hand page, a Tuesday morning



JOURNALING. WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? 1

What could you do this week to help someone in need?

Tues. Head already going and I'm not even up properly.
No coffee yet. why is it so cold
Everything feels urgent. Keep replaying Thursday's review.
What if the numbers are wrong and everyone sees.
Still feel bad about not replying to Sam. Why do I do that.
Slept badly. Dog snored all night. Actually quite funny.
Mum's birthday Sunday. I want it to feel nice this year.
Feel behind on everything. Not even sure what everything is.
Chest tight. Jaw tight. Shoulders up round my ears.
Maybe I need a proper weekend? A walk at lunch?
OK. ~~I can't~~ Breathe. None of this needs solving now.
2 Most of this is just noise going round and round.
The review is the only thing I'm properly worried about.
And I've done the work for it. I know those numbers.
Writing it down makes it smaller. Shoulders down.
Quieter already.

Psst. Write out your goals as if they have already happened.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT? 3

Calm at home. Sharp at work. Kind to myself.



Morning Mindset Journal £39

Next time your head's too full, both pages are ready in one book. You get clarity on what matters most.

Get the Morning Mindset Journal

90 days to try it

★★★★★

"It's been helpful to reflect on the positives of each day and use those to keep me moving forward."

David Warren, from our product page

3 words, *explained.*

The Morning Mindset Page uses 3 terms you may not know. Here's what each one means.

What's a vision board?

A vision board is a set of pictures and words that shows the life you want.

The idea is simple. When your mind can see what you want, it's easier to aim for it. Seeing it often keeps it on your mind, even on a busy day.

For the journal, just write 5 feelings you want, like calm or rested.

What's an affirmation?

An affirmation is a short, kind line about yourself, written as if it's already true. For example: I start before I feel ready.

Watch a sprinter before a race, or a footballer before a penalty. On TV you often see them talking to themselves. That's self-talk.

Short, planned lines like these helped performance across 32 sport studies. Your affirmations are the same idea, for your day.

Source: Perspectives on Psychological Science, 2011.

What's a mission statement?

A mission statement is one line on who you want to be. For example: calm at home, sharp at work, kind to myself.

It gives you a quick check when you choose what to do. Does this fit who I want to be today?



Morning Mindset Journal £39

Want it ready next time? The left-hand page walks you through all 3, each time you open it.

Get the Morning Mindset Journal

90 days to try it

"It takes the guesswork out of journaling and gives me a nice track every morning to run on."

Beth Rose, from our product page

Decide what to do *first.*

10 minutes

On any paper: draw a cross. Urgent goes right, important goes up. It's our Priority Pad layout.

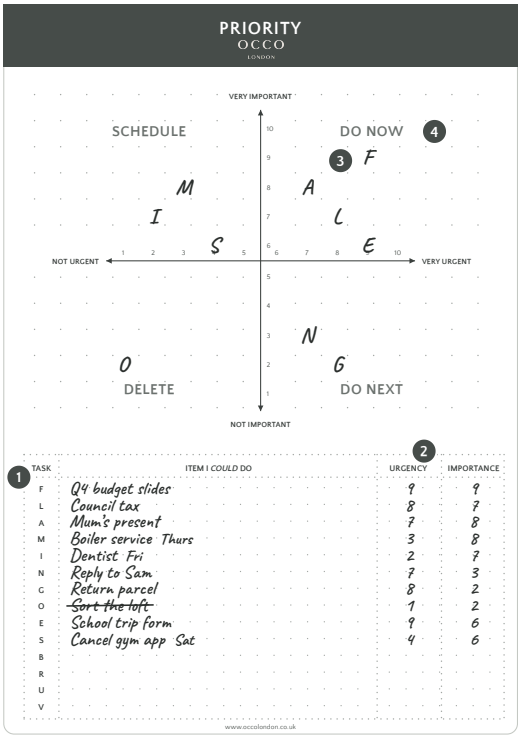
How to fill it

1. **Write each job** next to a letter, one job per letter. The letters are printed down the left. You won't need all 14.
2. **Score its urgency** from 1 to 10. 10 is due today, or waiting will cost you. 1 has no deadline at all.
3. **Score its importance** from 1 to 10. 10 matters a lot to your goals or the people you care about. 1 changes nothing if it never happens.
4. **Mark its letter on the grid.** Find its urgency score on the line that runs across. Find its importance score on the line that runs up. Write the letter where they meet.
5. **Read the 4 boxes.**
   Do now: urgent and important.
   Schedule: important, not urgent. Write a day next to the job.
   Do next: urgent, not important. Keep it quick.
   Delete: neither. Cross it out.
6. **Start the Do now job** that scores highest.

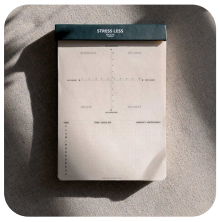
   For both scores, 6 or more counts as high. Can't decide on a score? Call it 5 and move on.

Reading the example. F, the budget slides, scored 9 for urgency and 9 for importance: Do now. M, the boiler, scored 3 and 8: Schedule. O, the loft, scored 1 and 2: crossed out.

Filled in: a Tuesday



The research that backs it up. With a clear plan, an unfinished job pops into your head less, even before it's done. Giving a Schedule job a day is that kind of plan. Source: Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2011.



Priority Pad £29

Next time everything's urgent, the grid is printed. You get clarity on what to do first.

Get the Priority Pad

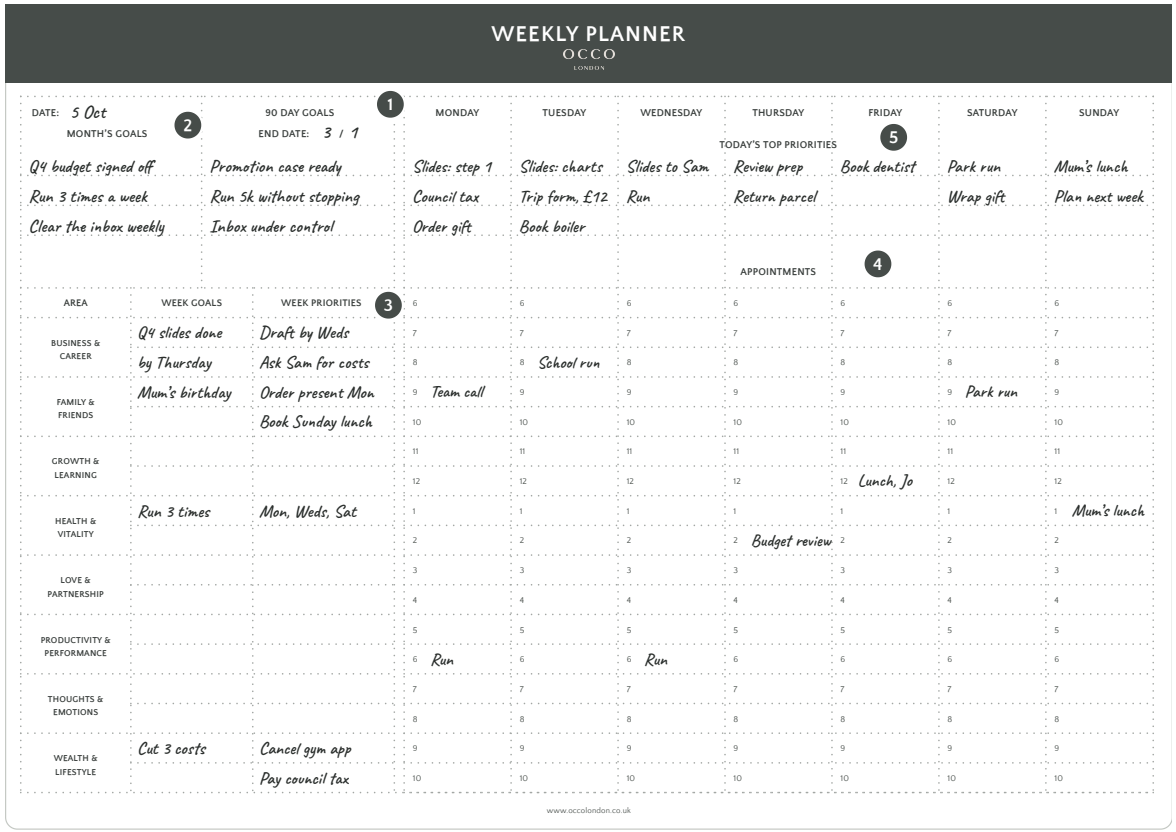
90 days to try it

★★★★★

"Once it is written down in front of you there's no backing out of what you need to do first."

Helen Davies, from our product page

Filled in: the week of 5 October



WEEKLY PLANNER
OCCO LONDON

DATE: 5 Oct
MONTH'S GOALS (2)
- Q4 budget signed off
- Run 3 times a week
- Clear the inbox weekly

90 DAY GOALS (1)
END DATE: 3 / 1
- Promotion case ready
- Run 5k without stopping
- Inbox under control

AREA	WEEK GOALS	WEEK PRIORITIES (3)
BUSINESS & CAREER	Q4 slides done by Thursday	Draft by Weds Ask Sam for costs
FAMILY & FRIENDS	Mum's birthday	Order present Mon Book Sunday lunch
GROWTH & LEARNING		
HEALTH & VITALITY	Run 3 times	Mon, Weds, Sat
LOVE & PARTNERSHIP		
PRODUCTIVITY & PERFORMANCE		
THOUGHTS & EMOTIONS		
WEALTH & LIFESTYLE	Cut 3 costs	Cancel gym app Pay council tax

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY (5)	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Slides: step 1	Slides: charts	Slides to Sam	Review prep	Book dentist	Park run	Mum's lunch
Council tax	Trip form, £12	Run	Return parcel		Wrap gift	Plan next week
Order gift	Book boiler					

TODAY'S TOP PRIORITIES

APPOINTMENTS (4)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
6							
7							
8		8 School run					
9	Team call					9 Park run	
10							
11							
12					12 Lunch, Jo		
1							1 Mum's lunch
2				2 Budget review			
3							
4							
5							
6	Run		6 Run				
7							
8							
9							
10							

www.occolondon.co.uk

The research that backs it up. Planning your week is a key part of a course for adults who struggle to stay organised. In a trial, the course reduced attention problems more than a support group did. Source: American Journal of Psychiatry, 2010. Studied in adults with ADHD, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Plan the week *ahead.*

10 minutes

On any paper: write 3 week goals, then each day's top 3 jobs. It's our Weekly Planner Pad layout.

How to fill it

On a Sunday or a Monday.

1. **Date and 90-day goals.** Write Monday's date. Then write 1 to 3 things you want done in 90 days. Add the date 90 days from now as the end date.
2. **Month's goals.** Write 1 to 3 steps towards your 90-day goals for this month.
3. **Pick 2 or 3 of the 8 areas** down the left. For each, write a week goal: what you want done by Sunday. Then a week priority: the next step towards it. Leave the rest blank.
4. **Appointments.** Add the fixed times: meetings, calls, the school run. The hours run from 6am to 10pm.
5. **Today's top priorities.** For each day, write up to 3 jobs from your week priorities. Then each day's list is ready before it starts.



Weekly Planner Pad £32

Next time the week runs away, it's on one sheet. You see the whole week at once.

Get the Weekly Planner Pad

90 days to try it

★★★★☆ "With meetings, calls, and loads of admin its easy to get pulled away from what you actually need to do the most."
Will Arnold, from our product page

When you can't stop *thinking.*

If your mind gets busy at 11pm, write it all down.

Bedtime is often when a busy mind starts thinking about tomorrow. Writing it down gets it out of your head.

10 minutes before bed

1. **Write tomorrow's jobs** on any paper, and make them specific.
2. **Write down anything else still on your mind.** Then it's out of your head before you sleep.
3. **Put screens away** for the last hour if you can. Get up at a similar time each day. Both are NHS advice.

If sleep has been a problem for a while, talk to your GP.

The research that backs it up

In a sleep-lab study, people who wrote a to-do list at bedtime fell asleep faster. The more specific their list, the faster they fell asleep.

Source: Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 2018.

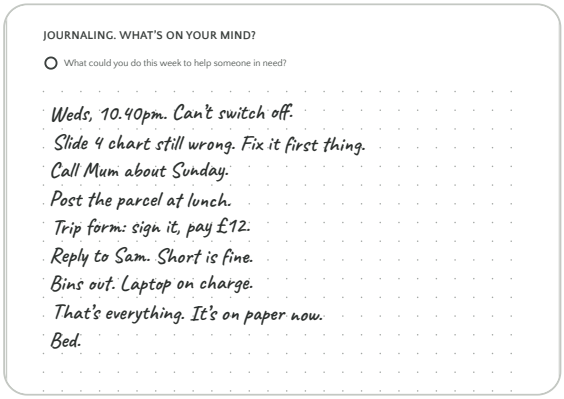
Takes

10 minutes.

Yes, we know it's called the Morning Mindset Journal. We use it at night too.

At 10pm, open a fresh journalling page, the one from **page 7**. Empty your head onto it. Be specific. Write "fix the chart on slide 4", not just "slides".

In the morning, you already know what to start with.



A Morning Mindset Journal page, written the night before.

When you need *more help.*

This guide isn't a treatment. If you're struggling to cope, or worried about your safety, please talk to someone today.

Samaritans — **116 123**
Free, any time, day or night.

Shout — **Text SHOUT to 85258**
Text support. Free, 24/7.

NHS 111 — **111**
Call 111 and choose the mental health option, or go to 111.nhs.uk.

Mind Infoline — **0300 123 3393**
Information, and help finding the right support. Mon to Fri, 9am to 6pm

In an emergency — **999 or A&E**
If a life is at risk.

If it's been going on for a while

Your GP is the right place to start. You don't need to know how to describe it. Take this guide with you if it helps.

You're not *lazy.*

Here's why your head gets overwhelmed,
and why each method helps.

1 **Your head holds about 4 things at once.**
Try to hold more than about 4 things and you start to forget some. So write them down instead. The Morning Mindset Page is for this.
Source: Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 2001.

2 **Knowing a job matters won't get you started.**
Many of us find it easier to start when a job is new or interesting. A deadline helps too, or having someone else there. So set a 5-minute timer. It gives you a small deadline.

3 **It's hard to judge time.**
Most people underestimate how long jobs take. A busy mind can also find it harder to judge how much time has passed.
Sources: Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1994. Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2021, review of 55 studies, studied in people with ADHD.

4 **Switching tasks makes the next one harder.**
Moving to a new task leaves part of your attention on the last one. That makes the new one harder to do well. The Priority Pad Page helps you decide your order once, then do one job at a time.
Source: Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 2009.

5 **Strong feelings can knock you off track.**
Many people with a busy mind feel things quickly and strongly. Wait 10 minutes before you reply or decide anything. Then go back to the job.
Source: BMC Psychiatry, 2020. Studied in adults with ADHD.

6 **A filled-in example makes it easier to start.**
People learn a new skill faster by studying a finished example than by working it out alone. That's why each method in this guide shows a page already filled in.
Source: Cognition and Instruction, 1985.

Why not just use *any paper?*

You can. Every method in this guide works on any paper. But loose sheets get lost, so the method stops on the days you need it most.

We know, because it happened to us. We're Ollie and Clare, 2 designers who both burnt out working in London.

Therapy, coaching and CBT helped. So did writing everything down.

We printed our own sheets, and friends asked for copies. But the sheets got lost. On the days we needed them most, we stopped using them.

So we made proper tools. They're ready when your head is too full to set anything up.

What a tool gives you that loose paper doesn't

- **The layout is ready.** On a bad day, drawing a page is one more job. With a tool, the boxes are already there.
- **It's all in one place.** The Morning Mindset Journal is bound, so you can look back at last month's pages.
- **It's easy to find.** It sits on your desk. No hunting for a clean sheet or last week's notes.
- **Each pad sheet tears off.** Use today's sheet, then bin it. The next one is waiting underneath.
- **It's undated.** Miss a week, or a month. Nothing is wasted. Start again on any day.



Like a toolbox
Pick the tool the job needs. You don't need all 4. You don't need them every day.

What to do *next.*

Do the method on the page you need. Then give the job 5 minutes. Reply to our email and tell us what you started.



Morning Mindset Journal £39

Head too full most mornings? Pages 6 and **7**, laid out for you. You get clarity on what matters most. Our best seller.

Get the Morning Mindset Journal

90 days to try it

★★★★★

"...it has slowed me down and given me clarity on what will have the greatest ROI over the long term."

Eloise Martin, from our product page

Or the tool for one kind of overwhelm

	**Could Do Pad**	**Can't start?** A list short enough to begin. Add it to the journal and UK delivery is free.	£15	See it
	**Priority Pad**	**Everything urgent?** Clarity on what to do first. 104 tear-off A5 sheets.	£29	See it
	**Weekly Planner Pad**	**Losing track of the week?** See the whole week at once. 52 undated A4 weeks.	£32	See it
	**The Toolkit**	**A tool for each kind of overwhelm.** All 4 in one gift box. Costs less than buying them separately.	£79	See it

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occolondon.co.uk/start

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Your welcome email has a free UK delivery code for your first order. It lasts 7 days.

90 days to try it. If it isn't giving you more clarity, email us. We'll refund you, even if you've used it. Return postage is yours, unless it arrived faulty, damaged or wrong. Full terms at occolondon.co.uk/policies/refund-policy.

5% of our profits go to Mind, the mental health charity.

© 2026 OCCO Wellbeing Ltd, company number 13518404. Share freely for personal use. General information only, not medical, legal or financial advice. Prices checked 9 November 2026. Helplines checked 28 September 2026.

The science *behind this.*

Every study and UK fact in this guide traces to one of these. If we couldn't check it, we left it out.

The 4 methods (pages 5 to 10)

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Emmons RA, McCullough ME (2003). Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 84(2):377–389. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.84.2.377

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Gollwitzer PM, Sheeran P (2006). Advances in Experimental Social Psychology 38:69–119. doi:10.1016/S0065-2601(06)38002-1

Milkman KL, Minson JA, Volpp KGM (2014). Management Science 60(2):283–299. doi:10.1287/mnsc.2013.1784

Sweller J, Cooper GA (1985). Cognition and Instruction 2(1):59–89. doi:10.1207/s1532690xci0201_3

Solanto MV et al. (2010). American Journal of Psychiatry 167(8):958–968. doi:10.1176/appi.ajp.2009.09081123

Hatzigeorgiadis A, Zourbanos N, Galanis E, Theodorakis Y (2011). Self-talk and sports performance: a meta-analysis. Perspectives on Psychological Science 6(4):348–356. doi:10.1177/1745691611413136

When you can't stop thinking (page 11)

Scullin MK, Krueger ML, Ballard HK, Pruett N, Bliwise DL (2018). Journal of Experimental Psychology: General 147(1):139–146. doi:10.1037/xge0000374

NHS Every Mind Matters. How to fall asleep faster and sleep better.

When you need more help (page 12)

Samaritans, Shout, NHS 111 and Mind: each organisation's own website, checked 28 September 2026.

Why you get stuck (page 13)

Cowan N (2001). Behavioral and Brain Sciences 24(1):87–114.

Buehler R, Griffin D, Ross M (1994). Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 67(3):366–381. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.67.3.366

Marx I, Cortese S, Koelch MG, Hacker T (2021). Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Meta-analysis of time perception, 55 studies.

Leroy S (2009). Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes 109(2):168–181. doi:10.1016/j.obhdp.2009.04.002

Beheshti A, Chavanon ML, Christiansen H (2020). BMC Psychiatry 20:120. doi:10.1186/s12888-020-2442-7

Products and reviews (pages 5 to 15)

Prices, contents and 90 days to try it: occolondon.co.uk, checked 9 November 2026.

Customer reviews: word for word from occolondon.co.uk product pages. Shortened, never reworded, spelling as written.

Some of these studies were run with adults with ADHD. We've used their findings where they match.

Pick the page you need. Then give the job *5 minutes.*

Can't start? *5*

Head too full? *6*

Everything urgent? *9*

Losing track of the week? *10*



Morning Mindset Journal £39

Head too full most mornings? The bound version of **pages 6** and **7**. You get clarity on what matters most.

Get the Morning Mindset Journal

90 days to try it

Send it to a friend on WhatsApp

OCCO
LONDON

Paper tools to reduce overwhelm and create clarity.

occolondon.co.uk

v9.3.1, Nov 2026