

string & space

Bujo

101

Everything You Need to Get
Started on Your Bullet Planner





[TABLE OF CONTENTS]



BEFORE YOU BEGIN 03

WHAT YOU'LL NEED 06

PARTS OF A BULLET PLANNER 07

DESIGN, DECORATE, AND DOODLE! 16

NOT ARTISTIC? NOT A PROBLEM! 18

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT 19

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BULLET PLANNER 21

MAKE THE HABIT STICK 23

BEFORE YOU GO 25



[BEFORE YOU BEGIN...]



You have in your hands an eBook downloaded from the [STRING & SPACE](#) website into your device. It's a digital product created to help you, dear reader, get started on an analog paper-based system. The irony is not lost on us :)

Much of life has gone digital. But journals, planners, organizers, and notebooks remain extremely popular and beloved, none more so than bullet planners. It's an effective outlet for you to be creative, express yourself, and get organized and productive all at the same time!

People of all ages all over the world who are looking to get a handle on their bloated to-do lists and boost their productivity can embrace this simple, creative, and life-changing way to track their lives. Bullet planning is a system of organization, not a particular type of notebook. In fact, any notebook will do. The dot grid is our all-time favorite. We find it best for creating different types of layouts.

The system's versatility also means that it can be adapted to fit anyone's preference, personality, lifestyle, and planning and organizing methods.

"THERE ARE APPS FOR THAT!", YOU MAY SAY.

You're not wrong. There are many good apps and digital tools designed to help people keep track of their lives, manage their schedules, and plan for the future. So why the bullet planner?

There's something instinctive in humans that makes us want to color outside the proverbial lines. Even the most rigid of us will reject limitations imposed on our creativity. Non-templated pages allow us to organize our days in a way that suits us best. A bullet planner is meant to grow with us and adjust to our changing needs and priorities, not the other way around.

Plus, decorating your bullet planner is fun! For many, it's their favorite part.



ARE YOU READY TO TRY IT OUT?

We wrote this concise guide to help the bujo-curious get started.

But, as is the nature of a bullet planner, every fresh page is a chance to do better, so we think seasoned journalers will also pick up a thing or two. Beginner or expert, wherever you are in your bullet planning journey, we hope you'll find this ebook useful.

HAPPY JOURNALING!



[WHAT YOU'LL NEED:]

! MUST-HAVES !

PENS / PENCILS

NOTEBOOK

NICE-TO-HAVES

WASHI TAPES

STICKERS

PAINTBRUSH

WATERCOLOR


RULER

HIGHLIGHTERS

*Not all paper takes well to paint or all types of ink. It is best to get a journal with great quality pages that can handle mixed media. A 170gsm paper thickness is a good choice like our **STAR DOTTED GRID JOURNAL**.



[PARTS OF A BULLET PLANNER]



Unlike traditional planners, the pages of bullet planners don't follow any set template or format. Tasks, notes, ideas, and other information are recorded or logged onto your journal as easy-to-digest bullet points. Other than that, the system is highly personal and completely customizable. No two planners will look alike. So what makes a bullet planner what it is?

Here are the core components:



INDEX

The first spread is usually reserved for the index. It functions as a table of contents, helping you locate specific sections.

Some journals come with numbered pages, but most don't, in which case, you can number pages as you go along and update the index as needed.

Most creative enthusiasts prefer it that way so they can tear out sheets without messing up the journal's pagination.



The key is your legend or decoder. It should include all the symbols or keys you will use throughout your journal and what they signify. Your key doesn't have to be an elaborate code. The idea is to give you an efficient system for categorizing your entries as you write them.



FUTURE SPREAD

The future spread covers the entire year. You can also do two half-year spreads if you require more space. You can use this section to mark important dates, such as birthdays and anniversaries.

There's no right or wrong way to use your future spread, but given that this will take up the first few pages in your journal, we think it's the perfect space for direction-setting. Think of it as the outline for your entire year. Write down goals you want to achieve for the specific months.



MONTHLY SPREAD

Your monthly spreads should give you an overview of what you can expect for the entire month at a glance. You can use this space to log upcoming events or to track past events.

At the close of every month, any unfinished business can be transferred or migrated to the next month.

If you're not too keen on the standard calendar view, try the vertical calendar where dates appear as a numbered list.



WEEKLY SPREAD

A weekly spread is where you can get more detailed in your entries since you'll have more space to work with.



DAILY LOG

This section is for your brain dump, where you jot down thoughts, to-dos, and other information as they come to you, a written equivalent of a "junk drawer." If it's important enough to take note of, it goes here. This section is meant for daily to-do's, but feel free to let your stream of consciousness flow. Take up as much space as you need.



HABIT TRACKER

The bullet planner is particularly useful as a habit tracker. You won't find a simpler and more efficient system for monitoring and measuring your progress as you build (and sustain!) new habits.

You can also use your journal to track your mood and mental health, medication, food intake, fitness, finances, and just about anything else you need to keep track of.



CUSTOM COLLECTIONS

Anything that is not a tracker and doesn't fall under yearly, weekly, monthly, and daily logs can have its very own section. If you want to do a vision spread or if you need space to sketch, paint, or scrapbook go ahead and make one.

Your bullet planner is what you design it to be.



[DESIGN, DECORATE,
AND DOODLE!]



With a bullet planner, the design possibilities are endless. It's what gets some people most excited about it. Blank pages just waiting to be doodled on and colored are pretty hard to resist.

The cool thing about creative pursuits is, whether you're working on a mural, a canvas, or the pages of your planner, its benefits run deeper than aesthetics. Creating art boosts self-esteem, stimulates the mind, relieves stress and anxiety, and gives us a sense of accomplishment. It's a powerful form of self-expression as well as a widely accepted form of therapy.

Some people have truly elevated bullet planning into an art form. Let their work inspire you, not intimidate you. You'll find Facebook groups, Pinterest, and Instagram to be a boundless source of bullet planner design ideas. There are also a lot of video tutorials you can learn from or free templates that you can build on.

A word of caution, don't let perfectionism hold you back. If decorating your journal will make you happy, then go for it. Allow yourself to do things you enjoy, whether or not you feel you're good at it.



[NOT ARTISTIC? NOT A PROBLEM!]



If you don't feel the need to decorate the pages of your journal, that's also perfectly fine. Some people do their best thinking in minimalist and clutter-free surroundings, and that extends to their journals.

Bujo was originally meant to be minimalistic, focusing on content rather than aesthetics. So even if you lack the time, the inclination, or the skill to create beautiful spreads, don't let it discourage you from taking up bullet planning. You don't need to be artistically gifted to reap the benefits of the journal system.

Maybe it's your penmanship that you're worried about. Many of us are more used to typing and it shows in our penmanship. We are sorely out of practice. But, guess what? The only person who needs to understand your handwriting is YOU. People love sharing pages of their planners online, you don't have to if you're not comfortable with it.

Plus, creativity and good penmanship are skills that will improve over time with regular practice.



[WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT]



IT'S FLEXIBLE.

Your journal is what you make of it. You can start anytime and choose which areas of your life it will cover. You are not bound by any rules.

YOU'LL GET A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF TIME.

Time, like the space in the pages of your journal, is finite. Having your tasks, responsibilities, and deliverables laid out in spreads will remind you of that and help you allocate your time wisely.

NO TO-DO GETS FORGOTTEN.

When you start setting up for a new month or week, one of the first things you will need to do is to migrate unfinished tasks and goals from the previous months or weeks. The act of having to manually copy entries onto a fresh page by hand means that you are unlikely to miss or forget them.

YOU'LL GET BETTER AT PRIORITIZING.

Writing something by hand also requires more thoughtfulness than typing it out. This way, you'll have the opportunity to consider each task, the effort it will take, and how it ranks in urgency with your other to-dos.

YOU'LL BE PART OF AN AWESOME COMMUNITY.

The bujo community is a large and thriving global network. It has many different subsets ranging from the typical (for students, moms, or artists) to the slightly obscure (for the left-handed). You'll easily find your tribe. You'll find them in Facebook groups or by searching for particular hashtags on social media.

Start by becoming a part of the String & Space community. Find us on social media using the hashtag **#STRINGANDSPACE**.

Here are other hashtags you may want to explore:

#BULLETJOURNAL #BUJO #BUJOJUNKIES #BUJOLOVE #BULLETJOURNALJUNKIES



MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BULLET PLANNER



START WITH THE BASICS.

It takes time to build a habit. The first two weeks are particularly crucial. Don't overwhelm yourself. You can start with daily logs and gradually add other collections once daily drawing and writing become second nature to you.

KEEP YOUR JOURNAL BRAIN DUMP-FRIENDLY.

Have ample space to write on. Function over form, always.

PERSONALIZE IT.

A lot of people share their journal layouts online to inspire others. Keep in mind that what works for others might not work for you. Take time to discover and refine your system.

ADD MORE TOOLS AS YOU GO.

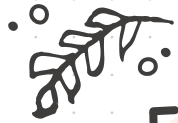
You only need a notebook and a pen. Eventually, you may also want to treat yourself to different colored pens and highlighters, cute washi tapes, stickers, or anything else that will make journaling more enjoyable

USE IT WITH DIGITAL TOOLS.

Using a bullet planner doesn't mean you have to shun technology. Complement your analog planner with digital calendars with alarms, helpful mind-mapping tools, and the like.

LET GO OF EXPECTATIONS!

Some people spend hours designing their journals. If you have time to spare and the artistic chops to go with it, that's great. If not, don't sweat it. Don't make setting up your journal a task in and of itself.



[MAKE THE HABIT STICK]



Once you decide to start a bullet planner, you'll probably feel a burst of motivation, but motivation is a fickle friend. The annoying truth is, it's usually when we need it the most that it's nowhere to be found. So what happens then?

No one ever got anything important done from motivation alone. You will struggle to maintain momentum eventually, at which point, discipline and processes will need to take over.

Your bullet planner can be a powerful tool for productivity or a cute notebook gathering dust on your desk. It's all up to you. So how do you get from "motivated" to "disciplined"? How can you make the journaling habit stick?

Here are three simple no-fail tips.

CREATE A VISUAL TRIGGER.

Keep your journal in your purse and take it with you wherever you go or give it a prominent place on your desk so you'll be reminded of it throughout the day. You can use any notebook as a bullet planner, but it helps if you choose one that's so cute you'll actually want to use it.

EASY STUFF FIRST.

If creating future logs or even monthly logs seem too daunting, then save it for later. Start with daily logs. All you really need to begin rapid logging is a key. Keep it simple. Dots and dashes will do.

GIVE YOURSELF A PASS WHEN YOU MISS A DAY.

You might be tempted to scrap bullet planning altogether if you miss a day or two. DON'T. You're building a routine. Expect off days and just keep going.

Note that a good planner—any good planner, be it digital or analog, will only work if you use it consistently.



[BEFORE YOU GO...]



Are you excited to begin your bullet planner journey? We're excited for you. Watch as your growth and self-discoveries unfurl on the pages. You will enjoy having a record to look back on for memories and all you have accomplished.

Grab a notebook and a pen and just start.

For inspiration, support, and other free resources, follow String & Space on [FACEBOOK](#) and [INSTAGRAM](#) and [SIGN UP](#) for our newsletter.

string & space

Copyright © 2021 Despaced Limited

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or used in any manner without written permission of the copyright owner except for the use of quotations in a book review. For more information, contact us at **HELLO@STRINGANDSPACE.COM**

www.stringandspace.com

  @stringandspace