

SAMPLE

X-SKILLS™

A strategic guide to executing
tasks effectively, sustaining
high performance and
reaching academic
and personal
goals.



**tutor
doctor**

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Defining the Destination

What's the **#1 goal** that you want to achieve by the time you graduate from High School?

Do you feel like you have the organizational and study skills to **guarantee** that you will successfully achieve that goal?

If you do, that's fantastic! If you're even a little unsure though, then this organizer is a great tool to develop the skills you will need to accomplish your **#1 goal**, as well as, to confidently go after all of your goals and dreams. Along the way you'll be practicing some techniques which may be unfamiliar to you so it will take some diligence to convert them to routines - that's ok and it's a part of the learning process.

In order to streamline the process, we have assumed that your primary long-term goal is academic success and this organizer provides a process for developing the skills necessary for you to confidently achieve that goal. We call these **X-Skills™** and they are listed below. The better you understand and apply these skills, the better you'll be at executing tasks independently and making good decisions affecting every aspect of your life.

- > **Time management**
- > **Organization**
- > **Prioritization**
- > **Task initiation**
- > **Focused attention**
- > **Memory**

The good news is that it doesn't take anything more than a willingness to learn the techniques; the persistence to establish the routines; and, a commitment to follow the rules of the game to start seeing results.

Rules of the Game

- 1 You have to want to do this. The tool is in your hands. You can choose to master it or you can choose to throw it in the back of your locker, the bottom of your backpack or in the recycle bin. Just keep in mind that wherever this organizer ends up is directly related to where your **X-Skills™** will probably end up.
- 2 You must identify a tutor, mentor, older sibling, friend or parent, whom you allow to hold you accountable on a daily basis. Your "accountability coach" should be someone you trust and respect and you must be willing to listen to their advice. They should also be someone who is vested in your success and, most importantly, someone who challenges you to work a little harder than you may sometimes want to push yourself.
- 3 You have to stick to the routine or you won't reinforce the habits required to accomplish the skills.
- 4 Don't consider this an exercise to learn a few lessons. Treat it as on-the-job training so that you can teach your friends how to manage their own daily tasks and achieve their goals!

The Weekly Worksheet

Capturing your academic (Alpha) tasks

1 During class, write down all of your academic assignments on the **Weekly Worksheet** as they are assigned and enter the date they are due in the **Date Due** column. These are your most important priorities so we'll call these Alpha tasks from now on.

2 Estimate how long it will take to complete the assignment and enter it in the **Estimated Time Required** column.

3 Select a date you plan to complete each task by and enter it in the **Complete By** column.

NOTE: If possible, choose a date one day prior to the actual due date for near-term assignments and two days prior for long-term projects, papers and exams.

4 Write down any obstacles which might prevent you from completing the task in the **Obstacles** block. Note the associated task by using the letter "A" followed by the line number. You'll want to develop strategies for overcoming these obstacles.

5 If you need specific resources to accomplish the task, note the line number in the **Resources Required** block and jot down a note on how you will obtain the resource.

NOTE: ALTHOUGH CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS COMPRISE THE MAJORITY OF YOUR ALPHA TASKS, KEEP IN MIND THAT OTHER TASKS ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND THEREFORE SHOULD BE LISTED AS ALPHA TASKS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE EYE DOCTOR APPOINTMENT ON WEDNESDAY COULD BE CLASSIFIED AS AN **ALPHA TASK** IF THE STUDENT CAN'T SEE THE BLACKBOARD OR READ THE TEXTBOOKS. FOR THIS EXAMPLE, WE'LL CONSIDER IT A ROUTINE APPOINTMENT AND LABEL IT AS A **BETA TASK**.

Alpha Tasks

Assignments, homework, tests, quizzes, papers, projects and exams.

TASK	DATE DUE	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	
01	PREPARE FOR HISTORY QUIZ	09/28	90 MIN	09/27
02	READ MATH CH. 2 & 3	09/28	30 MIN	09/27
03	SCIENCE WORKSHEET	09/29	90 MIN	09/28
04	READ MATH CH. 4 & 5	09/29	2 HRS	09/28
05	PREPARE FOR MATH TEST	09/30	2 HRS	09/29
06	UPDATE STUDY GUIDE	10/1	2 HRS	10/1
07	SCIENCE PROJECT	10/30	20 HRS	10/28
08				
09				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				

#	OBSTACLES (LIST BY LINE NUMBER)
A1, A2	MISSING CLASS DUE TO EYE DOCTOR
#	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BY LINE #)
A7	BUY MATERIALS FOR DISPLAY

The Weekly Worksheet

Beta Tasks and To-Do List

- 1 Use the **Beta Task worksheet** to capture other critical tasks which must be completed, but aren't related to academic success. These include appointments, music lessons, sports practice, extracurricular activities, hobbies, family or job commitments and chores.
- 2 Estimate how long it will take to complete the task and enter it in the **Estimated Time Required** column.
- 3 Schedule time on your weekly calendar to accomplish these tasks.
- 4 Use the To-Do List to capture any tasks that are not classified as Alpha or Beta tasks.

Beta Tasks

Important tasks that increase your quality of life personal commitments, appointments and chores.

TASK		EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	#	TO DO LIST
01	ROUTINE EYE DOCTOR APPT	2 HRS	9/28		BUY STAMPS
02	BOY SCOUTS	90 MIN	9/28		
03	BSU GAME	6 HRS	10/1		
04	LUNCH W/ FAMILY	3 HRS	10/1		
05					
06					
07					
08					
09					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

Weekly Calendar Prep Checklist

COMPLETE ON SUNDAY EVENING (See the example on the following page.)

STEP 1

Fill in the month, year and calendar dates at the top of the page and enter the hours of your day in the left-hand column.

NOTE THE LAST HOUR PRIOR TO THE BEFORE DEPARTING SCHOOL CHECKLIST BAR AND THE FIRST HOUR AFTER IT SHOULD BE THE SAME.

STEP 2

Block out time already allocated to pre-scheduled Alpha or Beta tasks.

NOTE INCLUDE APPOINTMENTS, SPORTS OR MUSIC PRACTICE, CHORES, CHURCH AND ANY OTHER COMMITMENTS THAT WILL LIMIT YOUR AVAILABILITY. WE HAVE INDICATED A ROUTINE EYE DOCTOR APPOINTMENT IS SCHEDULED FROM 8–10 A.M. ON THE 28TH, AS WELL AS, A DAILY HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP.

STEP 3

Transfer uncompleted Alpha tasks from last week to this week's calendar on the day they are due. Place them on the calendar during your school day at the time the class starts, then circle the entry on the calendar.

NOTE FOR EXAMPLE, WE HAVE CARRIED OVER 5-PAGE ESSAY AND DESIGNATED IT TO BE COMPLETED ON THURSDAY AT 10 AM BECAUSE THAT IS WHEN THE STUDENT'S ENGLISH BEGINS.

STEP 4

Review your web-based assignment system (e.g., Power School) and place any upcoming assignments on your calendar in the same manner as the uncompleted Alpha tasks in step 3.

STEP 5

Identify individual time slots to complete the Alpha tasks now listed on the calendar.

NOTE YOU WILL BE ADDING NEW TASKS TO THESE SLOTS AS THE WEEK UNFOLDS.

Calendar

Month: SEPTEMBER

Year: 20XX

MON: 26 TUE: 27 WED: 28 THU: 29 FRI: 30

BEFORE SCHOOL CHECKLIST

8:00					
:30			EYE DOCTOR		
9:00					
:30					
10:00				ENGLISH 5-PAGE ESSAY	
:30					
11:00					
:30					
12:00					
:30					
1:00					
:30					
2:00					
:30					
3:00					
:30					

BEFORE DEPARTING SCHOOL CHECKLIST

4:00	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP				
:30	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP
5:00					
:30					
6:00					
:30					
7:00	ENGLISH 5-PAGE ESSAY				
:30			BOY SCOUTS		
8:00					
:30					
9:00					
:30					
10:00					
:30					

End of Day Debrief

ALPHA COMP.	
INITIALS	
NEW TASK	

WEEKEND	ALPHA COMPLETE	Weekly Alpha Goals	SCHEDULED	ACTUAL	% COMPLETE
10/1 / 10/2					

Tasks Worksheet

Alpha Tasks

Assignments, homework, tests, quizzes, papers, projects and exams.

TASK	DATE DUE	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	
01	PREPARE FOR HISTORY QUIZ	09/28	90 MIN	09/27
02	READ MATH CH. 2 & 3	09/28	30 MIN	09/27
03	SCIENCE WORKSHEET	09/29	90 MIN	09/28
04	READ MATH CH. 4 & 5	09/29	2 HRS	09/28
05	PREPARE FOR MATH TEST	09/30	2 HRS	09/29
06	UPDATE STUDY GUIDE	10/1	2 HRS	10/1
07	SCIENCE PROJECT	10/30	20 HRS	10/28
08				
09				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				

#	OBSTACLES (LIST BY LINE NUMBER)
A1, A2	MISSING CLASS DUE TO EYE DOCTOR

#	RESOURCES REQUIRED (BY LINE #)
A7	BUY MATERIALS FOR DISPLAY

Beta Tasks

Important tasks that increase your quality of life personal commitments, appointments and chores.

TASK	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	
01	ROUTINE EYE DOCTOR APPT	2 HRS	9/28
02	BOY SCOUTS	90 MIN	9/28
03	BSU GAME	6 HRS	10/1
04	LUNCH W/ FAMILY	3 HRS	10/1
05			
06			
07			
08			
09			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

#	TO DO LIST
	BUY STAMPS

Completing the Weekly Calendar

Transferring Alpha tasks from your Weekly Worksheet

Transfer your Alpha tasks to the weekly calendar you prepped on Sunday evening. Transfer each task to the **Date Due** and enter it during the hours of the respective class period by subject. For the example, Alpha tasks 1 – 5 were transferred to the weekly calendar as follows.

- > **A1 was placed at 8:00 (History Class)**
- > **A2, A4 and A5 were placed at 9:00 (Math Class)**
- > **A3 was placed at 1:00 (Science Class)**
- > **English 5-page essay is circled because it was carried over from the previous week as an uncompleted Alpha task.**

NOTE 1: NOTICE THERE IS A CONFLICT ON THE 28TH BETWEEN THE PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED ROUTINE EYE DOCTOR APPOINTMENT AND THE ALPHA TASKS DUE IN HISTORY AND MATH. THIS CONFLICT PRESENTS AN OBSTACLE TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND MUST BE RESOLVED.

NOTE 2: ALSO NOTICE THAT THERE ARE NO ENTRIES FOR TASKS A6 AND A7 ON THE CALENDAR. A6 WILL BE PLACED ON THE WEEKEND SCHEDULE AND A7 IS DUE BEYOND THE CURRENT WEEK. A7 IS A SCIENCE PROJECT SO IT HAS BEEN COLOR-CODED YELLOW AND WE WILL BE PLACING A YELLOW TAB ON THE TOP OF THE ACTUAL CALENDAR PAGE THAT IT IS DUE.

Creating time slots for new Alpha and Beta tasks

Once you've placed your new tasks on the calendar on the date due, you will need to create a time slot to accomplish the task during your after-school hours.

Simply select the date when you plan to work on the task and write the Alpha task number in the slot. If you are going to break the task up across several sessions, place a dot to the right of the number to indicate there is more work to be done. Circle the Alpha task number on the actual date you plan to complete the task.

Once you've slotted your Alpha tasks, do the same for the Beta tasks.

Calendar Month: SEPTEMBER Year: 20XX A7

MON: 26 TUE: 27 WED: 28 THU: 29 FRI: 30

BEFORE SCHOOL CHECKLIST

8 :00			A1: HISTORY QUIZ EYE DOCTOR		
:30			A2: MATH CH. 283	A4: MATH CH. 185	A5: MATH TEST
9 :00					
:30					ENGLISH 5-PAGE ESSAY
10 :00					
:30					
11 :00					
:30					
12 :00					
:30					
1 :00				A3: SCIENCE WORKSHEET	
:30					
2 :00					
:30					
3 :00					
:30					
4 :00	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP				
:30	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP				
5 :00	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP				
:30	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP				
6 :00	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP				
:30	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP				
7 :00			BOY SCOUTS		
:30					
8 :00					
:30					
9 :00					
:30					
10 :00					
:30					
ALPHA COMP.	1	2	2	2	
INITIALS					
NEW TASK	A6: UPDATE STUDY GUIDES		A7: SCIENCE PROJECT		
WEEKEND	ALPHA COMPLETE	SCHEDULED	ACTUAL	% COMPLETE	
10/1 / 10/2	2				

Daily & Weekly Checklists

The last thing we need to review are the checklists you'll be completing on a daily and weekly basis to make sure you're prepared for each phase of your day and to assess your progress. The **Before School Check** will ensure you are prepared for the school day; the

Before Departing School Check is intended to make sure you bring everything home you need to complete your tasks that evening; and the **End of Day Debriefing** and **End of Week Assessment** provides a simple means of assessing your performance and measuring improvement.

BEFORE SCHOOL CHECK

- > Enter the total number of Alpha tasks assigned during the week and the number you completed at the bottom of the Weekly Calendar. Then, calculate the percentage of tasks you completed and enter it as well.
- > Review tasks due today
- > Gather assignments, homework & books
- > Permission slips, flyers and any other paperwork
- > Electronics (iPad, phone, etc.)
- > Backpack
- > Gym bag
- > Musical instruments

BEFORE DEPARTING SCHOOL CHECK

- > All homework turned in today?
- > Gather assignments, homework & books
- > Permission slips, flyers and any other paperwork
- > Electronics (iPad, phone, etc.)
- > Backpack
- > Gym bag
- > Musical instruments

END OF DAY DEBRIEFING

- > Confirm classroom daily notes are all transcribed. (See How to Take Notes in the back of this organizer.)
- > Homework completed?
- > Enter number of Alpha tasks completed today on calendar. Take credit for turning in assignments on time and each task that you actually completed.
- > Transfer uncompleted Alpha tasks to a future date.
- > Identify new obstacles or resources needed. Discuss strategies for improvement.
- > Update weekly plan with parent, tutor or X-Skills™ coach.
- > Initial all checklists complete on calendar.

END OF WEEK ASSESSMENT

- > Tally the Alpha tasks you completed and enter the actual % completed in the green box.
- > Circle any Alpha tasks that you did not complete. These must be carried over to the following week.
- > Assess and discuss what went well and what prevented you from achieving your Alpha goal this week.
- > Capture the strategies that worked well so that you don't forget them. If you missed your goal, adjust your strategies, develop alternate courses of action and discuss how to improve next week.
- > Transcribe the week's notes to your Study Guide (See How to Take Notes in the back of this organizer.)

Bringing It All Together

Your Daily Routine

1

SUNDAY EVENING

- > Prep your Weekly Calendar.

2

WEEKDAYS

- > Complete Before School Check.
- > During class use the Daily Worksheet to capture tasks by priority (Alpha, Beta or To-Do).
- > Complete Before Departing School Check.

3

AFTER SCHOOL

- > Transfer Alpha tasks to the day they're due on the Weekly Calendar.
- > Schedule after-school time to complete both Alpha and Beta tasks.
- > Use colored tabs to identify critical tasks due beyond the current week.
- > Use Project Planning Worksheets for long-term projects, term papers, exam prep, etc.
- > Transcribe classroom notes to your Weekly Spiral Notebook*, then complete homework.

4

END OF DAY

- > Complete the End of Day Debriefing with your accountability coach.

5

WEEKEND

- > Review progress with your accountability coach.
- > Adjust plans for following week.
- > Transcribe notes to your End of Semester Study Guide.

Setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals

(S)PECIFIC

Your goals should be clear, concise and tangible.

(M)EASURABLE

Measurement will give you specific feedback and hold you accountable.

(A)CHIEVABLE

Goals should push you, but it is important that they are achievable.

(R)ELEVANT

It's important to choose goals that matter.

(T)IME-BOUND

Ground your goals within a time frame, to stay accountable and motivated.

Goals For This Semester

Goals For This Semester	
Goal #1	
Goal #2	
Goal #3	

