THE 4-DAY DIGITAL ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE

Declutter Your Digital Life in Just 4 Days!



DAY 1

Build Your Foundation

Today you're building the folder system that will organize everything for the next decade. No theory. Just action.

This approach is adapted from proven productivity systems like David Allen's *Getting Things Done* and Tiago Forte's *PARA Method*, simplified for real-world use.

Step 1: Create Your 5-7 Master Folders (10 minutes)

Open your main storage location (Documents, Google Drive, whatever you use most). Create these folders:

1. Work (client files, projects, business docs)

2. Personal (taxes, medical, home, family)

3. Media (photos, videos, screenshots)

4. Reference (articles, PDFs, things you saved for later)

5. Archive (completed projects, old files you might need)

Optional additions based on your life:

Creative (if you make content)

Education (courses, learning materials)

That's it. Resist the urge to create 47 subfolders right now. We'll add those as needed.

Step 2: Set Your Naming Rules (5 minutes)

Every file you save from now on follows this format:

YYYY-MM-DD_ProjectName_FileType

This uses the *ISO 8601 date standard*, which makes files automatically sort chronologically across any system.

Examples:

2025-01-29_ClientProposal_Draft

2025-01-29_FamilyPhoto_Beach

2025-01-29_PodcastInterview_Notes

The date first means files auto-sort chronologically. The descriptive name means you can search and find it instantly.

Step 3: Practice With 10 Files (15 minutes)

Find 10 files currently living in chaos (desktop, downloads, wherever). Rename them using your new system. Move them into the correct master folder.

Do it right now. Set a timer.

What Just Happened

You created a system that scales. Every file has a home. Every filename is searchable. You can find anything in 10 seconds instead of 10 minutes.

Tomorrow we're cleaning the chaos zones (desktop, downloads, screenshots). But today, you built the foundation.

Your homework before tomorrow:

Save every new file using this system. When you download something, immediately rename and move it. Practice the habit.

DAY 2

Attack the Chaos Zones

Your desktop is cluttered. Your downloads folder has 847 files. Your screenshots are named "Screen Shot 2024-11-03 at 2.47.23 PM.png" and you have no idea what any of them are.

Today we fix all three.

Step 1: Desktop Purge (15 minutes)

Look at your desktop right now. Every file sitting there is a decision you postponed.

This is what productivity expert David Allen calls "open loops" in *Getting Things Done*. Each one drains mental energy.

Go through each file:

If you need it: Rename using yesterday's system (YYYY-MM-DD_Name_Type) and move to correct master folder

If it's a shortcut/app: Keep it (or delete if you never use it)

If you don't need it: Delete it

Goal: Desktop has zero loose files. Only apps and shortcuts allowed.

Step 2: Downloads Folder Blitz (20 minutes)

Open your downloads folder. Sort by date, newest first.

Last 30 days:

Keep and organize anything useful (rename and move to master folders)

Delete everything else

Older than 30 days:

Select all, delete all. If you haven't touched it in a month, you don't need it.

Be ruthless. You can always re-download something if you really need it (you won't).

Step 3: Screenshot Rescue Mission (10 minutes)

Find all your screenshots (usually in Desktop or Pictures).

Batch action time:

Delete any that are useless (you know which ones)

For keepers: Move to your Media folder, create a "Screenshots" subfolder

Rename the important ones so you can actually find them later

Pro tip: Screenshot tools like *CleanShot X* (Mac) or *ShareX* (Windows, free) let you organize and annotate as you capture.

What Just Happened

You eliminated the three places where digital chaos breeds fastest. Your computer feels 10 pounds lighter. You can actually see your desktop wallpaper.

Tomorrow we're tackling email. Inbox Zero is possible and we're going to show you how.

Your homework before tomorrow:

Every time you download something today, immediately decide: organize it or delete it. No more postponing.

DAY 3

Conquer Your Email

Right now you have 1,847 unread emails. Every time you open your inbox, you feel overwhelmed. You miss important messages because they're buried under newsletters you never read.

Today that ends.

We're using Dan Silvestre's proven *GTD Gmail system*, a method that helps knowledge workers reclaim the 17 hours per week they waste on email.

Step 1: The Great Unsubscribe (15 minutes)

Scroll through your inbox. Every newsletter or promotional email you see, ask yourself: "Have I read this in the last month?"

If no, hit unsubscribe. Do this for 15 minutes straight.

Tools that help: *Unroll.me* or Gmail's built-in unsubscribe button at the top of emails.

Exception: Keep the newsletters you actually read. Make sure to save 1% Better and any others you genuinely want. Mark them as favorites so they never get lost.

You'll cut your daily email volume by 50-70%. Immediate relief.

Step 2: Create Your 5 Email Folders (5 minutes)

You need exactly 5 folders (Gmail calls them labels):

1. Action (needs response or task)

2. Waiting (you responded, waiting on someone else)

3. Reference (important info you might need later)

4. Clients/Projects (active work conversations)

5. Archive (everything else that's done)

That's it. More folders means you won't use the system.

Step 3: Process to Inbox Zero (35 minutes)

Start with today's emails, work backwards. For each email, ask:

Delete? Trash it immediately (most emails)

Action needed? Move to Action folder

Waiting on reply? Move to Waiting folder

Need to reference? Move to Reference folder

Active project? Move to Clients/Projects folder

Done/irrelevant? Archive it

Set a timer. Process as many as you can in 35 minutes.

Don't aim for perfection. Emails older than 90 days? Select all, archive all. If it was urgent, they would have followed up.

Step 4: Set Your New Rules (5 minutes)

The GTD principle: if it takes less than 2 minutes, do it now. Everything else gets scheduled.

From now on, check email 2-3 times per day maximum. When you do:

Process every email using the 5-folder system

If it takes less than 2 minutes, reply immediately

If it takes longer, move to Action folder and schedule time for it

Your inbox is a processing zone, not storage.

What Just Happened

You hit Inbox Zero. Your inbox is now a tool that shows you exactly what needs action. Everything else is organized or gone.

Tomorrow we're organizing all your photos, videos, and visual media so you can find any file in 10 seconds.

Your homework before tomorrow:

Process every new email immediately using your 5-folder system. Maintain Inbox Zero.

DAY 4

Organize Your Media

You have 4,000 photos on your phone. 2,000 on your computer. 500 screenshots you can't identify. Videos scattered across three different folders. Finding anything takes forever.

Today you're building a system that lets you find any photo or video in 10 seconds.

Step 1: Create Your Media Structure (10 minutes)

Go to your Media folder (from Day 1). Create this structure:

Media

- Photos
  - 2025
  - 2024
  - 2023 (and so on)
- Videos
  - 2025
  - 2024
  - 2023
- Screenshots
- Graphics (logos, designs, work visuals)

Inside each year folder, create month folders: 2025-01, 2025-02, etc.

Simple. Chronological. Scalable forever.

Step 2: The Photo Purge (20 minutes)

Open your photo library. Start with this month, work backwards.

Delete ruthlessly:

Blurry shots

Duplicates (keep the best one)

Screenshots of things you'll never reference

Random photos you don't remember taking

Then move keepers into your new year/month structure.

Pro tip: Most phones let you bulk-select by date. Use it.

Step 3: Video Organization (10 minutes)

Find all your video files (check Downloads, Desktop, old project folders).

Move them into your Videos folder by year/month.

Delete:

Test recordings

Videos you never finished watching

Duplicates

Keep only what you'll actually use or want to preserve.

Step 4: Set Up Cloud Backup (5 minutes)

Pick one cloud service: *Google Photos*, *iCloud*, *Dropbox*, whatever you already use.

Turn on automatic backup for your Media folder.

Set it and forget it. Your visual media is now protected and accessible anywhere.

What Just Happened

You can now find any photo or video by remembering roughly when you took it. No more scrolling through thousands of files. No more "I know I have that photo somewhere."

Your entire digital life is now organized. Four days. Done.

What's Next: The Maintenance System

Here's the truth: without maintenance, you'll be back to chaos in 90 days.

The good news? It only takes 2 minutes per day and 15 minutes per week to keep everything clean forever.

Daily 2-Minute Routine

Clear desktop of any new files

Empty or organize downloads

Process new emails to Inbox Zero

File new screenshots

Weekly 15-Minute Reset

Review Action folder, clear what's done

Scan Media folder, delete junk photos

Archive completed projects

You did it.

The 1% Better Team