

The Book Of Time

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I'd like to propose three things that some might find astonishing:

1. **Don't read this book!** Not all at once, anyway. If you're like me, it's hard to remember much of the stuff in a self-help book afterwards. Why not just read at your own convenience, while applying whichever tips you find useful?
2. **Tear up this book!** How do you *make sure* that you remember all these time-saving tips? If you'd like to try something new, separate the pages and fold them in half so you can stand them up. Then place them around the home, either in plain view or semi-hidden inside books or cupboards where you'll sometimes see them. That way, you'll be visually reminded of its time-savers so you won't forget. Occasionally you'll glance at the pages, but after a while the tips will be so habitual, you can *really* tear up the pages.

When printing, set up your printer to allow the most lines possible for each page. Go to the **Printer Setup** option of the **File Menu** and set all the margins (left, right, top, bottom) as close to 0.1 inches as you can.

Later on, you might want to print out more copies of some pages. When you select the **Print** option from the **File** menu, you'll see a box labeled **Pages** where you can type the page number you want to print. Another box controls the number of copies to print.

3. **Write your own book!** You can write on the pages, add post-it notes, stick on your own photo -- have fun with it however you like. Whenever you have a good idea that should never be overlooked or forgotten, write it down.

As far as I know, this is the only book whose value heightens when you don't read it, you write all over it, and you rip it to pieces even *before* you use it.

Of course, you'll find many of these time-savers are already known to you. So if you only end up using 15% of these tips, don't look at it like you're batting only .150 -- think of the many hours you'll free up for your own enjoyment!

The first four chapters are all about how to increase the energy in your life. That will help you get through everything faster, which makes it another great way to increase your free time. But first, tear up this book -- then skip to the last page to see where to scatter the pieces!

Eating For Energy

You can actually "get high" on eating great food: The powerful nutrients your body wants can give you a steady feeling of well-being that lasts all day. Contrast that to the temporary "high" of drugs, followed by the inevitable crash afterwards. Good nutrition can also strengthen the immune system and helps build a strong, energetic physique.

Ingesting junk food makes us feel less vital, shortens our lives, and makes us more vulnerable to disease. A third of Americans are projected to develop diabetes, often in their forties. Try to get away from fatty meats and fried foods, and eat few processed foods that contain a lot of sugar. If you do that *and* you try lots of healthy foods to find those that you prefer, then after a month you'll seldom miss the junk food.

Even worse are "junk drugs" such as tobacco products, illegal drugs and excessive alcohol. They cost Americans hundreds of billions each year in added health-care expenses.

My Ideas: _____



"Breakfast Time - Morning Games"
by Charles West Cope (1811-1890)

shakes using a blender, with quality protein powder available from many vitamin merchants (both online and in most towns.)

7. Eat Healthy Desserts. Sugarless desserts are a great alternative. You can use a sugar substitute like xylitol, found in natural foods stores. It metabolizes slowly and has about 60% of sugar's calories, so there's no "sugar crash" effect. While most people can eat xylitol with no problems, some people are sensitive to it and need to build up tolerance by eating small amounts at first.

1. Fruits And Vegetables. These are among the most nutritious foods, so eat at least five servings each day. A "serving" can be a whole fruit such as a bananas or apple, ¼ cup of dried fruit, six ounces of Odwalla or V-8, or a cupful of leafy greens.

2. Vitamins. A multivitamin every day will help energize you, lessen the effects of aging, and ward off disease.

3. Eat Less Often. Nutritional experts now recommend eating smaller meals four or five times per day. There's less stress on your digestive organs that way. And you won't get too hungry, which helps avoid overeating.

4. Eat "Good Fats". The much talked-about "omega 3 fats" are present in nuts, cold-water fish, olive and canola oils. Use low-fat or fat-free dairy products. Instead of ordinary margarine, you can use equally delicious omega-3 substitutes such as Promise brand margarine.

5. Whole Foods Are Best. Eat whole grains and brown rice instead of enriched-flour foods. Too many processed foods such as pastries, sweetened cereals, or soft drinks can really undermine your health.

6. Get Enough Protein. You can best get it from eggs, dairy, beans or lean meat. And you can actually make your own nutritious low-carb protein

Exercise For Energy

Exercise keeps your body in shape and builds stamina. You can accomplish more throughout the day, and do it with more enthusiasm. Sometimes *it's the things you don't do that make you tired*: You can get to feeling that way when you just get frustrated and give up.

Plan how to stay with exercise before you even start, because most people slack off on their exercising. If you write it down on your schedule, you're more likely to stick with it. Even more motivating is some kind of health and fitness club, exercise class, or "buddy system." Some social support will make exercising more fun and you'll likely be reluctant to back out. In the age of MySpace and FaceBook, some people even state a commitment to exercise online and then post their results and progress.

Start slowly, because if you do too much you could get stiff, sore and discouraged. Beginners would be wise to start by walking or swimming for 10 to 30 minutes, 3 days a week. You'll soon discover what feels like the right pace to *you*, and each week you can try more exercises. If you prefer to jog, make sure to wear a good pair of running shoes that offer cushioned support to prevent injuries.

And forget the old "no pain, no gain" rule. You don't need pain, just progress naturally and enjoy yourself as best you can.

My Ideas: _____



"A Walk In The Woods"

by Edvard Frederik Petersen (1841-1911)

- 1. Warm Up Slow.** Stretch *lightly* for a few minutes before any exercise -- don't "push" your muscles to the point where they complain. You can do that in front of the TV or radio if you like, or just walk for a few minutes before jogging. You'll be less prone to injury, and you'll enjoy your workout more -- with less of the stiffness you sometimes get from "cold" muscles.
- 2. Stay Hydrated.** Don't drink shortly before exercising, but do drink at least six cups daily. That will increase endurance, guard against injuries, and promote fat loss.
- 3. Exercise For Fun.** When walking, find safe and interesting places to exercise like museums, good window-shopping streets, or beautiful parks. Games may interest you -- perhaps tennis, handball or golf.
- 4. Put On A Musical.** You can listen to music or audio books while you exercise. You can even invent your own dances while doing things like dusting, picking things up off the floor, and even vacuuming.
- 5. Listen To Your Body.** If your body feels like you're overdoing it, you probably are. Take some rest time to allow your body to recover. And don't run through any pains in the bones or joints, or any other sharp pains -- that will just make for a worse injury.

6. Strength Training Really Helps. You'll strengthen muscles, bones and ligaments. Your internal organs are biologically preset to expect good muscle mass, so strength training also helps strengthen them so you'll avoid health problems such as diabetes. Try to work out two or three times a week for 30 to 45 minutes by doing exercises such as swimming, push-ups, pull-ups, abdominal exercises, knee squats and/or weightlifting. But don't stress your muscles by working out two days in a row.

7. Preparation Helps Motivate. Pre-packing your gym bag or laying out your workout clothes will help remind and motivate you (it helps to persuade a household member to do that for you.) You could even try wearing your workout clothes to sleep for a more energetic start in the morning. It's the favorite time to exercise for many people.

Easy Sleeping For Energy

Almost 65 percent of Americans aren't getting enough sleep, according to the National Sleep Foundation. And difficult mental tasks take much longer to accomplish when you're not feeling well-rested. Unless you have a serious sleep disorder, just improving your daytime habits and creating a better sleeping environment can bring you consistently better sleep.

A few lifestyle changes can help immensely. Firstly, do what you can to improve your day. Almost needless to say, the happier and more relaxed your day is, the less stressed you'll feel come bedtime. It helps to exercise, the earlier in the day the better. Second, put good stuff in your system. The more nutritious your food is, the less complaining your body will do. Caffeine and smoking can degrade your sleep up to 12 hours after consumption.

If these tips don't work well enough for you, seeing a doctor could work wonders. A good sleep specialist can help identify a sleep disorder, such as obstructive sleep apnea or restless legs syndrome. If the problem is psychological, he should be able to put together a relaxation audio tape to help you sleep consistently faster. A good doctor should tell you that drugs are almost always only a stopgap solution. You can search for a doctor online at the [American Academy of Sleep Medicine](http://aasmnet.org) (aasmnet.org).

My Ideas: _____



"Child Asleep (The Rosebud)"
by Thomas Sully (1783-1872)

1. Prepare For Good Sleeping. In the last few hours before bedtime, don't drink fluids. Avoid alcohol or any medications that stimulate you or cause you to be jittery. In the hour before bedtime, avoid anything worrying or overly stimulating, like news broadcasts or horror shows. Surround your mind with soothing, enjoyable thoughts and experiences: Soft music, pleasant reading, beautiful art, a warm bath, or affectionate snuggling.

2. Maintain A Smooth "Sleep Cycle". Don't fall asleep before bedtime, because a smooth sleep cycle helps your body sleep. Go to bed and get up around the same time every day.

3. Avoid Discomforts. Even slight discomforts can affect sleep, so check the signals your body is sending. If your arm is uncomfortable, you can bring in another pillow to rest it on. Your legs might feel better if you stick that pillow between them. Go to the bathroom whenever you hear nature's call, even if you feel only a slight need to go. Unwanted noise can be lessened with earplugs, or with wads of cotton or tissue paper stuffed in the ears.

4. Surround Yourself With Comfort. Your bed should be large enough and the sheets comfortable. Some devices that might help are blackout curtains, eye covers, extra blankets (or even a humidifier, if your body prefers a certain humidity level.) To get a nice warm feeling in bed, you can throw your comforter into the dryer for five minutes.

5. Think Happy Thoughts. At bedtime try to think about a few pleasant things you'll do the next day, or fantasize about something you'd like to do. Don't reflect on problems you encountered before or might face tomorrow.

6. Think Dull Thoughts. Sometimes we have trouble letting happy thoughts into our heads. In that case, think dull, repetitive thoughts. Try counting anything that's easy for you to visualize, or just count numbers and let their dullness bore you to sleep. If you find yourself worrying about why you can't get to sleep, just think pleasantly dull thoughts and relax.

7. Minimize Nighttime Distractions. For example, does your cat keep you awake sometimes? If you change its feeding time from early morning to right before bed, your cat is likely to snooze longer. Another good trick is to play with your cat before bedtime, to tire it out and give yourself a warm fuzzy feeling.

Enjoyment For Energy

This is the most important chapter, and it's also the one where each reader is the best expert of all. The author can offer only a few loose guiding principles:

1. Know Your "Happiness Sources". Never be so busy that you get away from your happiness sources. When you're not feeling very good, many psychologists recommend reconnecting with all the things or activities that have made you happy before, even as long ago as your childhood.
2. Avoid Commercial Bombardments. Many advertisements, catalogs and even magazines are *designed* to make you feel inadequate if you don't own the latest and greatest new thing. They won't remind you that the best things in life are free.
3. Negativity Devours Time. Any negative emotion (e.g. anger, fear, melancholy, hatred) does that. Whether we're looking back with regret or looking forward in fear, we're not moving forward with positive actions.
4. Attitude Is King. The psychobabbling talking heads we've all seen on TV get at least *this* right: it's not success that makes us happy, it's a positive attitude that leads to happiness by attracting good people and good experiences.
5. Know Your Values, Dreams And Goals. One study showed that 80% of people who write down their goals achieve them, but only 20% of people who don't write them down ever achieve them. Any goals you may pick *must* be ones that usually keep you feeling good, to allow you a happy journey through life even if you happen to never fully reach them.

My Ideas: _____



"Dream of Arcadia"
by Thomas Cole (1801-1848)

1. You're The Expert. So I'll just shut up now and leave this page free to tack on *your own* personal ideas, inspirational photos, or even funny cartoons!

Say No, Take Control, And Live Free

Drop those activities that aren't supporting your priorities. In our eagerness to be good, some of us help others *too much*. Remember that you're not everybody's robot. Don't do the thinking (or the work) for those around you: Their brains will shrivel, and yours might just implode.

My Ideas: _____



"The Statue Of Liberty"
by National Park Service

- 1. Just Say "No".** Give yourself permission to politely refuse requests. Just say "I'm sorry, I can't. I've got other priorities right now." If they ask about priorities, you can say "I'd rather not get into that right now, but I (wish you success, hope you have fun, wish you good luck, etc.)"
- 2. Don't Let People Interrupt You Needlessly.** In encounters with other people, do only what is truly productive and/or fun. Keep a stock of polite excuses to get out of conversations you don't need. Some polite parting lines for business meetings are "That's it, then" or "Thanks for stopping by." *Bonus Tip:* The better you live your life, the more built-in excuses you'll have.
- 3. Stop Problems In Their Tracks.** Prevent problems before you have to fix them. For example, if you make your house a shoe-free zone you'll trim cleaning time, because most dirt is tracked in on shoes.
- 4. You Could Delay And/Or Delegate.** Before you start a task, ask yourself three questions: Does it have to be done? Is now the right time to do it? Do I have to do it?
- 5. Sometimes, Not Doing Something Means More Freedom.** When you write off things you *could do* that are starting to feel stale, you'll have time for new activities you *really want* to do.
- 6. Possessions Can Eat Time.** Before acquiring anything, ask yourself whether you want it enough to clean, maintain, store, insure, and pay for its upkeep. Home maintenance is often the biggest time-eater, so think carefully before moving into a big, old or poorly-built home.
- 7. Stop Information Overload.** You don't need to see or know about everything, heck you don't have to watch the news. You just need to do what makes you happy. Cancel some subscriptions, get off electronic mailing lists, and resolve to skim through the rest.

Time Management

This chapter is about how to schedule your activities with the timing that makes the most sense.

Optionally, you may find it helpful to carry an organizer/planner or electronic "PDA" (personal digital assistant.) You can write down all of your ideas and goals, wherever you think of them. Of course, it only works if you maintain the discipline to carry it and use it constantly. Write in it with a pencil so you can erase (exception: on the front write in ink "If found, please return for reward.") But don't "over-plan" -- there are some sections in your planner that you'll never even touch, because they're either of little practical help, or they don't relate to your life.

My Ideas: _____



"Preparing for the Ball"
by Franz Xaver Simm (1853-1918)

you shop, check your list to see what you need to get; when you get there, check it again to make sure that you've remembered everything.

1. Do Chores "First and Fast." Racing through tasks that you dislike helps make them less unpleasant, and doing them promptly means they won't be pressing upon your mind later.

2. Same-Day Scheduling. To "get your ducks in a row" and save time (and fuel), schedule errands and appointments (e.g. your dental visits or your kids' haircuts) back-to-back.

3. Consolidate Tasks. For example, you don't need to wash whites and colors separately if you use cold water (except for newly-bought colors.) Avoid ironing by doing small loads in the dryer and getting them out as soon as the buzzer goes off.

4. Prepare For Fast Morning Starts. The night before a busy morning, prepare for a fast start. While cleaning up after supper, set the table and even put out non-perishable items such as cereal. Pack up lunches and other traveling needs. And you can choose the next morning's outfits for you and perhaps the kids.

5. Monthly Menu Plan. By knowing in advance which days of the month you'll cook which meals, you can save a lot of time thinking about what to make for dinner. It's also a good way to avoid constant questions about what's for dinner!

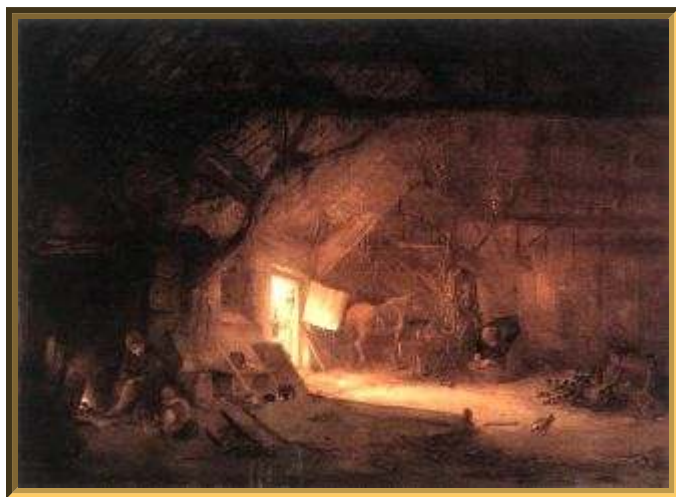
6. Plan Food Needs Carefully. Consider buying in bulk at supermarkets. Some people plan their food needs so carefully that they only have to shop once every two weeks. You can keep perishable food fresh by refrigerating or freezing it, which also keeps it nutritious longer.

7. How to Remember Groceries. Sometimes people forget to get a needed food staple at the grocer's. To prevent that and avoid making a second trip, make a shopping list on your computer once and print out as many copies as you need. Before

Organize, Don't Agonize

It's very useful to create a productive, organized foundation and build upon it. Everything will be easier to find, manage and prioritize. You will feel more in control, more confident and you'll probably even feel healthier. But don't "over-organize" -- if organizing something won't save you time, money or sanity, don't do it.

My Ideas: _____



"Farmhouse Interior"
by Isack van Ostade (1621-1649)

- 1. Everything In Its Place.** Looking for lost items can be a big time-waster. Keep related items together in one place.
- 2. Get Rid Of Junk.** You could gradually sell it on eBay or in garage sales. You could trash it or give some of it to charities. Or you could box it up and store it. Make a note of the contents of each box (or label it well), so you can still find everything easily.
- 3. Add Storage.** It's best to use a see-through type of storage to store toys, books, videos, and so on. Baskets are the quickest because you can just drop stuff in them without having to open them.
- 4. Fast Entries And Exits.** A great way to organize coats, shoes, mail, carrying packs, keys and shoes is to assign hooks, nooks and baskets near the entryway for each family member. You could also keep a pack of useful articles such as stationery, stamps, snacks and so forth near the door. If you have kids, you can fill packs with baby gear, coloring books, and so on.
- 5. Faster Pick-Ups.** One easy way to pick up and put everything away is to carry a laundry basket or two with you. Pick up any stray toys, clothes or dishes as you do a walkthrough of your house, put

them in your laundry basket, and put them away as you walk by the places where they belong.

- 6. Store Valuables Wisely.** Tricks like hiding keys under stones, or even submerging valuables in the toilet tank, are often known to burglars. Pick a place that will take a long time for them to discover, but that you can get to quickly in case of a fire.
- 7. Organization For Kids.** Designate some kid-accessible storage for things your kids use regularly, so they can find and reach them without having to ask.
- 8. Purse Organization.** If you carry a purse, you'll find everything easier if you put things in smaller pouches or other containers inside. Keep separate pouches, cosmetics, papers, food, reading, and a wallet for making payments (e.g. checkbook, pen, credit cards and money.)

Cooperation Pays -- For Everyone!

You can cooperate with your friends, neighbors and even your kids to make life easier for everyone. Try not to invest time in uncooperative people that you don't believe will ever become your real friend. On the flip side, you'll find it really pays to be cooperation-minded.

My Ideas: _____



"Concert of Angels and Nativity"
by Matthias Grünewald (1470-1528)

- enlist their help is when they want you to do something for them -- then you can trade.
- 6. Encourage Kids To Pick Up.** One good way to do this is to make sure your child perceives his possessions as a precious collection, not just a pile of toys to romp through. Get baskets and clear-plastic storage boxes and make labels for the contents. To instill the spirit of the idea, share the pleasure of helping them organize their prized possessions beautifully.
 - 7. Parenting Car Pools.** You could set up a car pool for those practices and events that your kids have in common with your neighbors' kids. Pass along a clipboard with headings for names, addresses, phone numbers and emails, then follow up with each parent.

1. At Parties, Share The Load. Your friends would rather enjoy your company than see you working at your own party. You can pave the way for sharing by casually mentioning that any help in "creating the occasion" would be welcome. Then when you host your event, just say "Okay everybody, it's time for _____, let's get started," gesture to the food and/or supplies you've lined up, and watch people rush to help you!

2. Share Errands With Neighbors. You can "barter errands" with a neighbor, or swap babysitting duties to gain time for your own to-dos. If you like some of the same recipes as a neighbor, you could even save time by swapping cooking duties and sharing double-batches of food.

3. Hang A Calendar. A family wall calendar will help keep track of all kinds of appointments, meetings and other dates. A big erasable white board could work even better.

4. Laundry Responsibilities. It doesn't take any extra work for everyone to put their dirty laundry in a hamper when they undress. And everyone can sort their own laundry while they're watching TV.

5. Trade Favors With Kids. Whether it's sorting laundry, preparing meals, or picking things up, even the youngest can help. Of course you can do things faster yourself, but if your kids are there helping you there's no need to leave the room every few minutes to check on them. A good time to

Tame The Paper Chase

Americans receive an average of 2,700 pieces of unsolicited mail each year. Add that to the bills, add in a little mail you *do* want, and you've got a substantial hassle on your hands. Let this chapter be your *life "RAFT"*. The RAFT system means "Read, Act, File, and/or Toss." All paper falls into one of these categories:

- Mail requiring action (such as bills, invitations, and personal correspondence) should be prioritized in order of the date when action must be taken.
- If you can read it later, save it for when you're standing in line or sitting in a waiting room.
- Ask yourself, "What's the worst thing that could happen if I don't keep it?" If you'll be all right without it, toss it out.
- Whatever you need to keep, file it in such a way that you can easily find it again.

Have one comfortable spot to do paperwork, and stock it with stamps, stationery, envelopes, pens and a big wastebasket. Keep at least a simple filing system of trays: In (stuff to look at), Out (to mail or otherwise take care of), and File (to put away).

Keep separate files or stackable trays on your desk labeled "Bills", "To Do" (tasks coming up soon), "To Read" (magazines, catalogs and articles), "To Contact" (people or companies you want to call or write to), and "To File Later." If you're collecting a lot of paper, have a filing cabinet or storage box where you keep important files that you're not currently working with, so your desk isn't swamped.

Some people like to put new files in the *front* of folders, others do the reverse. The important thing is that everyone in your household is on the same page, so explain it to them and post a note labeled "New In Front" or "New In Back" on all filing boxes. Last but not least, keep a folder marked "Hot!" in red ink: That way you'll always remember to do the stuff that needs doing ASAP.

My Ideas: _____



"The Waste Paper Basket"
by Henriette Ronner-Knip (1821-1909)

documents for 7 years. And some files should be saved forever: health records, wills, tax returns (to document your financial history), receipts for major appliances (for warranties and insurance), and major home expenses (for insurance, capital-gains taxes, and estate taxes.)

6. Stop Junk Mail. Contact the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) and have their Mail Preference Service screen out junk mail. Just go to <http://www.dmachoice.org/consumerassistance.php>. Remember that you'll stop getting catalogs in the mail, even catalogs that you may have enjoyed somewhat -- but you can still browse online catalogs anytime you feel like it.

7. Stop Some Junk Mail. If you really want some catalogs to keep coming, go to CatalogChoice.org. This free website specializes in helping you stop only those catalogs you *don't want*.

1. Easier Letter-Writing. If there are people or businesses you regularly write to, pre-print envelopes with their names and addresses. Just stick some envelopes in the printer tray, open up a word processor, type an address in the middle of the screen, and print all letters you'll need. You can also have the computer print your return address in the upper left corner, or you can have a self-inking stamp made with your return address.

2. Keep Receipts. To prepare for April 15, sort receipts in files or envelopes. Label them Utilities, Health Care, Housing/Mortgage, Transportation, Charity and whatever else you might deduct.

3. Don't Register Products. Don't send in product registration cards. They don't affect your guarantee and could generate junk mail. Just keep your receipt as proof of purchase.

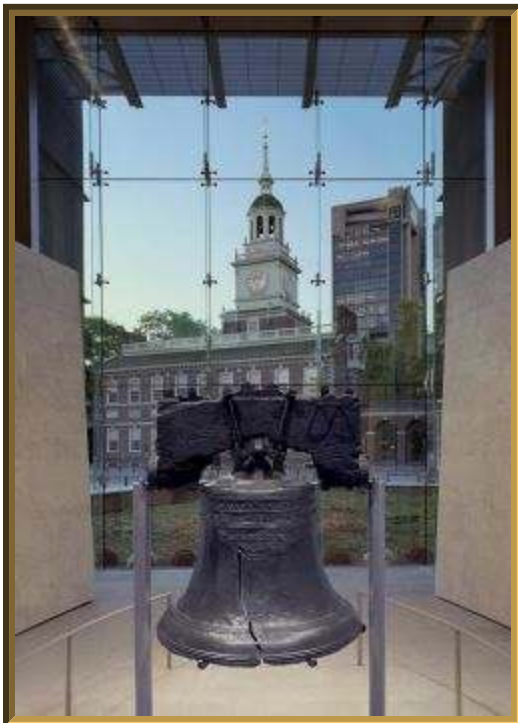
4. Use A Fax Machine. It can eliminate time-consuming trips to manually deliver paperwork, or mail it out. Usually a "multifunction printer" includes sending faxes.

5. Throw Away Old Files. Anything you won't really use should be tossed. But remember, tax experts recommend saving financial

On The Phone

Listed below are some tips and tricks to use around your telephone:

My Ideas: _____



"The Liberty Bell"
by Robin Miller

- 1. Multitask.** While you make calls, you can pay bills, wash dishes, fold clothes, do laundry or exercise lightly. If you wear a cordless headset, you could even walk around the house doing anything you want, while happily chatting away.
- 2. Stop Or Screen Unwanted Calls.** To reduce telemarketing, get listed on the National Do-Not-Call Registry at DoNotCall.gov. For a monthly fee, you could screen out other unwanted callers by using Caller ID. If you don't want to pay for that, you can still use an answering machine to screen calls: Just pick up the phone if someone you know starts leaving a message.
- 3. Interrupt The Telemarketers.** A few of them will still get through: Interrupt their script to get them to identify their company, and then say "It was nice talking to you. Please add my name to your do not call list. Thanks!" There are laws against repeated unwanted calls, so if they call you again, you can get your phoning records from the phone company and you could get substantial fine money from them.
- 4. Program The Speed Dial.** Almost all modern phones have a one-touch speed dial function, and it's worth using for any numbers you call more than once a month. If your phone can't remember all the numbers you call often, you could type up a list of contacts on your computer and put it by each phone in the house.
- 5. Phone Ahead Or Phone Instead.** Store workers normally answer the phone before they help anyone standing in line. If you're not sure the store has something, you'll save driving time by first calling to check.
- 6. Highlight Phone Numbers.** When you look up a number in the phone book, highlight it so it'll pop out the next time -- or perhaps even tear out the page.
- 7. Keep Pens And Notepads By The Phone.** Post-its or small spiral notebooks work well. Those messages you take (or the ones taken for *you*) won't go astray anymore.

On Trips

Whether you go on a vacation or a day trip, these tips will help save time and make sure your journey is a smooth and happy one.

My Ideas: _____



"Travelers on a Mountainous Path"
by Heinrich Hofer (1825-1878)

loose change, pens and anything else that's in your pocket in your carry-on luggage. To find your luggage easily after the flight, tie something colorful to each piece.

6. Don't Get Lost. You can use a maps site to get driving directions between any two points, and print out both maps and directions. But if you do get lost, most cell phones let you dial 411 to get point-to-point directions.

1. Pre-Plan What To Do. Make a list of the things you most want to do there, so you won't waste a moment of time. Look up online what activities are possible. Discuss the merits of various restaurants and attractions with travel specialists and friends who've already been there. Event tickets usually need to be bought at least a day in advance, but some may be fully booked long before.

2. Packing Lists. You can find packing lists for campers and travelers at RickSteves.com (Rick has been hosting traveling shows on PBS for decades.)

3. Holiday House Swaps. If you swap houses with distant friends, or use a vacation house-swapping service, you'll save money and you won't have to pack as many of your own things.

4. Print Your Own Tickets. Before a scheduled flight, you can print your boarding passes in your own home by going to your airline's Web site.

5. Prepare For The Airport. Don't take a pocketknife or any other sharp instrument on board with you, not even in your carry-on luggage. Before going through the metal detector, place your wallet,

Online Shortcuts

Before venturing out onto the Internet, it will help save a lot of time if you have just three programs at your command:

1. A Program That Remembers Your Stuff. You could just make a written list of passwords, but even better is a "form filler" program like the free Roboform for Windows. It remembers your passwords and lets you log in with one click. It can also fill in your name and address on many other web forms. Their older, free version allows up to 30 forms or passwords to be stored; get it at: <http://www.roboform.com/dist/AiRoboForm-5-7-6.exe> (1.8 megabytes.)

2. A Combined Search Toolbar And Popup Blocker. With the free Google Toolbar you can do web searches without first having to go to Google.com. It also blocks most popups, and can automatically fill forms with your contact data at the click of a button. There are versions for both the Firefox and Internet Explorer browsers. Download it at: <http://toolbar.google.com> (1.02 megabytes)

3. A "Hotkey" Utility. The free HotLaunch program for Windows lets you define "hotkeys." These let you use a single keystroke to insert any text you frequently use into almost any Windows program. You can use them to launch an application, take you instantly to a web page, open a commonly-used document, send email to a specified email address, and more. Download at: http://www.psssoftlab.com/pshl_info.phtml (0.740 megabytes)

In a way, the Internet puts the whole world at our fingertips, with the opportunity to either save or waste a lot of time. Use this power for good, grasshopper.

My Ideas: _____



"Kittens Playing on a Desk"
by Alfred Brunel de Neuville (1852-1941)

1. Shop Online. You'll avoid crowds that way, or at least save time by researching purchases before heading out to buy them. The main exceptions are when you really need to examine an item personally, or you need it right away.

2. Arrange Deliveries. You can buy all kinds of foods and supplies online, and even subscribe to have them delivered at regular intervals. With web grocers like Peapod.com, you can set up a shopping list of the items you buy often, so from then on you can always place an order in just minutes. You can read more about it in the chapter on Delegating.

3. The Post Office Is Online. You can buy stamps and arrange package pickups by the post office at usps.com. If you know how much a package weighs, you can even print a shipping label online and tape it to the package.

4. Online Banking. You can pay many bills online. If a biller is trustworthy, it may be wise to arrange their bills to be automatically deducted from your bank account.

5. Hire A Free Expert. When you need an answer to a complicated question, go to Yahoo! Answers or Answers.com to post it (or maybe it's already been answered there.)

6. Fix Computer Errors Faster. Before calling a company's technical support people, you can save time (and perhaps money too) by taking careful notes about the problem that's happening. Write down any error messages that appear on your screen, and briefly note the steps you took that preceded the error message.

7. Use Time-Saving Programs. For example, notice those times when you frequently do the same action, and use a HotKey utility to do those actions faster.

Where To Scatter The Pages

These are suggestions only -- place the pages as you think best. Some pages you might actually want to keep to yourself (such as the chapter on how to say "no"...)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Eating: | Refrigerator |
| 2. Exercise: | Exercise Area/Clothing |
| 3. Easy Sleeping: | Nightstand |
| 4. Enjoyment: | Breakfast Table |
| 5. Say No: | Purse Or Wallet |
| 6. Time Management: | Calendar Or Planner |
| 7. Organize: | For Each Family Member |
| 8. Cooperation: | Family Message Center |
| 9. Delegate: | The Stack Of Bills |
| 10. Tame The Paper Chase: | Desk Top |
| 11. TV Time: | On The TV |
| 12. On The Phone: | Near Each Telephone |
| 13. Kitchen: | Counter Top |
| 14. On The Go: | Purse, Wallet or Entryway |
| 15. On The Job: | At Work |
| 16. On Trips: | Passport Or Travel Storage |
| 17. Online Shortcuts: | Computer Desk |