

Todoist Free Plan Workflow: A Simple Setup You Can Keep Using

For Todoist users who want a task system that is easier to understand, easier to review, and still makes sense when the week gets busy.

Use Todoist's free plan with a simple setup: **fewer projects, clearer daily planning**, and **less time spent tweaking the system** instead of using it. No productivity religion — just a setup you can keep using without rebuilding it every few weeks.

INTRO

People use Todoist every day, but still don't really trust it.

The app is open. The tasks are there. Maybe there are projects, labels, filters, priorities, recurring tasks — all of it. And still, half of the real list is somewhere else: in your head, in Slack, in email, in screenshots, in notes, or in some task called "reply" that made sense when you wrote it and became useless three days later.

This guide is for people who want Todoist to feel easier to use in a normal week. Maybe your Inbox fills up quickly. Maybe Today is always overloaded. Maybe you keep adding tasks like "budget," "website," or "email Alex," and then later you have to decode what you meant.

It's not for building the most advanced Todoist setup possible. If you want lots of filters, dashboards, automations, GTD, PARA, time blocking, or a system that looks impressive in a screenshot, this guide may feel too simple.

The goal here is different: fewer vague tasks, fewer fake deadlines, clearer places for things, and a review process that doesn't feel like digging through a junk drawer.

A reliable workflow usually has more than one layer. **For now, think of the system this way:**

- **Todoist holds actions:** tasks, follow-ups, and review.
- **Calendar holds fixed time:** meetings, appointments, and things that happen at a set time.
- **Reference holds support material:** notes, links, drafts, screenshots, and documents.
- **Email is only an input, not your memory.**

You don't need perfect boundaries yet. We'll use this split later.

A Note From HKeys

I'm Lika, and I worked on the guide content and development for HKeys.

I like sharing practical ways to make digital work feel easier: shortcuts, task systems, small setup choices, and the little fixes that reduce friction in everyday apps. Not in a "turn productivity into your personality" way. More like: this app is already part of your week, so let's make it less annoying to use.

I also learn a lot by making this kind of content. When you try to explain a workflow clearly, you start seeing where it's too complicated, where people get stuck, and which parts actually help in real use. Teaching other people is one of the best ways I know to understand something better myself.

This guide isn't meant to be a perfect productivity method. It's a practical setup I helped shape, test, and explain as clearly as I could.

If you have questions, feedback, or notice something confusing in the guide, you can reach us here:

Email: mail@hkeys.app

Website: hkeys.app

How to use this guide with HKeys

Before you continue: open the [website version of this guide](#). Your Gumroad purchase already includes access to it.

The PDF and the website version are helpful in different ways.

THE PDF IS USEFUL AS

- a saved copy
- a printable workbook
- a reference you can keep offline

THE WEBSITE VERSION IS USEFUL WHEN YOU WANT

- easier reading
- faster navigation
- companion resources
- Todoist shortcut references

You don't have to choose one version and ignore the other. They work better together: the guide explains the setup, and HKeys helps with the shortcuts and extra materials around it.

A simple way to think about it:

Use **this guide** to understand the workflow.

Use [the website version](#) when you want easier reading and faster navigation.

Use [the Todoist shortcut reference](#) when you need the exact keys for your platform.

Quick note: **Training Mode** is still in development. When it's ready, this guide will be updated. For now, use the shortcut references and printable cheat sheets.

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The Foundation

The Problem This Guide Solves

Many Todoist setups get messy for one simple reason: **tasks enter the system faster than clarity does.**

That's the main problem. You add something quickly. You promise yourself you'll clean it up later. But later often doesn't come. Todoist starts filling up with unfinished thoughts instead of tasks you can actually act on: scraps of memory with dates attached.

The five kinds of mess

1. Capture mess

You capture things quickly, but they enter the system with no meaning.

Example: "Alex".

This may be enough for the next ten minutes. Two days later, it's useless. Alex what? Call Alex? Email Alex? Ask Alex for the file? Follow up because Alex owes you something? The thought made it into Todoist. The meaning did not.

2. Vague task mess

Your list is full of entries like: "email", "budget", "paperwork", "gift", "tickets", "call Alex".

These aren't really tasks yet. They're topics. And topics are expensive because every time you see one, you have to think again.

A good task should reduce thinking later. A vague task just moves the thinking to later, usually to a version of you that has less time and patience.

3. Date mess

Too many tasks have dates, so everything starts to feel urgent.

People assign dates because they want control. Understandable. But when every soft intention gets a date, Today turns into a pile of real deadlines, random hopes, old intentions, recurring tasks, and guilt.

Nothing stands out because everything is shouting.

4. Review mess

You scroll through everything instead of seeing the slice you actually need.

Today. Inbox. Projects. Labels. Filters. Maybe Upcoming. Then back to Today. And it still feels like something is missing.

Review should answer a question:

- What needs attention today?
- What's overdue?
- What matters this week?
- What am I waiting on?
- What still has no decision?

If review means "look through everything and hope I notice the important part", the system is doing too little work.

5. Boundary mess

Todoist is trying to hold too many kinds of things:

- tasks
- appointments
- deadlines
- notes
- links
- documents
- ideas
- reminders
- follow-ups
- things you're waiting on

This is where the system gets heavy.

Not because Todoist is bad, but because one tool is being asked to be a task manager, calendar, notebook, file storage, project archive, reminder system, and backup brain at the same time.

KEY IDEA

The problem is usually **not Todoist** itself. It's the workflow around capture, clarification, structure, dates, and review.

Mini Audit Worksheet

Before changing anything, check where your system actually breaks. The five kinds of mess show the usual problems; the audit also checks maintainability — whether the setup is light enough to survive a busy week.

People often fix the wrong thing: they add labels for vague tasks, build filters for messy dates, or reorganize projects when half the tasks aren't really tasks yet. So audit the workflow first. Rate what's true in a normal week, not on your best day.

USE THIS SCALE

- 1 = rarely true in real use
- 2 = sometimes true, but not reliable
- 3 = true often enough, but weak under pressure
- 4 = usually true in normal weeks
- 5 = consistently true, even during busy weeks

Capture

Score: ____ / 15

- I usually capture tasks quickly before they get lost.
- I have one default place to capture tasks.
- I don't leave tasks in my head for later.

If this score is low, the system is leaking before it even begins.

Task Quality

Score: ____ / 15

- My tasks start with a clear action.
- My tasks are clear enough that I know what to do next.
- I don't need to remember the context to understand older tasks.

If this score is low, Todoist has tasks, but not enough decisions.

Dates and Deadlines

Score: ____ / 15

- I use dates for work I actually plan to do that day.
- I use deadlines only for real cutoffs.
- My task list doesn't feel artificially urgent.

If this score is low, your system may be making things feel urgent when they aren't.

Review

Score: ____ / 15

- I have 2–3 views I use regularly.
- I can see important upcoming work without scanning everything.
- My review process helps me make decisions, not just look at lists.

If this score is low, the system may have plenty of information, but it isn't showing you what matters.

Maintainability

Score: ____ / 15

- My setup feels simple enough to maintain during a busy week.
- My structure still makes sense when I come back to it.
- I can keep the system usable without a major reset.

If this score is low, the setup may be too clever.

Workflow Boundaries

Score: ____ / 15

- I move time-specific commitments to Calendar when needed.
- I keep Reference material separate from task reminders.
- I know what belongs in Todoist, Calendar, and Reference.

If this score is low, Todoist is probably holding the wrong kinds of things.

How to read your score

13 – 15 = strong
10 – 12 = workable, but watch it
7 – 9 = noticeable friction
3 – 6 = fix this first

Total score

78 – 90 = strong system
60 – 77 = workable system with some friction
42 – 59 = unstable system
18 – 41 = high-friction system

Don't obsess over the total. Your total score is less useful than your lowest section. Your lowest section shows where Todoist is probably breaking first.

Fix the weakest layer first. That's usually where you'll feel the biggest relief.

The Core Method

Here's the whole method: the version you can actually keep using when the week gets busy.

This workflow is built on six habits.

1. Capture quickly

Use one fast entry point so tasks don't stay in your head.

For Todoist, that usually means **Quick Add**.

The point is to get small open loops out of your head before they sit there all day.

2. Clarify soon

Capturing something is only the first part of planning.

This is where people get into trouble. They think that once something is in Todoist, it has been handled. But a captured thought still needs to become one of these:

- a real task
- a calendar event
- Reference material
- Waiting For
- Someday / Maybe
- trash

Until that happens, it's just a stored interruption.

3. Add meaning while you type

Don't capture weak tasks and hope you'll understand them later. Write enough context now so the task still makes sense when you come back to it.

4. Give each layer one job

Projects, sections, labels, and priorities shouldn't all do the same thing. This sounds obvious, but it's where people get tangled.

Projects become notes. Labels become projects. Priorities become stress markers. Sections become status labels. Then the system starts to feel weird.

Each layer should have a clear job.

5. Separate planned dates from real deadlines

A planned date is when you want to work on something. A deadline is when something is actually due. Treating them as the same thing creates false urgency. False urgency is one of the fastest ways to stop trusting your task list.

6. Review through focused views

Don't scan your whole Todoist setup every time. Build two or three views that answer real questions.

That's enough for most people. You don't need a dashboard for every possible life situation. You need a few reliable places to look when you're making decisions.

KEY IDEA

A good system should still work during busy, low-energy weeks. If your setup only works when you have time to clean it up later, it's probably too heavy.

Shortcuts in the Workflow

Why Shortcuts Matter

People usually explain keyboard shortcuts as a way to save time. That's true, and it matters. When you repeat the same Todoist actions every day, saving a few clicks is not a small thing.

But shortcuts do more than speed things up. **They also help with continuity:** staying in the thing you were doing instead of stopping to click around, open menus, and rebuild your focus.

You're writing something. Reviewing something. Answering a message. Thinking through a problem. Then you remember a task.

If adding it takes too much effort, one of two things usually happens:

- you interrupt yourself too much
- you don't capture it properly

That's where small friction starts. It isn't dramatic or visible, but it adds up.

A low-friction workflow works best when capture, planning, and review feel easy enough to do in the moment.

The more you have to click, switch, open menus, and reach for the same controls again and again, the more likely you'll delay small decisions. And delayed small decisions are how task lists become messy.

So yes, shortcuts matter. They save time, reduce small friction, and make useful behavior easier to repeat.

That combination is why they matter in a real workflow.

Shortcuts support the workflow

Shortcuts are useful because they make repeated Todoist actions faster and easier to do without breaking your attention.

They help you capture tasks, move between views, open search, edit tasks, add structure while typing, and get through small routine actions with less clicking. That matters because the more effort each small action takes, the easier it is to delay.

But shortcuts work best when the workflow is clear.

If your tasks are vague, shortcuts can help you edit them faster, but you still need to decide what the task means. If Today is overloaded, shortcuts can help you move through it faster, but you still need to choose what truly belongs there. If every soft intention has a date, shortcuts can help you change dates faster, but you still need better date logic.

That's why this guide starts with the workflow. The workflow tells you what to do with a task: capture it, clarify it, sort it, date it honestly, review it, or move it out of Todoist. Shortcuts make those steps faster, lighter, and easier to repeat.

Use shortcuts as support, not as a workaround for a messy setup.

The method keeps Todoist clear. Shortcuts make the method easier to use in a normal week.

KEY IDEA

Use HKeys to reduce friction around repeated actions: capture, search, editing, navigation, sorting, and review. Shortcuts work best when they support clear tasks, honest dates, and a workflow you actually use.

Where Shortcuts Help Most

Most people don't need to memorize every Todoist shortcut. They need the same few actions to stop getting in the way.

That's the practical use of the [HKeys Todoist shortcut reference](#).

This guide shows the workflow: what to do, when to do it, and why it matters. The reference gives you the exact keys for the platform you use: [Windows](#), [Web \(Windows\)](#), [macOS](#), [Web \(Mac\)](#), [iOS](#), or [Android](#).

USE THIS GUIDE TO UNDERSTAND

- what to do
- when to do it
- why it matters

USE THE HKEYS RESOURCE TO LEARN

- what shortcuts Todoist supports
- how to move faster through views and filters
- how to reduce friction in everyday Todoist use

Use them together.

Shortcuts are part of the system. Once the workflow is clear, they make the repeated parts faster, lighter, and easier to trust.

Shortcuts are especially useful in five places. We'll go through them one by one.

Full guide only

This section continues in the complete version.

[Buy the full guide on Gumroad](#)

[Read more on the HKeys website](#)

Includes practical shortcut use cases for capture, task structure, search, review, and repeated Todoist actions.

Capture & Clarity

Make Quick Add Your Default Capture Habit

If you change only one thing, change this.

Use **Quick Add** as your default capture habit.

I know it sounds small, but a lot of Todoist mess starts at the exact moment a task enters the system. You remember something. You open the app. You click around. You add a vague title. You promise yourself you'll clean it up later. Now the system has technically captured the task, but not the meaning.

Quick Add helps because it reduces the gap between the thought and the task.

Not every thought needs a planning session. Sometimes it just needs to get out of your head before it disappears.

The shift

✗ BAD HABIT

- remember task
- open app
- click around
- type vague title
- promise to organize later

✓ BETTER HABIT

- open Quick Add
- type the task with enough context
- save it
- move on

A good capture habit should feel almost boring. You think of something. You capture it. You move on. No app tour, no five-minute cleanup session — just enough to stop your brain from carrying the task.

💡 RULE

For the next 7 days, use **Quick Add** as your first capture method. Don't organize while capturing unless the task is easy to clarify in one pass.

Capture First. Clarify Soon

Quick Add helps you capture fast.

But fast capture doesn't mean leaving tasks vague forever. This is the part people miss: they hear "capture everything" and turn Todoist into a pile of raw thoughts. That's not the goal.

Capture is the first step. Clarifying is what makes capture useful.

Sometimes you already know enough to write the task clearly in one pass. Great — do that. Sometimes you only know the rough idea, and that's fine too. But unclear items still need a short path to clarity:

- rewrite it
- sort it
- schedule it
- move it
- make it Waiting For
- move it to Reference
- delete it

Capture is allowed to be imperfect. **Long-term vagueness isn't.**

COMMON MISTAKE

Don't clarify everything while capturing. That's how a quick capture pass turns into a slow cleanup session. Capture first, then clarify soon.

The Inbox Sorting Path

After an inbox sweep, don't start assigning dates immediately. That's one of the fastest ways to turn raw capture into future stress.

First, decide what each item actually is.

1. Is there an action here?

If not, it isn't a task.

It may be **Reference**: a link, note, screenshot, draft, or document you may need later. Useful, but not something to do.

It might be **Someday / Maybe**: something you may want later, but aren't doing now. That keeps maybe-later ideas from pretending to be current work.

Or it might just be trash, which is useful too.

✗ RAW ITEM

good soup recipe

✓ DECISION

Not a task. Save it as Reference if you want the recipe later. Use Someday / Maybe only if you might actually do something with it later.

2. Is it a fixed-time commitment?

If it must happen at a specific time, it belongs on **Calendar**.

Calendar is where fixed time lives. Todoist can hold the prep task or follow-up, but the appointment itself shouldn't depend on your task list.

✗ RAW ITEM

dentist Tuesday 3 PM

✓ DECISION

Calendar event

Todoist can hold preparation tasks and follow-ups. The fixed-time commitment belongs on Calendar.

3. Are you waiting on someone else?

If someone else owns the next move, this isn't active work.

Put it in **Waiting For**. Waiting For means the loop is still open, but the next move isn't yours. You're tracking it so it doesn't disappear.

✗ RAW ITEM

landlord reply

✓ BETTER

Waiting for landlord
reply about the repair
@waitingfor

Full guide only

This section continues in the complete version.

[Buy the full guide on Gumroad](#)

[Read more on the HKeys website](#)

Includes the rest of the Inbox Sorting Path: projects, clear next actions, and vague task decisions.

Need a Fuller Capture Reset?

The Inbox Sorting Path works when the raw items are already in front of you. But sometimes that's not the real problem yet.

Sometimes Todoist looks manageable, and your head still feels crowded. That usually means the open loops aren't all in the Inbox. They're still scattered across memory, messages, email, notes, screenshots, and "I'll remember this later" thoughts.

In that case, don't keep organizing the same visible list. **Do a fuller capture reset first.**

Use the **Todoist Inbox Sweep Checklist** on HKeys when:

- your head feels crowded even when your task list isn't that long
- you keep remembering things at random moments
- Todoist feels incomplete or hard to trust
- you need to get the real list out of your head before you keep organizing

The companion checklist helps you collect unfinished tasks, reminders, follow-ups, waiting items, ideas, and mental loose ends in one place.

After that, come back to the Inbox Sorting Path in this guide and process what you captured.

COMPANION RESOURCE ON HKEYS

Todoist Inbox Sweep Checklist: Get the Real Task List Out of Your Head

Use it when you need a fuller capture reset before sorting, scheduling, or rebuilding anything.

Add Meaning While You Type

The fastest way to make Todoist more trustworthy is to stop creating low-quality tasks.

Most messy Todoist systems aren't full of too many tasks. They're full of tasks that ask you to remember too much later. A low-quality task is vague, missing context, or unclear enough that you need to rethink it later.

✗ LOW-QUALITY TASK EXAMPLES

receipt
doctor
pharmacy
school form
package
insurance
plumber
birthday gift

It may have felt clear when you typed it. But Todoist isn't for the version of you who just had the thought. Todoist is for the version of you who comes back later, distracted, tired, and without the original context. Write for that person. That person needs more than "receipt".

Vague Task Repair Kit

A vague task isn't really a task. It's a reminder that you'll need to think again later. That's why vague tasks feel so heavy. They look small in Todoist, but when you click them, your brain has to reopen the whole situation.

A good Todoist task should make the next move easier to start. A task is clear enough when it includes:

- a visible action
- enough context to recognize it later
- only the fields that make the next decision easier

You don't need perfect wording. You need enough clarity for later-you to start without decoding the task again.

INSTEAD OF:

Doctor

WRITE:

Call the doctor about
test results Monday
#Personal @calls p2

At one glance, you know what to do, when to do it, where it belongs, what kind of work it is, and how much attention it needs.

THE 30-SECOND REWRITE RULE

If a task takes more than 30 seconds to understand, rewrite it. If you have to ask "what did I mean?", it isn't ready yet.

Structure That Stays Usable

A Quick Note Before We Start: We explain the system first. Todoist Free has limits, so your setup may be smaller than the structure we describe here. The walkthrough will show how to fit the same logic into Todoist Free.

Give Each Layer One Job

Structure only helps when each layer has a job. If you underdo it, Todoist becomes one long mixed list. If you overdo it, Todoist becomes a setup that looks impressive but is annoying to maintain.

The useful point is somewhere in the middle.

Three things shouldn't be confused:

- **A project** is where the work belongs.
- **A next action** is the next visible step you can actually do.
- **Support material** is useful context, but not the action itself.

These aren't the same thing. Each layer should carry a different kind of information. When you mix them, projects become notes, notes become task clutter, and next actions disappear inside vague placeholders.

A good task list should show what can move next.

EXAMPLE

Project: Set up home office

Next action: Measure desk area before ordering a new chair
Saturday #HomeOffice @home p2

Support material: measurements, chair options, delivery details, room photos, budget notes, links, screenshots

Full guide only

This section continues in the complete version.

[Buy the full guide on Gumroad](#)

[Read more on the HKeys website](#)

Includes structure rules for projects, sections, labels, priorities, Waiting For tasks, Reference, Someday / Maybe, and a minimum viable Todoist setup.

Dates, Deadlines & Calendar Logic

Separate Dates from Deadlines

This is one of the biggest quality upgrades you can make in Todoist.

A date isn't the same as a deadline. A **planned date** is when you want to work on something. A **deadline** is when something must be finished. When you blur them, Todoist starts to feel stressful and a bit dishonest.

If every planned date feels like a hard consequence, everything starts to feel urgent. If real deadlines are treated casually, the real cutoffs stop standing out.

Your system should make the difference clear.

PLANNED DATE

When you want to work on something

Start tax prep on Monday

DEADLINE

Real cutoff for when something must be finished

File taxes by April 15

A planned date helps you schedule attention. A deadline protects a real cutoff. Try not to blur them.

What Belongs on Calendar Instead

Put it on Calendar when:

- it must happen at a set time
- it's a meeting
- it's an appointment
- it blocks part of your day
- you need to see it as part of the fixed schedule
- it's day-specific information you need to notice that day

Todoist should answer: **what needs to be done?**

Calendar should answer: **when's time already committed?**

Reference should answer: **where's the supporting information?**

These tools don't need to compete.

RULE

If it has a set time, put it on Calendar.

If it needs soon, keep it in Todoist.

If it only supports the work, put it in Reference.

You don't have to split these perfectly. Clear boundaries just make the system easier to trust.

Full guide only

This section continues in the complete version.

[Buy the full guide on Gumroad](#)

[Read more on the HKeys website](#)

Includes Calendar logic, starter review views, and filter examples for daily and weekly review.

Keep It Maintainable

Keep the Workflow Light Enough to Use

Maintainability is where a lot of systems break. Not because the idea was bad, but because the system became too heavy for normal life.

A workflow is useful only if it still works after a busy week. That means capture stays fast, structure stays light, review stays focused, and you don't have to rebuild everything all the time.

Keep these principles:

- fewer labels beat label sprawl
- two strong filters beat ten weak ones
- structure when it's easy
- clarify soon when capture is rough
- keep priorities meaningful
- add complexity only when it removes friction

A good system should feel lighter after you build it, not heavier. If Todoist starts feeling like another job, something went wrong.

Red Tasks & Green Tasks

Most task lists show urgency well, but they're worse at protecting progress. So it helps to separate red tasks from green tasks.

RED TASKS

pay overdue bill
reply to urgent message
submit required form
renew insurance

GREEN TASKS

compare hotels for the trip
draft proposal version
organize guest room closet
update website homepage

Red tasks prevent problems. If you don't do them, something bad may happen. Green tasks create progress. If you skip them today, nothing may explode, but if you keep skipping them, important parts of your life or work stay stuck.

Red tasks matter, but if your whole system is only red tasks, Todoist becomes a machine for preventing damage.

Green tasks rarely scream. That's why you need to protect them on purpose.

RULE

Each week, choose **3 green tasks**. Not 20. Three.

Full guide only

This section continues in the complete version.

[Buy the full guide on Gumroad](#)

[Read more on the HKeys website](#)

Includes the 10-minute daily plan, weekly reset, common mistakes, troubleshooting, and recovery mode.

Templates & Examples

Templates are useful when they save thinking, not when they create extra ceremony.

Use these as starting patterns, not as rules you have to copy perfectly. The goal isn't perfect formatting. The goal is a task you can understand later without reopening the whole situation.

SIMPLE TASK PATTERN

Action + object + only the fields that help the next decision

Not every task needs every part. Add only what makes the task easier to capture, understand, or review.

Full guide only

This section continues in the complete version.

[Buy the full guide on Gumroad](#)

[Read more on the HKeys website](#)

Includes ready-to-copy task templates for deep work, email, admin, waiting-for, meeting prep, personal admin, and decision tasks.

Todoist Free Setup Walkthrough

Meet Maya

Maya isn't trying to build a perfect productivity system. For now, she wants to use **free Todoist**, keep things simple, and see whether the setup actually helps before paying for anything.

She also doesn't want to manage a separate Calendar app yet. If Todoist starts working well for her, she may upgrade later. Right now, she wants to see how far she can get with a simple free setup.

Maya works at a small beauty studio. She answers client messages, checks schedule changes, handles small admin tasks, follows up with suppliers, prints forms, and tracks studio supplies.

She's also taking a Spanish course and preparing for a language certificate. She just wants to study consistently enough that the exam doesn't become a panic project later.

Outside work and study, Maya has normal life tasks: family messages, bills, appointments, errands, friend plans, recipes, plants, and things she promised herself she would "definitely do this week."

Maya isn't lazy, and her Todoist isn't empty. That's what makes it frustrating. She has captured a lot, but many tasks entered Todoist as rough reminders, not clear next actions.

She has tasks like: reply, pay, doctor?, PDF, Anna, check this.

They made sense when she typed them, but three days later they're just tiny mysteries with dates attached.

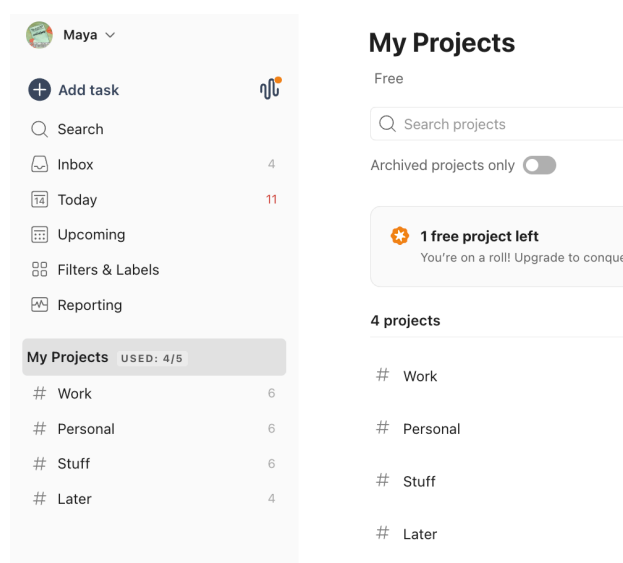
Maya doesn't need a complex setup. She needs a simple way to turn scattered reminders into clear next actions.

Step 0 — Starting Todoist Mess

Maya doesn't clean anything yet.

First, she opens her current Todoist and looks at the mess she's already built.

Maya's messy projects

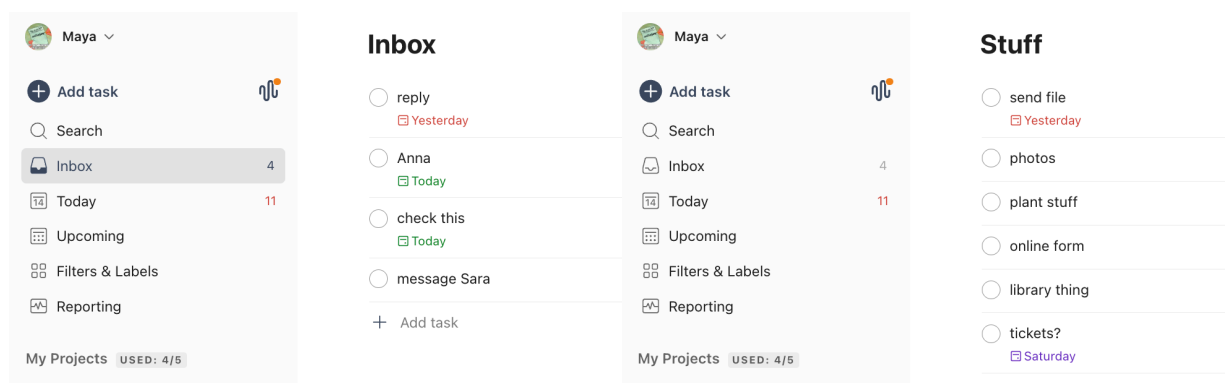


Maya has four user-created projects, plus the default Inbox, but they still don't help her decide what to do.

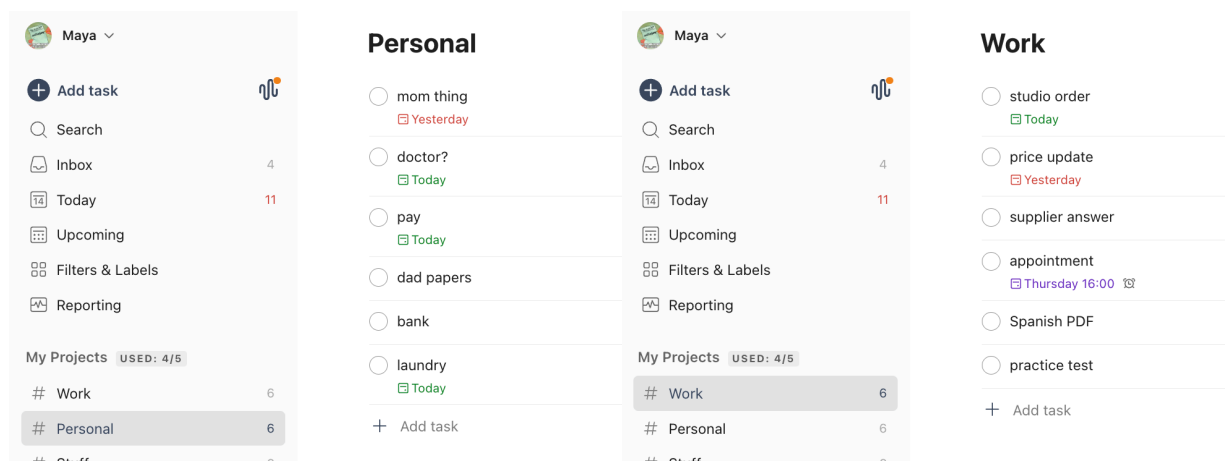
Inbox catches quick, unfinished tasks. Work, Personal, Stuff, and Later mix work, study, family, errands, ideas, notes, appointments, and things Maya doesn't want to think about yet.

Maya doesn't fix anything here. She only notices that her projects aren't helping her decide what to do. The problem isn't that she has no system at all. The problem is that her system is full of mixed signals.

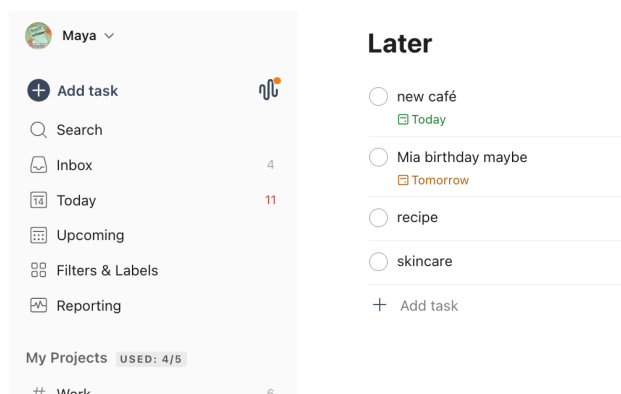
Maya's messy task list



Maya has captured a lot, but most items still need meaning. Today is already overloaded, but not everything here truly belongs today.



Some items are names, topics, questions, ideas, appointments, study material, or waiting items. Some are real tasks. They just aren't clear enough to act on yet.



Full guide only

This section continues in the complete version.

[Buy the full guide on Gumroad](#)

[Read more on the HKeys website](#)

Includes Maya's full Todoist Free setup walkthrough: audit, Inbox Sweep, task repair, projects, sections, labels, priorities, dates, deadlines, and review views.

Implementation & Worksheets

This is the practice section, but it's not a full rebuild. A full rebuild feels productive for one day. Then it turns into a second system to maintain.

Use the 7-day rollout to change one layer at a time.

RULE

Change one layer. Use it. Then change the next one.

First Pass: 7 Days

Don't rebuild Todoist in one weekend. That usually creates a beautiful system you don't want to maintain.

This first pass is lighter: each day changes one layer, so you can see what actually helps before you move more things around.

Day 1 — Audit your current Todoist

Don't fix anything yet. Just mark where the system breaks:

- capture
- clarification
- structure
- dates
- review
- shortcuts and friction

See the real friction before moving things around.

Full guide only

This section continues in the complete version.

[Buy the full guide on Gumroad](#)

[Read more on the HKeys website](#)

Includes the complete 7-day rollout and final setup checklist for capture, task quality, structure, dates, review, reference, and maintenance.

Worksheet 1: Your Turn — Repair the Messy Tasks

Now it's your turn. Don't turn every raw item into a Todoist task. First, decide what it really is: task, project, Calendar event, Reference, Waiting For, Someday / Maybe, or trash. Then rewrite only the items that should stay in Todoist.

Raw items:

1. vet appointment Thursday 5pm

Decision: _____ Rewrite if needed: _____

2. kitchen photos

Decision: _____ Rewrite if needed: _____

3. piano lessons maybe

Decision: _____ Rewrite if needed: _____

4. neighbor borrowed ladder

Decision: _____ Rewrite if needed: _____

5. fix sleep routine

Decision: _____ Rewrite if needed: _____

6. return shoes by Saturday

Decision: _____ Rewrite if needed: _____

7. school costume

Decision: _____ Rewrite if needed: _____

8. old grocery list

Decision: _____ Rewrite if needed: _____

Full guide only

This section continues in the complete version.

[Buy the full guide on Gumroad](#)

[Read more on the HKeys website](#)

Includes worksheet answer keys, the project card worksheet, and the weekly reset worksheet with completed examples.

Continue With HKeys

This guide gives you the workflow. The [HKeys resources](#) help you keep using it with fewer small interruptions.

Todoist Inbox Sweep Checklist: Get the Real Task List Out of Your Head

Use this when your head feels crowded and you need to capture open loops before organizing them.

Todoist Keyboard Shortcuts for Smarter Task Planning

Use this when you want to understand how shortcuts support capture, planning, and review.

Platform-Specific Shortcut Pages

Use these when you need the exact hotkeys for Todoist on your platform: [Windows](#), [Web \(Windows\)](#), [macOS](#), [Web \(Mac\)](#), [iOS](#), or [Android](#).

Training Mode

HKeys Training Mode is still in development. For now, use the shortcut reference and printable cheat sheets. Later, Training Mode will help you practice shortcuts instead of only looking them up.

Final Note

This guide gives you a starting structure, not a system you have to follow like a religion.

Use it, test it, and change it as you see what works in your real life. After a week or two, you'll start noticing which tasks move smoothly and which ones keep getting postponed.

Pay attention to the ones that keep getting stuck. If you keep moving "sort out the closet", the problem may not be the date. Maybe the task is too big, the first step is unclear, or you don't have the energy for that kind of work on a weekday. Or maybe the closet is good enough, and not every shelf needs to become Pinterest.

Planning doesn't happen in a vacuum. Your energy, focus, environment, and distractions matter too.

So don't just optimize Todoist. Notice the pattern, then adjust the system. Make the next step smaller, clearer, or easier to start.

Everything in this guide is a recommendation, not a rule you have to obey forever. Use the foundation, then adapt the rest to your life.

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Created by the HKeys Team. Author & Product Lead: Lika Girina.