



I am Using the GTD Outlook Addin. So why do I Need Taskline?

Getting Things Done is a great system for improving your productivity and organizing and managing your email. Much of the power of Getting Things Done is encapsulated in the GTD Outlook Addin.

On its own, Taskline will greatly improve your time and task management. It maximizes your productivity and enables you to remain in full control of your work load. But Taskline can also work alongside GTD, to give you many additional benefits:

1. Automated and accurate task scheduling, for all of your tasks. What do you tell your boss, or your clients, or your customers, when they ask you when future work will be completed? By automatically scheduling all of your future tasks, Taskline can give you this information. Don't rely on wishful thinking! Knowing when things will get done helps you co-ordinate with others and allows you to reserve any resources that may be needed. Without Taskline, any start or completion dates you may give out are just guesswork. And because people tend to under-estimate how long things will take them, the chances are that your guesses will be wrong.
2. Achievable deadlines. Do you know whether all your current deadlines are achievable? How do you know when to start working on a project in order to meet a deadline? This can be especially tricky if the project has many tasks and you also have other commitments that occupy your time. Taskline handles deadlines with ease, putting you in control and giving your task list a predictability that you never thought possible.
3. Enhanced task prioritization. We prefer to do the work we enjoy rather than the work that needs doing the most. This is human nature. Taskline tackles this by encouraging you to put your task list into priority order. Several methods are supported, including a simple and convenient drag n drop method. Once you have prioritized your tasks, it is no longer necessary to decide what to do next at the start of each day. And the weekly review becomes a process of updating priorities and then simply running Taskline, to see what can be achieved next week, and beyond.
4. Quantify the impact of new work. When can you get the new work finished? How will it affect all your existing tasks and commitments? Taskline can tell you all of these things. Automatically. There is no need to manually reshuffle all of your tasks. The effects of changing deadlines, new meetings or other changes in circumstances can be quickly calculated.
5. Added focus: when you arrive at work in the morning, you already know much of what needs to be done, and when you can expect to finish. All this information is in your enhanced Outlook task list.
6. The ability to view your tasks in Outlook's calendar, so that you have a single view listing all of your commitments. This useful view, which can be daily, weekly or monthly, is one that many people print off to use as a reference.

Specifically, how can GTD and Taskline Work Together?

We suggest you simply use Taskline as you would anyway, i.e. use it to schedule your task list. This gives you all the extra control and benefits listed above, together with all the benefits of using the GTD Outlook Addin.

1. Total Work. Taskline requires that each task is assigned an amount of **Total Work**, which is your best guess at how long you think the task will take. For tasks that are created from emails by GTD, we suggest that you select the **Show created task** check box on the **Add to Action List** dialog, and add the **Total Work** there and then, at task creation time. If you don't want Taskline to schedule the task, leave the **Total Work** as zero.
2. Action list. Currently, Taskline only supports a single set of working hours that apply to all tasks. With this in mind, we suggest that you have Taskline schedule any tasks that should be done during office hours, such as your **@Office** tasks, and have it ignore other tasks such as your **@Home** tasks. You will need to leave a time allowance for the items Taskline does not schedule, to avoid over-committing yourself. You can do this by setting the **I start work at** and/or the **I stop work at** times conservatively, or by adding a day time break. All these settings are on the **Working Week** tab of Taskline's dialog. Another useful method is to overestimate task Total Work times.
3. Someday tasks. If you keep all your future work in the **Somedayed Project Actions** folder, you might prefer to have Taskline schedule that folder, rather than the **Tasks** folder.
4. In your Weekly Review, reassess task priorities. Also check that you have not forgotten anything – omitting tasks is a common mistake. Then run Taskline to reschedule your tasks list and set the new focus for the coming week, and beyond.
5. Task prioritization. You will also need to prioritize your tasks, so that you do the most important tasks first. Without this vital step, there is a danger of procrastinating or floundering when deciding what to do next. This can be time consuming in itself. Or you may find yourself always picking the most enjoyable tasks, rather than the most important ones. Prioritization brings focus to your task list. Most people use either task **Natural Order** or **Priority (A1)** to define task priority. **Natural Order** is nice to use because it allows you to graphically reprioritize by dragging tasks up and down Outlook's task list. However, to do this you need to set up a task view with sorting and grouping switched off. Alternatively, use **Priority (A1)**, perhaps by adding an "A1" column to the standard GTD task views. With **Priority (A1)**, tasks are given a priority ranging from A00 to Z99.

Combining the power of Taskline and the GTD Outlook Addin will bring you many productivity benefits. It will empower you to keep your work load manageable and predictable. Together, you, Taskline and the GTD Outlook Addin can make a great team.

Taskline - Take the work and the guesswork out of managing your work.
<http://www.taskline.com>