



Hey graduate friends,

How do you break down and plan your work? I know many students use planners, so let's talk a little bit about the Bullet Journal, also known as BuJo.

But before I introduce it, I want to mention that there are a lot of benefits associated with writing by hand. For example, with a notebook, you get a break from the screen and can use it while unwinding for the night, it has its own privacy and security benefits, and it helps with reflexivity (Ayobi et al., 2018). Not surprisingly, there are a lot of amazing paper planners out there that you can use. Most of them consist of monthly, weekly, and daily calendars that allow you to list, prioritize, and schedule your tasks using their specific formats. We also have free fillable and printable [calendars](#) which you can conveniently download and use for this purpose.

But if you're tired of using calendars, don't want to pay for one, or simply don't like the structure they place you in, I suggest checking out the [Bullet Journal](#). Ryder Carroll (2018) is the creator of the Bujo who developed the system as a solution to his unique organizational and self-tracking needs that were shaped by his attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). His innovation turned out to work extremely well for both people without and [with ADHD](#). As he put it himself, Bujo allows for a mindful way of doing things which helps you "automatically form a regular habit of introspection where you'll begin to define what's important, why it's important, and then figure out how to best pursue those things" (p. 25). The next best part is that you don't have to buy it, you can simply make one yourself using any notebook! Empty pages mean endless possibilities and a lot of control over what can be organized and how.

The Bujo basically has two parts. The first part includes *the system* which you set up in a few pages and it helps you find where things are in the notebook. The second part is *the practice* where you actually start planning your months and days. At the end of each month, you're prompted to reflect on your work by going over all the previous month's incomplete tasks to decide whether to eliminate them, bring them over to the new month, or keep them in a separate list for the future. You can obviously make modifications as well. It's minimalistic and simple. Here, [check out the Bujo yourself](#).

There are many other ways to plan; if you want to **get together** with a few PhD Planning Buddies to **break down and schedule your work together**, fill out the registration form on [our website](#) and I'll get back to you with the details soon!

Also, if you tried the BuJo, let me know! I'd love to hear about it, especially because I'm about to test it out myself.

Best,



Najmeh Keyhani (she/her/hers), PhD, from your [Learning Development & Success](#) team!

Resources:

Ayobi, A., Sonne, T., Marshall, P., & Cox, A. L. (2018). Flexible and mindful self-tracking: Design implications from paper bullet journals. *Proceedings of the 2018 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 1–14.

Carroll, R. (2018). *The bullet journal method: Track the past, order the present, design the future*. Penguin.

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