CHEAT SHEET
THE GTD FRAMEWORK

What is the GTD Framework?

The **Getting Things Done** method, aka **GTD**, is a productivity framework focused on clearing your mind of "stuff" and eliminating distractions. This approach hinges on the use of an "external system" to help manage, prioritize and progress your work - whether that's a piece of paper or a dedicated project management tool.
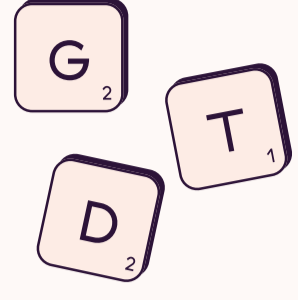
Where did it come from?

The GTD method emerged from David Allen's New York Times Bestseller, "*Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-free Productivity*".

Allen highlighted how "incompletes", "open loops" and "stuff" with unclear outcomes can become sources of stress. By using an external system to remove these stresses from your mind, you can focus on the task at hand and improve productivity.

> "There is an inverse relationship between things on your mind and those things getting done."
>
> — David Allen

How does it work?

STEP 1: CAPTURE

Write down *everything* on your mind and store it in an external system — this could be a simple piece of paper, a to-do list app or a project management tool.

STEP 2: CLARIFY

What is the desired outcome for each task? And what is the next action and project you can assign to it? If you can't answer these questions for a task — decide if it is trash, reference, or something to put on hold.
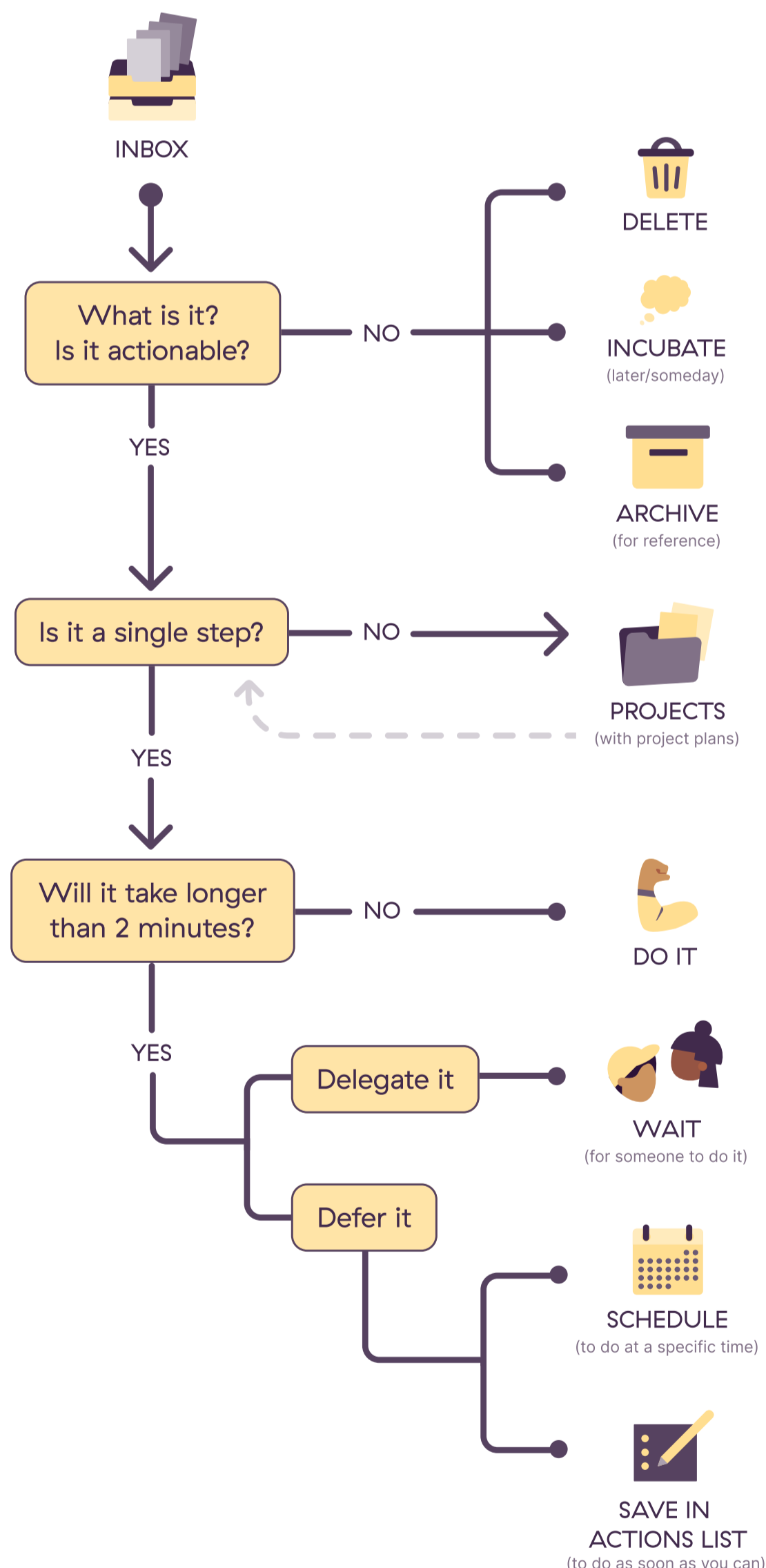
STEP 3: ORGANIZE

Group your tasks together in specific categories or "park" them in spaces. It's up to you how you structure these categories, but there are plenty of suggestions online.

STEP 4: REFLECT

Take a step back, assess what progress you've made, and what you need to do next. The GTD framework suggests both short Daily Reviews, and longer 1-2 hour Weekly Reviews to help clear your mind and rebalance priorities.

STEP 5: ENGAGE

Start doing! (It really is that simple)

INBOX

What is it?
Is it actionable? — NO → DELETE / INCUBATE (later/someday) / ARCHIVE (for reference)

YES ↓

Is it a single step? — NO → PROJECTS (with project plans)

YES ↓

Will it take longer than 2 minutes? — NO → DO IT

YES ↓

Delegate it → WAIT (for someone to do it)

Defer it → SCHEDULE (to do at a specific time) / SAVE IN ACTIONS LIST (to do as soon as you can)

Pros & Cons

Pros	Cons
✓ Very structured and systematic	✗ Takes time to set up
✓ Action-oriented	✗ Requires understanding of Allen's theories to maximize results
✓ Helps juggling multiple projects	✗ Can result in overly complex systems
✓ Reduces distractions	

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