Brain dump worksheet: 5 minutes, then sort

Set a 5-minute timer. Write one line per thing (tasks, worries, errands, the half-idea from the shower) and don't sort while it runs. When it rings, give each line a letter from the sort key and pick today's 3.

Date _____ Timer: 5 min _____ Started at _____

The dump · 5 minutes · no sorting yet

One line per thing. "Renew passport" can sit next to "buy oat milk." Sort

_____ ☐
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Mind went blank?

Read one, write, move on

Work / school What did I promise someone? What's due in two weeks?

Home Broken, running out, or going back to the store?

Money Bills, subscriptions to cancel, that refund?

People Who do I owe a reply? Birthdays, plans?

Body Appointments, prescriptions, the call I keep skipping?

Digital Passwords, backups, the photos eating my storage?

Waiting on Packages, replies, someone else's decision?

The vague stuff Not a task yet? Write it as a question.

About 20 seconds per heading, even if nothing comes.

Morning version · 2 min

What has a time attached today?

_____

What would make today feel handled?

_____

What am I already dreading?

_____

After the timer · one letter per line

The sort key

2-minute cap, do 5 now: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2 **Under 2 minutes:** do it after the timer, not during

C **Has a date:** it goes on the calendar

S **Too big:** rewrite as the next physical action

W **Waiting on:** who, and when you'll check

T **Today:** three of these, max

B **Backlog:** everything else, no guilt

Today's 3 · from your T lines

☐ **One that matters**
glad it's done by tonight
_____

☐ **One that's urgent**
real deadline, or someone's waiting
_____

☐ **One easy win**
you could start it in five minutes
_____

Bedtime brain dump, sitting up

Do this at the kitchen table or the desk, in the last half hour before lights out. Five minutes, then stop. Write things specifically ("send the landlord the leak photo"), because in a 2018 sleep-lab study the people who wrote more specific to-do lists fell asleep faster.

Date _____ Timer: 5 min _____ Lights out at _____

On my mind

Everything, unsorted

tasks, worries, "I should really..."

Worry and next step

Give each worry one small move

you don't have to solve it tonight

The worry	One next step, and when

Has a date

Calendar it tomorrow

What	Day

Waiting on

Not a to-do

Who / what	Check on

Tomorrow's first move

One physical action, small enough to do half awake. Then close the notebook.

No 2-minute tasks after dark.
"Quickly" replying means picking up the phone. Write it down and leave it.

In the morning,
run the On my mind list through the sort key on page 1.

Awake most nights for weeks?
A list won't cover that. It's worth raising with a doctor.