Eisenhower matrix

Write this week's one to three priorities first, because "important" means important to those. Then put every task in one box. Box 1 gets three things at most. Box 2 is the one that changes your month, so every line there gets a day and a time.

Week of _____ **What matters this week (1 to 3)** _____

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	**1 Do** Real deadline soon and it matters. Today or tomorrow, three max. Task / By when	**2 Schedule** Matters, no deadline yet. This box never gets urgent until it's on fire. Task / Day + time
Not important	**3 Delegate or shrink** Loud but low payoff. Hand it off, or do the smallest version that stops the bad thing. Task / Who / small version	**4 Drop** Neither. Cross it off, or write a date to look at it again. Task / Look again on

Urgent means a real deadline.
Something actually happens within a day or two if it slips. A red badge or a "quick question?" isn't a deadline.

Important means it moves a priority.
Check it against the line at the top. If it doesn't touch any of them, it's probably box 3 or 4.

Ten minutes, then start.
The sort is planning, and planning can turn into procrastination. Do the first thing in box 1.

Sort the list first

Long list? Do it here before you fill in the boxes. For each task, write what it's actually worth and what happens if it waits a week. In experiments by Zhu, Yang and Hsee (2018), reminding people of each task's payoff right before they chose made them less likely to grab the urgent-looking, low-payoff one.

Is it urgent?

Something real happens within a day or two if it slips: a late fee, a missed flight, someone blocked and waiting on you. Feeling rushed doesn't count.

Is it important?

It moves one of this week's priorities, or skipping it for a month would cost you real money, health, grades or a relationship.

The sort

Task	What it's worth	If it waits a week	Urgent?	Important?	Box
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	
			Y N	Y N	

Friday check: did box 2 happen?

Box 2 task	Slot (day, time)	Happened?	Moved to
		Y N	
		Y N	
		Y N	
		Y N	
		Y N	

Moved, not deleted.

A box 2 slot that didn't happen gets a new day. Deleting it is how important things turn into emergencies.

Same task in box 1 every week?

It was a box 2 task that nobody scheduled. Give it a recurring slot.

Box 3 keeps winning?

Turn off the alert that makes it look urgent, or batch it into one daily slot.