



Time Frames

		It always goes wrong - it 's raining – or too dry - or something!	We don't plan our projects; we just do them on our days off	
We get all behind when someone wants a picnic or a shopping trip!				They get so upset when their plans get pushed aside for big events
Company is coming for a big family event - will we be ready?	I really want to be sure that we can still go on vacation, too			They never have enough time to do a project and it winds up a problem
The materials don't arrive - or they're early and we're not ready		They work so much, I can't depend on them to do the parts they agreed to do		

Time Frames

How do you set projects up to work within your available time frames?

Look at your family's plans first

First – before you lift a hammer – get out your family calendar and a piece of paper.

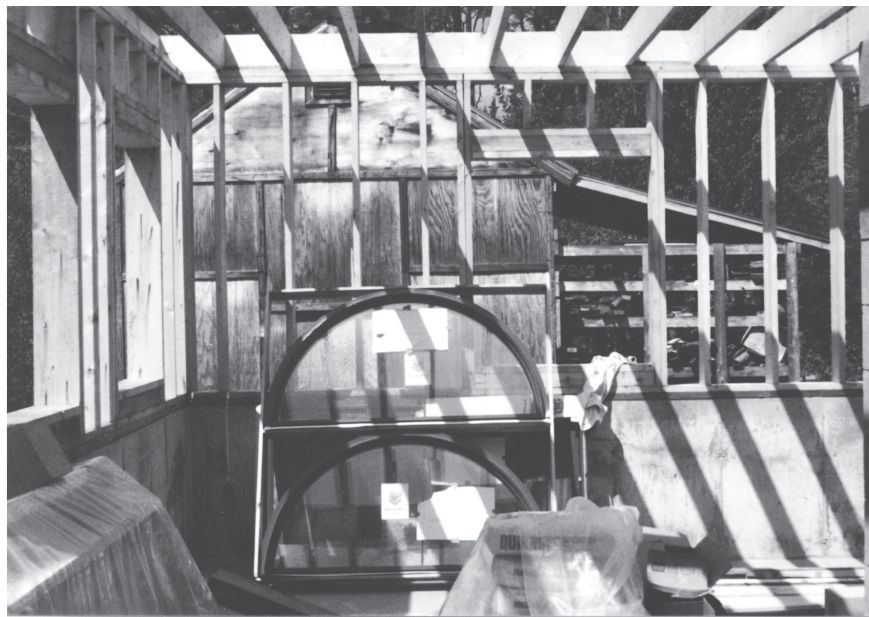
Mark down your own & the kids' seasons of activities – from baseball to graduations – and also write down special projects that can overflow from work and get tossed into the mix.

Now sit back & look at it all, and on a new page note the impact

- 1. On your availability for projects**
- 2. AND the special times that determine the need for presentable home space (e.g., for a graduation party or special company coming)**

The timeline you get for #2 – events that can impact the timing of a project – may increase its urgency, or factor into a decision to delay it.

Your availability discovered in #1 will determine if your projects can get done inside the desired work window, or perhaps need to be changed in scope to fit into the time allowed.



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Project particulars can help determine the time plans

Next – of course you already have a list of dream projects, so now look at them, and consider:

Do you need fair weather? (Decks, doors, windows, and home additions all do.)

Will you need a set-up space if you cannot use the outdoors? Is it OK if it is unheated? (Ouch for a missed hammer blow in 20 degrees.)

Do your materials need special temperatures or humidity? (Tub reglazing requires humidity below 60%; jointing compound works best above 75 degrees indoors, and even better when not in full bright daylight but with a light bulb point source.)

Will deliveries work any time of year? Or will snow & ice prevent using the best entrance to the room? Can you accommodate the mud or snow without ruining other home spaces?

Now – look at the answers to those considerations and lay them alongside the times of day and amounts of work time you have available in the different seasons, and you will have a fair idea of whether this project will fly.

Bringing order to these bits of information

Doing the activity above, you will end up with a bunch of pieces of paper with scribbles on them – strewn over the tabletop. That is fine. Many little parts fit together in the whole process of making a project plan. Do not fear the litter-look of this stage. Your mind can seem a



jumble, but let the pieces each have a seat in the room that is your mind, and then breathe and talk and relax while things start to come together. You may even want to have some pie and fun while in the back of your mind you go over these details and sort them into a map.

Solution ideas

In the next step, fragments of solutions will surface as you begin to cluster ideas and limits together. Perhaps in a deck plan, you imagine a patio as a better alternative – just go ahead and write such ideas down, or tell them to your partner. Try to use a different kind of pen or size print for this layer of the sorting so you can be aware of these coalescing ideas more readily.

Listening to each other

Soon, the solution layer will have shape to it and some choices will emerge too. Now it is time to look at those choices and listen to each other as you determine the importance of different courses of action and your ability to accomplish the dreams and goals that are on the table. It is important not to jump to conclusions, but hear each one out.



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Too much idea-litter making you mad?

Something to note:

It is possible that too much chaos can stop you from thinking. If you find that seeing papers & ideas all strewn about makes you agitated and causes you to become overwhelmed, you may be the kind of person whose distractibility needs to be accommodated.

If this is you, ask your partner to sort the pieces for you, and you can just leave the room. The sorter will then need to address the ideas with you in sections, rather than the entire project at once.

Deciding – agreement is the only way

It can be very tough on a marriage to have one or the other of you take matters into your own hands, use family resources of money and time, and do just as you want. Some may be able to live through the consequences – but may be quite discontented about it if they are not involved. Considering the inconveniences and the investment of resources, one really must concede that both partners need to be in on the go-ahead from the time a commitment is made.

It may seem quite peculiar that the way to organize a project's time would involve communication with loved ones. Go figure; it's not just about hammers *and* saws and better power tools. (But they are nice.) See more on the decision-making process in chapters: Planning, Communication, and Deep Talk.

Disclaimer - The picture with the nail gun was posed for illustrative purposes only. Real power tool use requires securing loose hair and clothing, and wearing appropriate safety goggles and other protective wear.

Notes from Time Frames

Make some herbal tea and sit... at your Communication Table

Now, look at the calendar

1. **Write down** events for all family members that will need your attention during the project period. (You may need more paper.)
2. **Go back over** the chapter and follow the steps for marking down your project needs and their impact on the family.
3. **Take your time.** Discuss with the children and each other what you all expect and wish for.
4. **Notice** if there are competing requests for your time.
5. **Mull it over** and reward yourselves for the cooperative process.
6. **Revisit** another time for re-thinking the project goals or timelines.

<i>Score your Home Team participation:</i>	
3	for going through the discussions with flexibility in decision making
2	for going through the discussions
1	for attempting to organize your time ahead to sit together
Team Bonus	Multiply your points times each other's
If it is zero - Try again! - <i>but make cookies next time.</i>	
at least 1	If your team bonus is 1 or higher - Congratulations! You are on your way to being a Home Team! Yay!!!!
2	Both of you will have some stretching of communicating skills - but you are both trying - that's great!
3	One of you is doing all the work - in communicating - don't be fooled - it always takes two! <i>Refer to the chapter on Level Play.</i>
4	You are both working hard - and both growing in this skill - Stick with it - it will be worth it!
5	Sorry, I said multiply - not add. You may benefit from reading directions on materials while planning - it can help you prepare ahead for the project.
6	Great - you are both involved in the discussion - but be careful that one of you is not always giving in and the other just has their say. Try a little flexibility on both sides.
7	Use a computer to organize your time and projects. It may be good to have one of the kids come in as a team secretary. <i>See # 8.</i>
8	(You made a math error) <i>See number # 7.</i>
9	You are advanced communicators - you may end up as Team mentors!
10	You are ambitious and yet need more technical background for the project you are seeking to do. Check with a friend or contractor to see if you are on track. (see also #s 7 & 8)

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