

# Mastering Your Home Backlog

BUILDING A HOME WITH SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES  
AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION STARTS HERE

**KORINNE - AGILEMOMLIFE**





*"Balance in the home starts with shared responsibilities"*

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*Welcome!*

In this guide, you will learn how to create your master household task list using my Home Management System inspired by Agile. By the end, you'll have a clear, prioritized, and manageable backlog of tasks for your home.

The main objectives of this guide are to help you create a master task backlog for your home tasks, break down tasks into their smallest pieces, prioritize and point tasks, and begin creating your family task board. By the end, you'll be able to create a master task backlog for your household, assign points and prioritize tasks, and implement these Agile home management techniques effectively.

Overview:

- Basics of Agile methodology
- Creating prioritizing and pointing your tasks
- Practical exercises to build your home backlog and get started with Agile Home Management

# What is Agile

Agile is a flexible and iterative approach to managing projects and tasks, focused on continuous improvement and collaboration. Agile used to only be used in software development, but I've taken it, reworked it, and created a system for inside the home!



The key principles of Agile for home task management emphasize prioritizing family interactions and communication over rigid systems and tools, focusing on practical solutions rather than exhaustive planning, encouraging collaboration among all family members instead of strict roles, and being adaptable to changes rather than sticking to a fixed plan. Applying Agile in home management fosters flexibility, teamwork, and effective completion of household tasks. This approach is particularly effective through the various seasons of life because it allows families to adjust their priorities and methods as circumstances change. Whether you're dealing with the demands of a new baby, adjusting to kids' school schedules, or managing the needs of aging parents, Agile home management provides a framework that can adapt to evolving needs, ensuring that your household runs smoothly no matter what life throws your way.



## Understanding the Task Backlog

What is a task backlog?

A task backlog is a prioritized master list of tasks that need to be completed. It's a running list that keeps track of all household tasks, ensuring nothing is forgotten. Tasks are prioritized and completed over time.

**Examples of tasks that might be included in a backlog are indoor tasks such as cleaning, laundry, and meal preparation, as well as outdoor tasks like gardening, car maintenance, and yard work. Also tasks related to parenting such as switching out seasonal clothes, school items, making appointments etc.**

Continued maintenance of the backlog is essential to ensure it remains relevant and effective. Regular reviews and updates allow you to reprioritize tasks based on changing needs. This ongoing process helps to identify completed tasks, add new ones, and adjust priorities, keeping the household organized and efficient. It serves as a dynamic tool that prevents tasks from becoming outdated or overlooked.

“*Bite sized tasks are like fun sized candy*”

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## Creating Your Task Backlog

Make sure all participants are available to participate in creating the master task backlog. If your children are younger, only include adults. If your children are older, include them in the discussion. This task should be a team effort. This isn't your average task list!

Begin by gathering all tasks from family members. Then, break them down into their smallest form.

I suggest creating this master list digitally using a simple spreadsheet tool such as Excel. You can use sticky notes as well but ensure they are in a folder to keep them organized.

The priority will change so having the ability to move them around is critical.

Examples:

- Clean Toilet
- Unload Dishwasher
- Dust Livingroom
- Mow Grass
- Leaf Blow Driveway



## Creating your *Task Backlog* cont.

Breaking tasks into smaller components makes them more manageable and achievable. To do this, identify the smallest actionable step and ensure tasks are specific and clear. For example, if the complex task is deep cleaning the kitchen, smaller tasks could include cleaning the fridge, wiping countertops, and mopping the floor.

**Smaller tasks are quicker to complete, which makes them less overwhelming and more likely to be tackled by family members. This approach also enhances clarity, ensuring that everyone understands what needs to be done without ambiguity. Additionally, smaller tasks provide a sense of accomplishment as they are checked off the list, which can motivate individuals to continue contributing. Overall, this method leads to better time management, increased participation, and a more smoothly running household.**

# Prioritization

**Organizing your tasks by priority is key. This ensures the higher priority items are completed first, followed by lower priority items. In the event that items cannot be completed within a defined timeline, the lower priority items may roll into the next week.**



Prioritizing tasks means organizing them according to their urgency and importance to make sure you tackle the most crucial ones first. I personally use a High, Medium, Low system for identifying the priority/urgency of tasks. Any tasks with a time specific requirement, aka an appointment, includes the day/time in the title of the task along with its importance level.

Another approach is the ABC prioritization method, where tasks are assigned as A (Urgent and important), B (Important but not urgent), and C (Neither). For example, an urgent task might be fixing a leaking faucet, an important but not urgent task could be scheduling car maintenance, and a non-urgent task might be organizing the attic.

The priority should be agreed upon by everyone in the home and is free to change if necessary and agreed upon by the leaders of the home (aka parents).



## How to Point Tasks

Pointing is a method used to estimate the effort required to complete each task using points. These points follow a sequence called the Fibonacci sequence. The point options will be as follows; 1,2,3,5 and 8. The scale continues but if you were to point anything higher than an 8, it likely is not in its smallest form.

***The Fibonacci Sequence follows the rule that each number is equal to the sum of the preceding two numbers. The Fibonacci sequence begins with the following 14 integers: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144, 233... Each number, starting with the third, adheres to the prescribed formula.***

Determining the amount of points for a task is based on the following factors, familiarity with the task, complexity of the task and the time required to complete the task. For instance, taking out the trash might be a 1-point task, while mowing a large lawn may be a 5-point task.

“There is more than one way to complete a task”

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## How do you know if a task is *done*?

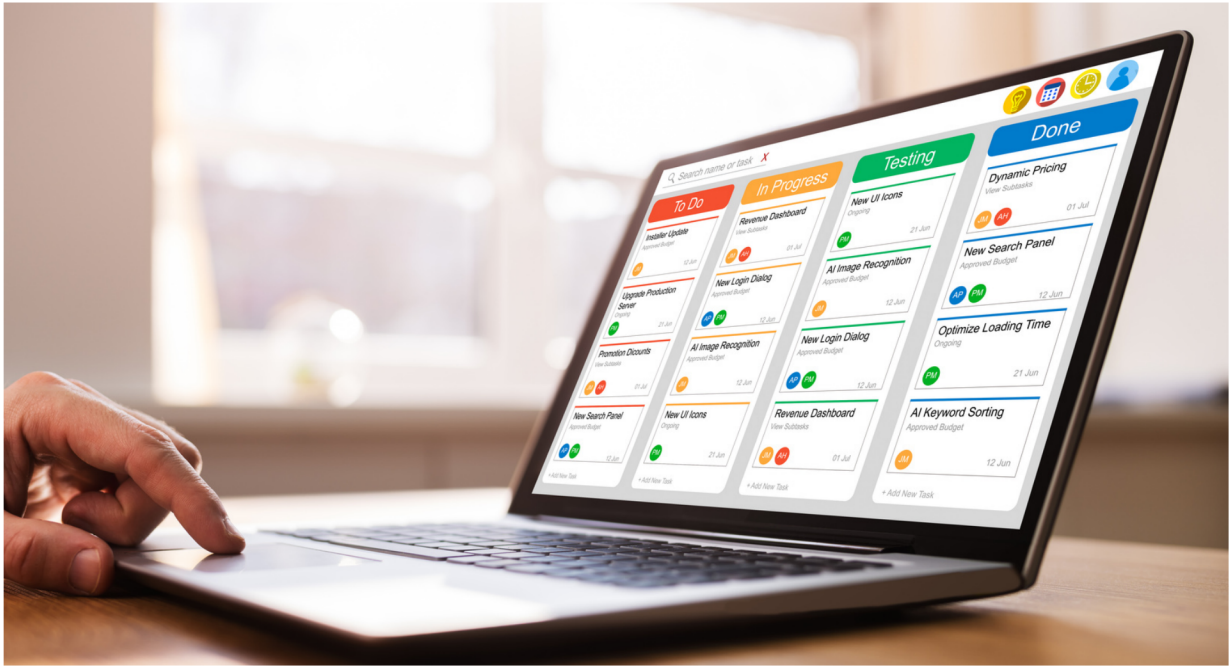
Each task should be discussed with the family and have a clear set of expectations to be 'accepted' as completed. In Agile we call this Acceptance Criteria. Clear acceptance criteria ensures tasks are completed to a satisfactory standard.

Remember, there is more than one way to complete a task. The way in which someone goes about completing the tasks, as long as it meets the acceptance criteria, doesn't necessarily matter. Be open to different ideas from everyone in the family. Empowering everyone to have a voice is key in the success of this management style.

### Example task: **Clean Toilet**

#### Acceptance Criteria

- Used toilet cleaner
- scrubbed inner toilet bowl
- wipe toilet down including exterior bowl, seat, lid and tank



## Setting up your family *Task Board*

Setting up your family task board is a vital step in transforming a simple list of tasks into an actionable weekly plan. By organizing tasks visually on a board, whether physical or digital, you can clearly see what needs to be done, track progress, and ensure accountability. This approach turns abstract tasks into concrete actions, making it easier for family members to understand their responsibilities and collaborate effectively.

**You can use physical task boards by employing whiteboards and sticky notes to create a visual task board, dividing it into columns such as To Do, In Progress, and Done. Alternatively, you can set up digital task boards using tools like Trello or Excel with a similar column setup. Regularly updating the task board keeps everyone informed and engaged, promoting a sense of teamwork and ensuring that household tasks are completed efficiently and on schedule.**

# Getting Started

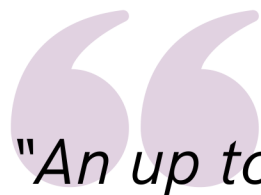
You've reached the end of the informational portion of this guide and are now ready to begin implementing what you've learned in your own home. Congratulations!! Follow the exercises below to begin implementing Agile Home Management,



**Creating Your Task Backlog:** First decide on where your master list will live. As mentioned in the guide, I suggest a digital list using a program like excel where items can be easily moved around. To create your task backlog, list all household tasks, break down complex tasks into smaller components. Start with a small list to avoid feeling overwhelmed and all family members should be involved in the process to ensure a comprehensive backlog.

**Prioritizing and Pointing:** Review your task backlog and use prioritization methods to rank tasks. Assign points to each task to estimate the effort required for completion. For example, organizing the closet might be a medium priority and assigned 3 points. Therefore any 'high' importance items will be above it in the list.

**Set up your task board:** Choose a physical or digital board, set up columns 'To Do, In Progress, and Done', then add your prioritized and pointed tasks to be completed in the coming week.



*"An up to date task backlog is crucial to the success of this system"*

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**Congratulations!** You've taken the first step towards implementing my Agile Home Management System! Remember, the backlog is ever changing and never 'done'. Make sure you continue to have regularly scheduled meetings to ensure your backlog is always up to date with relevant tasks, priority and points.

**Thank you** for participating in 'Mastering Your Home's Backlog!' I hope you found this guide to be informative and provide you with the tools to create your first Family Backlog! Please feel free to reach out with any questions or feedback and stay connected through [@agilemomlife](#). Check out my additional guides to implement my full Agile Home Management System!

### **Remember!**

The backlog will be ever changing. Priorities will change, points can decrease as everyone gets more familiar with the tasks. Seasonal items will come and go. This system is built on flexibility. The backlog is not created once and forgotten about, it's maintained.

# Your Feedback Matters!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PURCHASE OF MY MASTERING YOUR HOME BACKLOG GUIDE. I WANT TO MAKE SURE EVERY GUIDE I CREATE HELPS REDUCE THE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL LOAD AND BALANCES HOME TASKS ACROSS EVERYONE IN THE HOME.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK SO I CAN CONTINUE TO CREATE TRAINING MATERIALS THAT COMPLEMENT YOUR LEARNING STYLE.

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