

Do you feel like you're always running errands, taking care of household business, and spending time on things that should just be easier? By automating parts of your life, you can create more time to do the things you enjoy.

Some of the suggestions below are truly automated tasks, which means you won't have to think about them any more. Other suggestions do require some input on your part, but will save you a ton of time.

Ways to Automate Your To-Do List



1 Set up automatic bill pay. Check out your bank's website, or even go into your local branch to learn about how bill pay works. We are able to pay many of our bills automatically (some are paid directly from our checking account, and others are paid through our credit card), and we can send checks for free. This saves us time, plus we don't have to buy as many checks, envelopes, or stamps.



2 Automate savings and money transfers. If you do periodic transfers of money from your accounts, set them up so they happen automatically. I have my retirement savings funding set up to automatically happen on certain days of the month. I also automate student loan payments, and my loan provider gives us an interest discount for having done so.



3 Take advantage of USPS Package Pickup. The last time I went to the post office, I was in line for 35 minutes. If you have a package to mail, you can go to usps.com, and schedule a package pickup at your home. I just leave the package on the front porch, and our mailman picks it up. You can also order Priority Mail shipping materials for free, and they will send them directly to your home.



4 Order supplies for your home through Amazon's [Subscribe and Save](#) program. You will save at least 15 percent each month by ordering through [Subscribe and Save](#). I've checked Amazon's prices against the prices at Costco, and usually Amazon's prices are the same or even a little less. Even if the prices are higher, it's usually worth the extra quarter to not have to run to the store. We have subscriptions set up for diapers, wipes, coffee, and some of the beauty supplies I can't buy with coupons. You could even automate deliveries of toilet paper, paper towels, and cereal if you wanted to.



5 Consider grocery delivery or pick-up services. Do some research about grocery delivery or grocery pickup in your area. Avoiding going into the stores is a huge time saver, even if you have to pick up your stuff. We have our milk delivered to our home each week for 10 cents more per carton than we would pay in the store. Water is delivered to our home each month for the same price we would pay if we carried it home from the grocery store. We also have a bag of organic fruits and vegetables delivered to our home for less than we would pay at our local health food store. Some grocery stores offer a pick-up service that saves you the time you'd spend in the store collecting your groceries.

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Have your medications delivered. If your insurance provider offers a prescription medication delivery service, take advantage of it! You can sometimes have your medications delivered to your home for free, saving you a trip to the pharmacy. Unfortunately, our insurance does not have a prescription delivery service, and I spend at least an hour each month waiting for my prescriptions. You can also order many non-prescription medications like vitamins and over-the-counter meds, online, which will save you even more time.

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Order office supplies online. If you work from home, or even if you just use a lot of office supplies at your house, ordering them online can also be a huge time saver. I'm an office supply junky, so if I set foot in an Office Max, I'll be there for at least an hour drooling over the planners, cool pens, and pretty paper. It's better for my schedule and my budget if I stay away and order what we need online. You can order from many office supply stores directly, or order from Amazon's [Subscribe and Save](#) program, which will truly automate your shopping.

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Request books from your library. Is there a book you'd like to check out from the library? See if your library offers an online hold service. Many libraries will allow you to place a hold for books online. When the book is available, they'll set it aside for you. All you have to do is come in and pick the book up.

CONSIDERING THAT MANY OF THESE AUTOMATION IDEAS COST THE SAME OR LESS THAN THEY WOULD IF YOU HUSTLED TO COMPLETE THE TASKS YOURSELF, IT MAY ACTUALLY BE COSTING YOU TO NOT HAVE THINGS AUTOMATED.