

Copyright 2009 Store & Style, All Rights Reserved

Christmas Task Calendars In her last newsletter, Aby Garvey at Simplify 101 suggested that holiday projects are less overwhelming when they're bite-sized. For instance, if you're stressed about your holiday cards, Garvey says, "spread out the mini projects associated with sending cards-taking a photo, writing the newsletter, updating address lists, buying stamps, addressing envelopes, and signing the cards-over the days and weeks ahead." To help visualize my bite-sized holiday to-dos, I created a task calendar. Though I find electronic reminders and datebooks useful, an old-fashioned wall calendar and written lists keep me sane. I see at a glance what needs to be done (and am reminded each time I walk by).

1. First, I used a fine-point black Sharpie to label 24 clothespins with the dates from December 1st through December 24th. Then I glued a magnet on the back of each clothespin, and hung them in several rows on my kitchen blackboard.
2. Next I compiled a list of any holiday related task or errand that needed to be accomplished (I also considered what items could be delegated to my husband or children).
3. Finally, I purchased a box Avery marking tags--they have a pretty scalloped edge, and wrote two or three assignments on each one. I clipped a tag to each clothespin. A blank calendar page would work as well, but I like using separate pieces of paper, so the daily lists are individual and easy to grab as I'm walking out the door. If clothespins sound too complicated, here are a few other ideas:

- Label the tab of a manila folder with the words Holiday Tasks. Open the folder, and place sheets of square Post-it notes in rows, filling up the entire folder. Label each Post-it with a day (December 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc.) and then list 1-2 tasks to be accomplished below the date. Check the folder each morning, pull off the corresponding Post-it, and put it in your planner or on the fridge.
- Cut out 24 squares of cardstock, label each one with a day in December, and list several to-dos beneath the date. Using tape, arrange the papers in a square on your fridge, the back of a cupboard door, or atop a kitchen whiteboard. Just keep it visible! Planning early, and establishing a realistic daily task list will help make a month prone to craziness much more peaceful.