

High-Tech Helpers

Seven nifty gadgets that make life easier for people with AD/HD. **BY SANDY MAYNARD**

High-tech gadgets won't solve all your organizational problems. They're often pricey, and you can read every word of the owner's manual and still not know how the things work. But the *right* gadgets can make you a bit less frazzled—especially if you're the kind of person who can spend 30 minutes looking for keys...only to find them in your pocket or purse.

Odds are, you already know how to use a kitchen timer to help you keep track of time outside the kitchen. Here are seven more nifty, high-tech helpers, selected for people with AD/HD:

1 Graphical clock

If you have trouble keeping track of the time, you'll want one of these: a clock that uses a diminishing red disc to graphically indicate time's passing. As minutes tick by, the red "pie slice" gradually disappears. The clocks come in various sizes and sell for about \$25 at www.timetimer.com. A software version can be installed on your computer's desktop.

2 Keyless lock

Are you the kind of person who loses your keys *and* your key finder? You may want to outfit your home with a door lock that substitutes numerical codes or fingerprints for keys. These devices offer enhanced security as well as convenience, as you can quickly change the code or fingerprint profiles. (It's great for housekeepers, guests, and others you'd rather not have a permanent key.) Keyless locks cost around \$300. There's a good selection at www.smarthome.com.

3 Fail-safe alarm watch

Many people with ADD keep their alarm clock on the other side of the bedroom—to make sure they get up. Here's a better idea: The Sleeptracker (\$149) watch monitors your sleep cycles. You set it to wake you during a specified window of time, and it sounds the alarm when you're in a period of light sleep—and less likely to fall back to sleep once you've been roused. For more information, go to www.sleeptracker.com.

4 Goof-proof garage door closer

Ever wake up in the morning only to realize that you left the garage door open all night? www.smarthome.com offers an automatic garage door closer (\$89.99) that uses a timer to close the door automatically in case you get distracted and forget. (Make sure the closer works with your particular type of garage door.)



5 Business card scanner

Are you drowning in a sea of business cards? Cut the clutter by scanning cards into your computer, then throw them away. At www.tigerdirect.com, you can find a basic model for about \$70.

6 Key finder

These aren't just for keys. You can use them to find any object that you tend to misplace—TV remote, eyeglasses, or telephone handset. Afraid you'll set aside that library book and never find it again? Just attach one of the electronic fobs to the bookmark. Press a button on the base unit, and follow the beeps to the book.

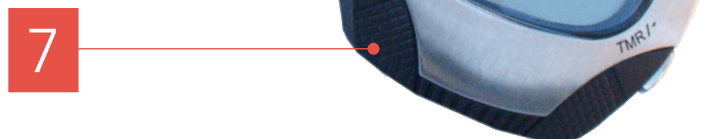
A basic key finder costs as little as \$15 from online gadget stores like www.brookstone.com, www.sharperimage.com, and www.target.com. If you need lots of fobs, take a look at the finders at www.findonefindall.com. These can be configured to keep track of up to 36 items.

7 Intelligent watch

Muti-function, water-resistant sport watches aren't just for athletes. People with AD/HD often find them useful. Because you can wear one in the shower, you don't have to take it off so often—which means you're less likely to lose it. And many models feature multiple alarms. You can set alarms for 15- to 30-minute intervals to keep you on track and sharpen your sense of timing. Some programmable models, including those made by Timex, can store hundreds of phone numbers and appointments.

If you can't remember to take your meds, go to bed on time, or keep multiple appointments, a vibrating alarm watch may be the solution. At www.watchminder.com, you'll find a programmable watch that can be set to go off up to 30 times a day. The \$79.50 model is a smaller, lighter-weight, and better-looking version of a watch that has been used by people with AD/HD for many years.

Sandy Maynard, ADDitude's coach on call, coaches adults with AD/HD. She lives in Washington, D.C.



Which high-tech tools and gadgets have you found helpful?

Share your ideas by writing to *ADDitude*, 39 West 37th Street, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10018, or e-mailing letters@additudemag.com.