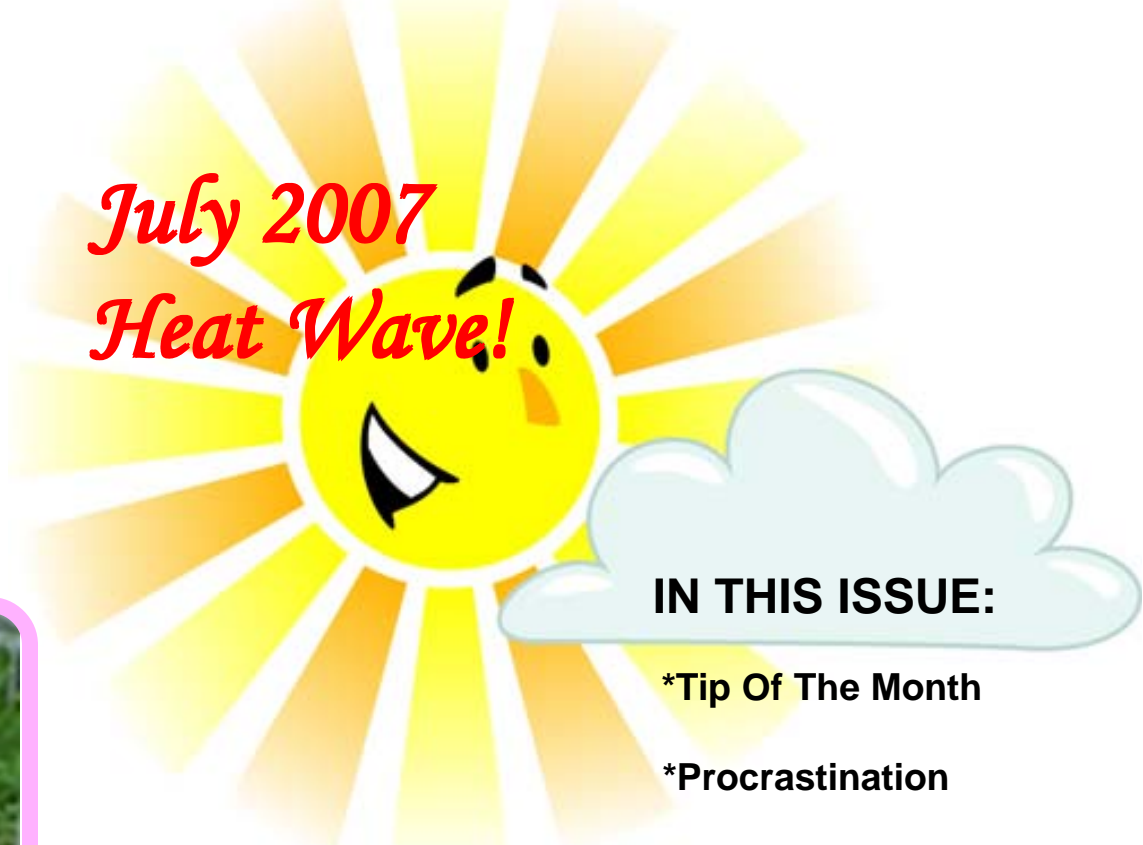




# July 2007 Heat Wave!



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## Tip of the Month!

When you choose organizational tools, be sure to choose those you find attractive. The idea is, if you like your newly organized and attractive space, you will be more inclined to keep it that way. For instance, if you have your house cleaned, your first response is to keep it that way, nice and neat. So, if you are a visual person, try purchasing colorful file folders <http://tinyurl.com/28jde2>, that way when you open your filing drawer you will feel energized and more likely to keep it tidy!

Sometimes even if you have your space organized and beautified, after a while you go back to your former messy ways. To rectify this situation, either create a routine where you set appointments with yourself to file, put your shoes away, etc. or write it in your calendar or have your friend or Professional Organizer-such as myself-do follow up appointments with you.





## The Perils of Procrastination

This video: [http://www.i-am-bored.com/bored\\_link.cfm?link\\_id=7240](http://www.i-am-bored.com/bored_link.cfm?link_id=7240) is a clever depiction of procrastination. It illustrates how we can avoid starting any project or task because of a small interruption such as a drop of spilled coffee on a desk. Instead of quickly wiping off the drop from the desk notice how he washes *the whole desk*. Although this is a humorous attempt at showing procrastination, this problem affects the majority of the public at some time or another. I wanted to blog this to my readers as an example of what not to do when we are finding a task too daunting to work on.

There are a variety of reasons behind procrastination. To overcome it we must examine the reasons behind it, set a schedule that works for each of us individually, and push forward. If you have a hard time sticking to your schedule it either means the schedule is unrealistic or that you need a coach or buddy to help you stay focused. If you can't find a buddy or are unable to hire a coach, write down all of the tasks you have due for that week and prioritize them.

**First:** Choose the task that is most important, leaving the less important tasks until later. Be sure the tasks that are less important are done as well. (Just because they're not #1 doesn't mean they shouldn't get done!)

**Second:** Put all of your priorities into your PDA, pocket pc, or daily planner.

**Third:** For each task make an appointment with yourself. Make sure to set a time limit for how long you will work on that one particular task. For example, if you are in a crunch to finish working on a presentation think of how long a previous presentation took you to prepare. If you think it took 4 hours to create, then allow yourself 5 hours. It is always better to allot more time, than not enough. **Tip: Avoid doing personal errands during business hours.**

**Fourth:** Look at the past, see what works and learn from the positive – Ask yourself the following kinds of questions: What makes you succeed at a project? Timing? Teamwork? Quiet environment? When you haven't gotten projects done what has been the biggest barrier? Are you a morning or evening person? When you decide what time of day you are most productive, do the crucial and most important tasks during that time. Keep mindless tasks to the times when you are not as alert. **Tip: If you find yourself feeling sleepy at your desk, stand and do your task, it may seem funny, but you'll get it done!**

Finally, remember procrastination makes a difficult situation even worse. Don't put it off, take baby steps. One task at a time, one day at a time.

# Weighing in on the Top



## Time Savers

### 1. SENDING GIFT CERTIFICATES FOR PRESENTS

**The good:** This allows the person to use the gift when they want. For example, movie tickets, massage and dinners are my favorite gift ideas for gift certificates.

**The bad:** Gift certificates might not get used. Some of your friends might be offended that you didn't take the time to get them a more personal gift.

**The bottom line:** Gift certificates are perfect for people who have everything, or are really picky about "creative gifts." I would use your best judgment and give gift certificates out on a person-by-person basis. However, if you are that busy, something needs to give, you need to make time for yourself!

### 2. BUYING BAGGED SALAD GREENS, SLICED APPLES, AND BABY CARROTS

**The good:** This is definitely a faster way to prepare dinner.

**The bad:** Sometimes faster is not always better. Purchasing bagged salad greens, bagged sliced apples, and baby carrots can be costly. While your time is most important, having spending money for fun evenings is important too.

**The bottom line:** If you are having a very busy week or month, give yourself an allowance to spend on an evening out for dinner or the pre-made items at grocery stores.



### 3. ASKING FOR THE EARLIEST APPT. AT THE DOCTOR'S OR DENTIST'S OFFICE

**The good:** You won't have to worry about traffic or waiting in a long time at the office.

**The bad:** You will have to get up extra early, which may cause a restless night of sleep.

**The bottom line:** Making the earliest appointments is a great idea for people who are too busy during the day, when personal appointments should be kept to a minimum.

### 4. USING MAIL ORDER PRESCRIPTIONS

**The good:** No driving to the pharmacy to pick them up. Plus, you will save a lot of money.

**The bad:** You will have to remembering to mail the prescription in before your medications run out.

**The bottom line:** If you are sick, you will still have to go to the pharmacy, but it's less trips than when you have to fill all of your prescriptions there. Put a reminder on your calendar for when it is time to mail in the refill for your prescriptions.

### 5. PUTTING A LIST OF MOVIES YOU WANT TO SEE IN YOUR WALLET OR ON YOUR PALM PILOT

**The good:** If, like many folks, you cannot remember titles of movies this is a great way to jog your memory.

**The bad:** If you're exceptionally busy, it may be hard to make time to make such organized lists.

**The bottom line:** When you are waiting at the doctor's office, or in an airport on a layover, this is a great time for the fun activity of making movie lists.





6. **INVESTING IN A WIRELESS HANDHELD SMART PHONE WITH EMAIL**  
(such as a Blackberry or a Pocket PC)

**The good:** This is a great way to keep up with your email during downtimes between appointments. The *Blackberry* is easy to use.

**The bad:** If you have a limited budget, a Blackberry is not cost effective, unless your work is footing the bill.

**The bottom line:** If you don't have a palm pilot already, I suggest getting a smart phone or a Blackberry. You can download your email along with many other cool features.

7. **SIGNING UP FOR AUTOMATIC BILL PAY THROUGH YOUR BANK**

**The good:** You don't have to worry about your bills getting paid on time.

**The bad:** You have to balance your checkbook, which takes time and care. Balancing your checkbook helps you to make sure you have sufficient funds in your bank account at all times, a necessity for auto bill pay. Setting up your many bills that you pay can be time consuming.

**The bottom line:** Signing up for automatic bill pay is a *great* long-term idea if you have sufficient funds in your account. For the monthly peace of mind alone it's worth it. Make sure to sign up for anti-virus protection if you decide to do this, so no one can access your account information online.

8. **BUYING A CASE OF YOUR FAVORITE WINE AS HOSTESS AND BIRTHDAY GIFTS**

**The good:** Having a gift on hand is a great idea.

**The bad:** Giving the same gift may begin to look thoughtless.

**The bottom line:** If you are going to purchase hostess gifts ahead of time, pick up some of the following: cheese labels in silver <http://tinyurl.com/yrox7v>, a wine "cooler" <http://tinyurl.com/2wc83y> or wine glass tags <http://tinyurl.com/yrzhn4>.



9. **BUYING MOVIE TICKETS IN ADVANCE USING FANDANGO** <http://www.fandango.com/>

**The good:** You won't have to wait in line, unless it is the premier showing.

**The bad:** If you have something come up last minute, you are stuck with the tickets, and the bill. You are also charged a little extra for purchasing ahead of time.

**The bottom line:** If you really have no time and no one to run the errand, use Fandango.

10. **MAKING AND FREEZING LUNCHES ON SUNDAY FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN**

**The good:** When you have no time and no energy to make lunches during the week, this is a great idea.

**The bad:** Sometimes it is hard to find lunches that freeze well and the same old lunches can get tiring.

**The bottom line:** Look up the food you are making to make sure it freezes well, for example, macaroni and cheese does NOT freeze well! When you figure out what freezes well (such as peanut butter and jelly) definitely make a bunch of them to keep for your emergency weeks when you have no time and no energy to cook, it is healthier than going for fast food!

