



# Slay Your Deadlines with a Kanban Board

Kanban is a visual system used to trigger an action. The Japanese name roughly translates to “card you can see.” The first Kanban system was developed by Taiichi Ohno for Toyota Automotive in Japan in the early 1940s. Toyota wanted to increase productivity and efficiency to better compete with American rivals. The tool quickly became popular in all industries since it is inexpensive and visually displays inventory and production at every stage, thus revealing bottlenecks in product teams and processes. *And it is super flexible!*

In this workshop, we’ll explore how to use a personal Kanban system to increase the productivity of our writing process by controlling workflow and focusing our planning. Hopefully, this will also inspire creativity.

A simple Kanban board has three major areas (swim lanes): **To Do**, **Doing**, and **Done**. The fun part is that you can name and personalize these any way you want.

## Planning Your Kanban System

The key to the Kanban method is flexibility. In order to achieve that, there are three main points to keep in mind when you set up your system:

1. Plan Quarterly: Anything longer becomes cumbersome.
2. Use Laser Focus: No more than 3 major goals.
3. Revisit & Reassess: The plan is not set in stone. *(No shame, only progress!)*

Most of us are probably used to working with an annual schedule, which is totally fine. You can still keep your annual overview of what you want to achieve. However, when you set up your Kanban board, only worry about the next three months and *what you can reasonably achieve during that time*.

**Let’s do some brainstorming!** Write down what goals you want accomplish in your writing career and why they are important to you, or why you want to accomplish them.

**Goals**

**Because I want to:**


Once you have that list, narrow it down to the two or three goals that seem most important, or most urgent, and make them measurable. That doesn’t mean you’re never going to work on the other goals, *just not right now*.

## Most Important/Urgent Goals

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_

Next, figure out what projects you can work on that will achieve those important/urgent goals. And then, create the tasks that you have to do to complete the projects. *(Tasks = Sticky Notes for your Kanban Board.)*

**Note:** There are no set numbers of projects per goal, you can customize to whatever works for you.





## Kanban Board Material Ideas

- 🌀 **Wall Mounted White Board:** If you don't need a magnetic board, a very affordable erasable white board can be made out of White Panelboard. You find this in the panel section of any hardware or lumber store. It comes in sheets of 4' x 8', costs less than \$15 and for a few bucks—often free—you can have the store cut it to any size you want.
- 🌀 **Flexible Materials:** find white board poster board or chalkboard poster board in your stationary store. *Note: The white board poster board isn't very erasable, but it works great for sticky notes.* More permanent flexible materials: "Vinyl Peel and Stick" film for wall or floor tiles from your hardware store.
- 🌀 **Mirrors, Picture Frames, Glass Marker Boards, Standing White Boards, Corkboards, Cabinet Doors, and Plain Wall Space:** these can all be made into magnificent Kanban boards.
- 🌀 **Washi Tape and Color Duck/Duct Tape.** All the glorious Washi Tape you want!
- 🌀 **Stickies, stickies, stickies** in any size and color and shape you want. I recommend getting the ones that has glue on the whole back side (super sticky).

## Online Resources

- 🌀 **Sarra Cannon's Heart Breathings Free YouTube** channel is a marvel of writing and planning videos, here are two where she explains her planning system:
  - How I Create My 90 Day Plan And Use A Kanban Board to Achieve My Goals:*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8wblgmNjBQ> (55 min).
  - My 90 Day Plan Review - How Did I Do??:*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9CTIemxaN8> (23 min).

Here's the link to her channel with all her free videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCasYwEzMc7tjKuAS-vtDYPw>.



- 🌀 **Sarra Cannon's Heart Breathings 90-Day Bootcamp Class** completely changed my (writing) life. Sarra encourages, inspires, and empowers you during the class and beyond. Check it out at: <https://heartbreathings.teachable.com/p/hb90-bootcamp>. If you want to know when Sarra next runs the class, sign up for her newsletter at: <https://heartbreathings.com/newsletter/>.
- 🌀 **Some popular online Kanban applications** are: [Trello.com](https://trello.com), [Smartsheet.com](https://smartsheet.com), [Productboard.com](https://productboard.com), [Monday.com](https://monday.com), [Miro.com](https://miro.com), and [Clubhouse.io](https://clubhouse.io). Most have free trial periods. Clubhouse and Miro are permanently free unless you want some of the multi-member team fancy features. *Note: I have not used or evaluated any of these products.*
- 🌀 **Notebook Kanban:** Marissa Mohi's video shows how she uses the HB90 system in a bullet journal: *Kanban in a Bullet Journal | The HB90 Planning Method:* <https://youtu.be/AzDwN92sVlc>.

Thank you for taking this workshop! If you have any questions, email me at [GetInTouch@AsaMariaBradley](mailto:GetInTouch@AsaMariaBradley).

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