

# Three Tools for Managing Your Calendar

Keep on top of your schedule, and plan meetings quickly and easily.

By Amy Sample Ward

**O**ur calendars are our ultimate tools for staying on top of our work, meetings, and to-do lists. For something that's so critical to our daily success, it's surprising how many of us struggle to keep track of our schedules.

It would be much easier if it weren't for the endless e-mail threads and phone calls involved in setting up meetings. Luckily, there are apps to solve this problem.

Whether you currently use Outlook, iCal, or Google Calendar, you can use the following apps as add-ons or extensions to your online calendar. They'll help you do the following:

- **Find times to meet** that work for a full group of people.
- **Allow others to reserve time** on your calendar directly.
- **Update your calendar** with bookings automatically.

All three of the following apps are free. (There are also paid options that include advanced features and customization.)

**Doodle** (<http://doodle.com/>) is designed to stop the endless e-mail threads about finding a time for a group of people to meet. To get started, you select days and times that you want to appear as options and then circulate a single link to your meeting participants. Each time someone provides their availability, you'll receive a notification. The app will automatically highlight the best times (the ones with the most participants indicating they can participate) so it's easy to follow up and confirm your meeting. Doodle is especially valuable when you're trying to schedule a call or meeting with participants in multiple time zones. When you put in the options, you can select the time zone you're using and responders can use their own time zones when picking the best options for them. The app will calculate the times correctly, taking different time zones into consideration, so you can be sure there won't be any mix-ups or confusion.

**Test it out for your next meeting at [doodle.com](http://doodle.com)**

**Youcanbook.me** (<http://youcanbook.me/>) moves the scheduling away from you and over to those who want to meet with you. After setting up your profile (it only takes a minute or two!), scheduling meetings is as simple as sharing your youcanbook.me link with your colleagues. When they visit the link you provide, they can see when you're already booked, the times you're available, and preset options for your preferred length of meeting. After they choose a meeting time that works for you and them, the event appears on your personal calendar, and your availability within your profile is updated. Some organizations use tools like youcanbook.me to manage volunteer sign-ups or other community calendars.

**Set up your profile and get scheduling at [youcanbook.me](http://youcanbook.me)**

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**Calendly** (<http://calendly.com/>) is another option for allowing others to book their own appointments with you. It's designed for individuals and organizations that want to manage a high volume of outside calls or meetings. Much like youcanbook.me, calendly allows you to create a profile and sync your available times, creating a single link you can share with others or post on your Web site. When a meeting is reserved, the time is booked on your calendar directly and the public availability changed to match. Whether you have recurring meetings or one-time calls, calendly will minimize your time scheduling so you have as much time as possible to do your work.

**Give it a try today with a free trial at the premium level at [calendly.com](http://calendly.com)** 

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