

While putting writing time on your calendar is a great, and necessary, step, just having blocks of time may not be enough motivation to get you started or keep you going. Many writers need more, including something to help visualize daily, weekly, or monthly progress on a written project. Luckily, a wide range of tools are available for planning and organizing projects and for setting goals and tracking accomplishments along the way. Most trackers available online or as apps have free and paid versions, so consider what you need and what features you can live without. Here is a list of some, but certainly not all, project trackers available.

TrackBear: <https://trackbear.app/>

Web-browser based “app” that lets you track by word count, chapter, pages, and/or time. You can create a leaderboard to share progress with friends, classmates, colleagues, etc. All features are free.

Google Sheets: there are sheets templates you can use for tracking projects—some free, some paid. Here is an example of one called The Writing Log3:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1EHIJwNw11FG7EdAJ6W9mNZd2gNppKwpUVvDB4p3Sl8/edit?usp=sharing>

(you will likely need to use an email address other than @unomaha.edu)

ONLINE WRITING LOG: <https://onlinewritinglog.com/>

This is the online—polished version of the Google example. Free for basic features but limited to one project. Paid tiers, of course, offer more features.

Pacemaker: <https://www.pacemaker.press/>

Helps plan, organize, and track progress on writing projects. Has calendar features and checklist creation as well as group challenges/tracking on premium tier.

StoryOrigin: <https://storyoriginapp.com/pricing>

Free for a basic plan that tracks word counts and basic goals.

Writing Progress Tracker: <https://fiveminutefriday.com/writing-progress-tracker/>

If you are not a digital tracking person, you may like this one, as you download a file and print tools that help monitor progress via tangible charts, worksheets, etc.

Tips:

1. Trackers take some time to learn—how to add a project, set a goal, record progress, etc. If you find the initial learning curve too steep or cannot figure out how to get started, STOP. Choose a different tracker.
2. Share your progress with someone in your life—partner, spouse, colleague, children, etc.—so they can acknowledge your work. Screenshot or print daily/weekly/monthly from whatever tracker you use and email or display your progress. As cheesy as it sounds, posting progress on the fridge can be extremely motivating.