

Assignment Tracker – Setup & Guide

What This Spreadsheet Does

The **Assignment Tracker** is a Google Sheets–based productivity tool created specifically for students who want a simple but powerful way to stay on top of their coursework. College and high school students often juggle multiple classes, each with different types of assignments, deadlines, and priorities. It’s easy to lose track of what’s due and when, especially when assignments are spread across different apps, syllabi, or sticky notes. This tracker solves that problem by bringing everything into **one organized workspace** that is both easy to use and fully automated.

At its core, the tracker has two main sections:

- **The Active Assignments Table (A:J)**
This is where you enter all your upcoming assignments. Each row contains key information such as the assignment name, course, due date, priority level, estimated time to complete, and any notes you want to attach. There’s also a checkbox in column A that lets you quickly mark an assignment as “done.” The table automatically sorts itself by due date, ensuring that the next upcoming deadline is always visible at the top of the list.
- **The Done Archive (L:U)**
Once you complete an assignment, you simply tick the checkbox in column A. The script automatically moves that row from the active table into the archive. The archive serves as a historical record of everything you’ve finished, sorted by due date, so you can look back at your progress throughout the semester. This is especially useful for end-of-term reviews, study reflections, or when you need to prove what you’ve completed for group projects or participation grades.

Beyond just storing assignments, the tracker includes several powerful **automation features** that make it function like a lightweight task management app:

-  **Daily Email Reminders**
Each morning, the script checks your active assignments. If something is due in the next 3, 2, or 1 days, you’ll receive a personalized email reminder directly in your inbox. These reminders include details such as assignment name, course, due date, priority, type, estimated time, and any notes you entered. This way, you never miss a deadline because you’ll have multiple warnings before it arrives.
-  **Automatic Sorting**
Both the active list and the archive sort themselves by due date every time you make an edit. This keeps the most urgent work front and center while still preserving a clean, chronological history of what you’ve completed.
-  **Dropdown Menus for Courses and Types**
The spreadsheet comes with a secondary sheet (Sheet2) where you can customize your own list of courses and assignment types. By linking these lists to dropdown menus in the main table, you avoid repetitive typing and keep your entries consistent. For example, instead of typing “Biology”

ten different ways, you just pick it from the dropdown list. This makes filtering and sorting much easier.

- **Checkbox Workflow**

The checkbox system is not only intuitive but also visually satisfying. When you check off a task, the row is automatically grayed out with a strike-through before being archived. This creates a sense of progress while also keeping your active list uncluttered.

Altogether, this tool combines the **flexibility of a spreadsheet** (easy to customize, simple to expand) with the **power of automation** (automatic reminders, sorting, and archiving). It doesn't require any special apps or subscriptions—only Google Sheets and Google Apps Script, which are free.

Whether you're a first-year college student managing general education classes, a graduate student juggling research deadlines, or even a working professional taking online courses, this tracker adapts to your needs. By centralizing assignments, automating reminders, and keeping a history of your work, it helps reduce stress and ensures you stay on top of your academic workload.

About the Script

The script is what powers the automation. It has several key sections, each doing something specific:

1. **CONFIG Section**

- This is where you define key settings, like:
 - **SHEET_NAME** → Name of the tab holding your assignments (default is "Assignment Spreadsheet").
 - If you rename your tab in Google Sheets, you must also change it here.
 - **RECIPIENT_EMAIL** → Where reminder emails are sent.
 - You can add multiple emails separated by commas.
 - **TIMEZONE** → Ensures reminders are accurate to your local time.
- Think of this section as the “control panel.” Most users only need to update their email and timezone here.

2. **onEdit Function**

- Runs every time you make a change in the sheet.
- When you tick a checkbox in column A (marking an assignment “done”):
 - The row is **pasted** into the archive section (L:U).
 - The row is **removed from the active list**.
 - Both tables (active and archive) are sorted by due date.

3. **Sorting Functions (sortActive_ and sortArchive_)**

- Keep the lists clean and chronological.
- Active assignments (A:J) always sort by soonest due date first.
- Archive (L:U) also stays sorted so your history is easy to review.

4. **Archiving Logic (nextArchiveRow_)**

- Ensures that each new completed assignment is pasted into the **next available row** of the archive, without overwriting older entries.
- It even remembers the last archive row so that the process is fast and reliable.

5. **Daily Reminder Job (checkDueSoon)**

- Scans your active assignments once per day.
- Looks for any due dates that are **3, 2, or 1 day away**.
- Sends you an email with the assignment name, course, due date, priority, type, estimated time, and notes.
- You schedule this to run automatically at a time of your choice (e.g., 7–8 AM).

6. **Helpers**

- These are smaller utility functions that handle things like:
 - Formatting dates.
 - Making sure data is safe to send by email.
 - Resetting the archive pointer if needed.

Setup Instructions

Step 1 — Open the Script Editor

1. In your **Assignment Spreadsheet**, click:
Extensions → **Apps Script**.
 2. A new tab will open with the script editor.
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Step 2 — Add the Code

1. Delete anything already in the editor.
2. Paste the full script provided in this guide.
3. Scroll to the **CONFIG** section at the very top.
4. Update the following:
 - `RECIPIENT_EMAIL: "your@email.com"` → replace with your own.
 - To send to multiple people, separate with commas (e.g., `"me@school.edu, partner@email.com"`).
 - `TIMEZONE: "America/Detroit"` → change to your local timezone if needed.
 - `SHEET_NAME: "Assignment Spreadsheet"` → leave as-is **unless** you rename your sheet tab.

Save the script (**File** → **Save**).

Step 3 — Authorize and Test the Script

1. In the script editor, open the function dropdown (top middle).
 2. Select **checkDueSoon**.
 3. Click the  Run button.
 4. Google will prompt you to authorize the script. Approve with your account.
 5. If successful, you'll receive a test email reminder for assignments due within 1–3 days.
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Step 4 — Test the Archive System

1. In the main table (A:J), create a sample assignment in row 9.
2. Tick the checkbox in column A.
 - The row should gray out and strike-through.
 - The row disappears from the main table.

- The assignment reappears in the archive (L:U).
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Step 5 — Automate Reminder Emails

1. In Apps Script editor, click the **Triggers** icon (🕒 clock).
2. Add a new trigger:
 - Function: `checkDueSoon`
 - Event: **Time-driven**
 - Type: **Day timer**
 - Time: Choose the hour range you want (e.g., 7–8 AM).
3. Save.

From now on, the script will automatically email you every morning about upcoming assignments.

Step 6 — Customize Courses & Assignment Types

1. Go to **Sheet2** in your spreadsheet.
 - Column A = your list of courses (e.g., ENG 201, BIO 110).
 - Column B = your list of assignment types (e.g., Essay, Lab Report, Quiz, Project).
2. To connect them as dropdowns:
 - Highlight the **Course column (C)** in your main sheet.
 - Click **Data** → **Data validation**.
 - Choose “List from range” → select **Sheet2!A:A**.
 - Do the same for **Type column (H)** using **Sheet2!B:B**.

Now you'll have dropdown menus that make adding assignments much faster.

Step 7 — Resetting (Optional)

If your archive pointer ever gets stuck or the archive misbehaves:

1. In Apps Script, select the function **resetArchivePointer**.
 2. Run it once.
 3. This resets the archive system back to start at row 9.
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Why This Tool Is Useful

- No more **missed deadlines** — you'll get 3 warning emails before every due date.
- Keeps your assignments organized in one place with **automatic sorting**.
- The **Done Archive** doubles as a record of your progress (great for end-of-semester reviews).
- Dropdowns save typing and ensure consistency (e.g., always writing "Essay" the same way).
- Fully customizable — you can adjust courses, assignment types, reminder days, and email addresses.