

# Bullet Journaling

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## Introduction

Bullet journaling can be a great way to organize your life, while still be a general journal/diary and notebook. To its bare bones, it's simply a to-do list. But it's a flexible system that allows it to be so much more. It's a way to get a bird's eye view of each month, and weed out things that aren't worth your time. As the creator of bullet journaling put it, instead of making you busy, bullet journaling helps you become productive. However, I said it *can* be a great way to organize your life, but it's not for everyone. It doesn't hurt to set one up and try it out for a while. Bullet journaling was made to be adaptable and personal, but it isn't perfect.

The bullet journal that is created in this document is the most basic of the bullet journaling system, designed directly by the creator of bullet journaling. It's a bit dry, but this is simply the most utilitarian part of it and arguably the most useful. With a quick search online, though, you'll learn that people have taken this basic system and made it into their own to fit their lives and creative tastes. As a last note, any journal can be used for this system. A smaller, more portable journal is recommended, though, to not waste paper.

### *Intended audience:*

- Anyone who needs an efficient, but thorough, organizational task system
- People who want room for creativity and self-expression while tracking to-do's.
- Those who want to be a little more analog
- Anyone who wants to better organize and track their lives

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## Body

The most basic bullet journal is made up of an index, the future log, the monthly log, and the daily log. A “collections” section can be added, which is basically a section for lists of things you want to track. The index is to log and reference the sections and their respective page numbers. The future log is to plan anything that you know will, or must, happen. The monthly log is to plan and track things that must (or might) be done in the current month. Lastly, the daily log is a place to write down everything that needs to get done each day; this is the to-do list that we all know and loathe.

### *Index (See Figure 1)*

1. Flip to a blank spread of paper.
2. Label these pages at the top "Index." These will be your index pages.

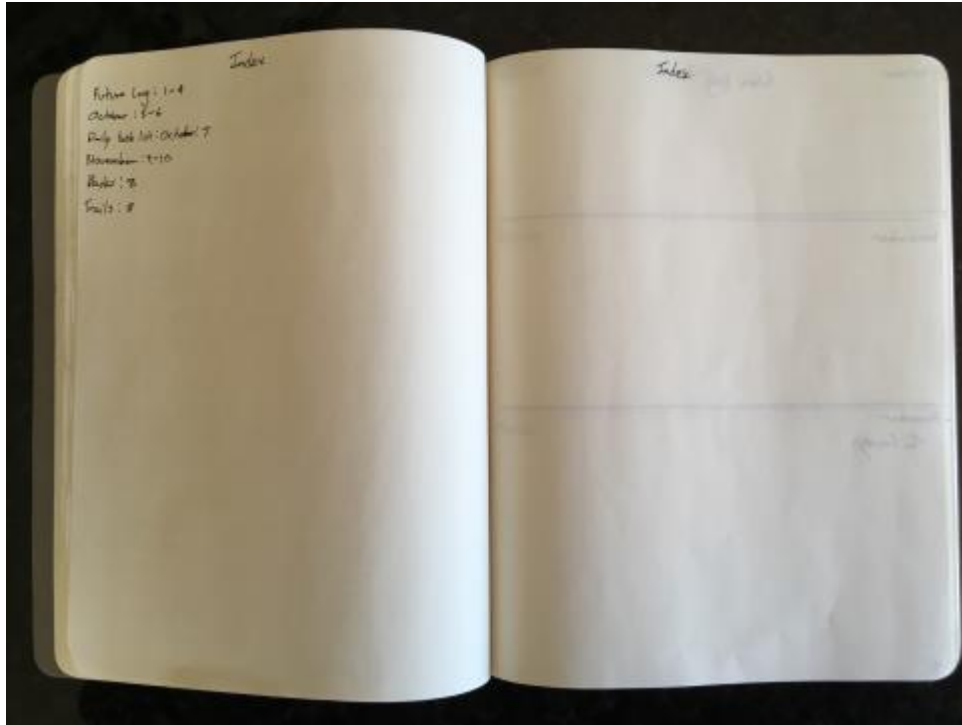


Figure 1. The Index

### *Future Log (See Figures 2 and 3)*

3. Flip to the next blank spread that has the other two pages blank as well. In total, there will be four blank pages in sequence.
4. Label these pages as "Future Log". These will serve as your log of your future tasks, events, and such.
5. Divide the pages into three sections for each page, and draw a line going all the way across them. Note: there will be twelve of these.
6. Label each section a month. I started on October because this month isn't through yet.
7. Number these pages (starting from 1, for example) and enter them in the Index pages (for example, "Future Log: 1-4").

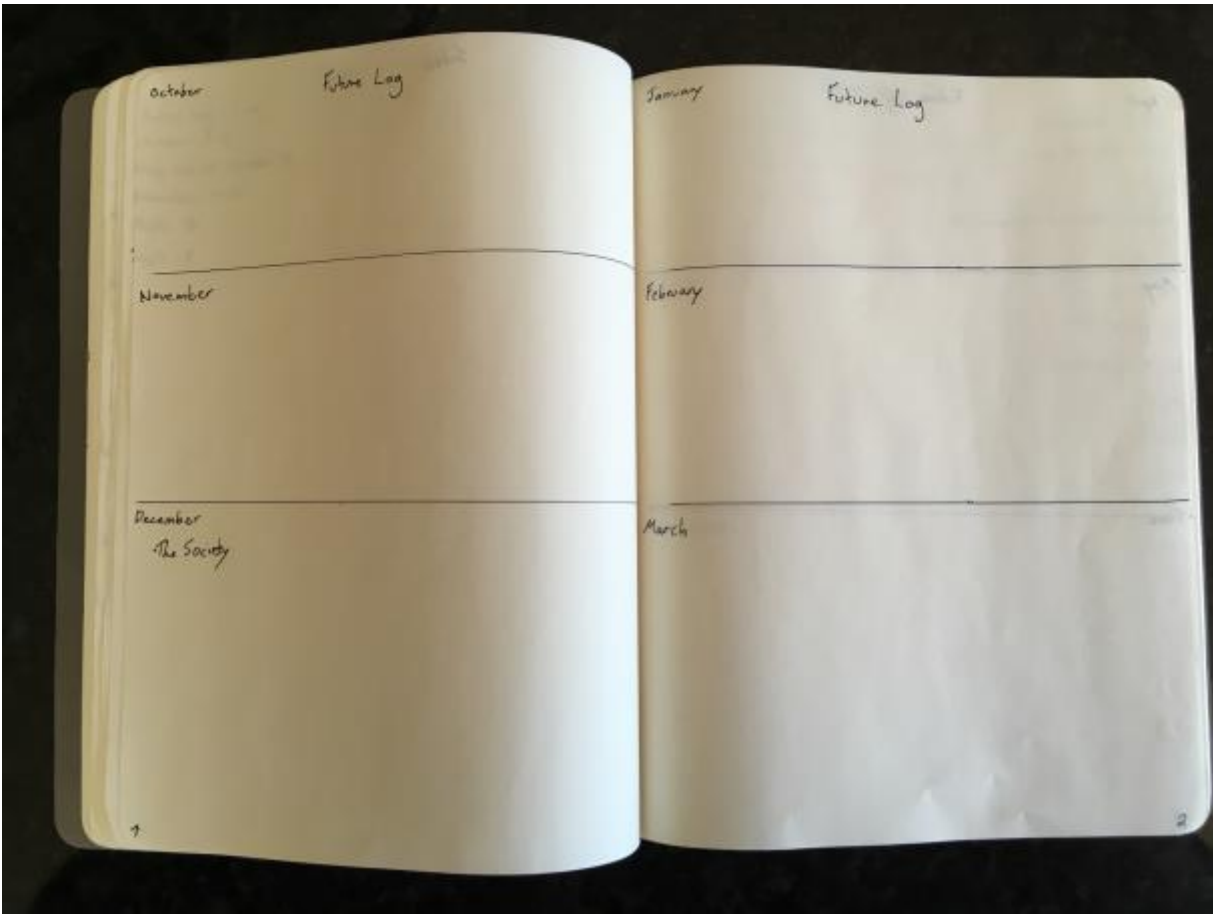


Figure 2. The Future Log Page 1

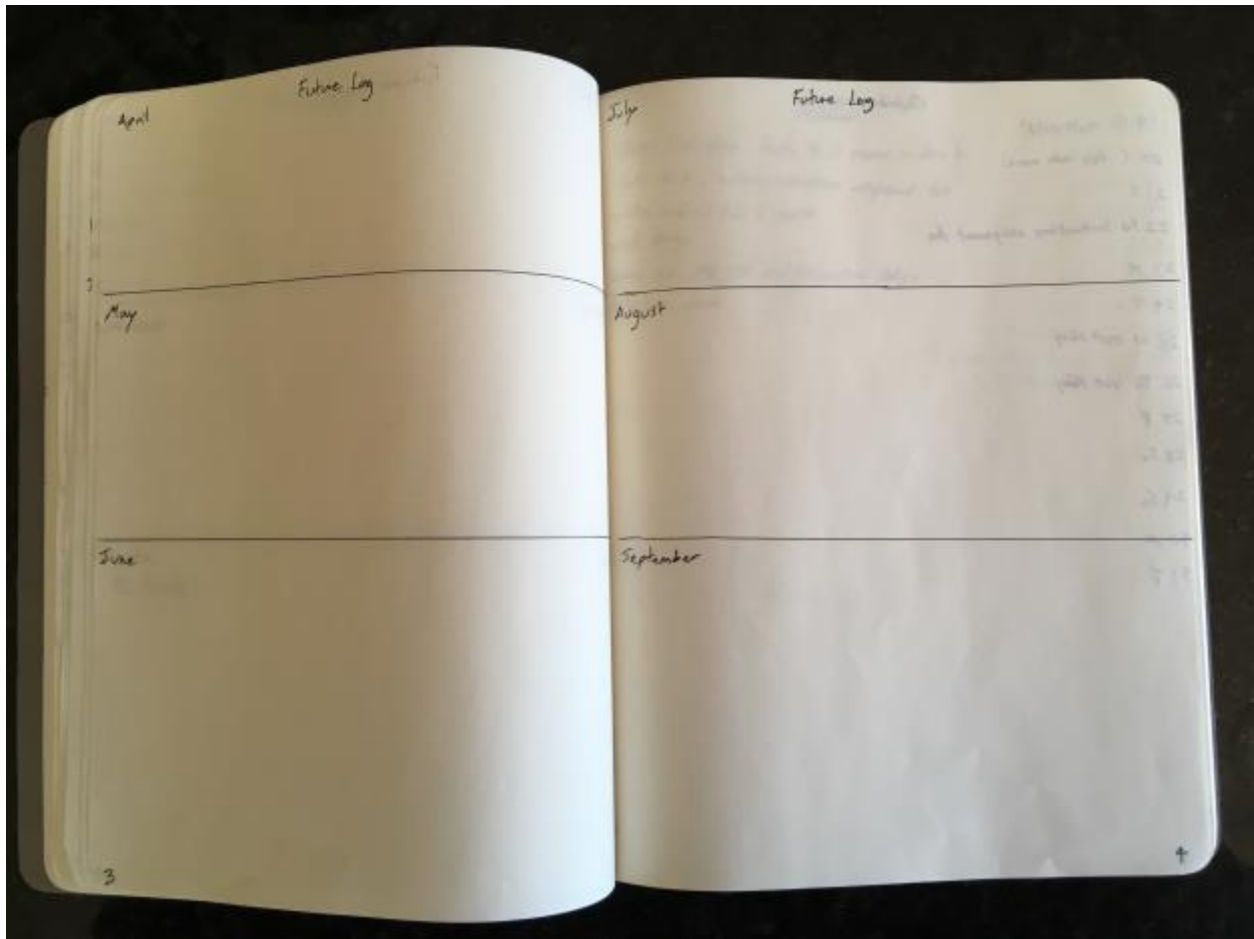


Figure 3. The Future Log Page 2

### *Monthly log (See Figure 4)*

8. Flip to the next blank spread.
9. Label the left page as the starting month (I labeled mine "October"). Write the dates of the month on the left side of the page, vertically.
10. Write the corresponding days next to the dates.
11. Label the right page the same month.
12. Write down the tasks that need to get done that month.
13. Number these pages and enter these pages in the Index (for example, "October: 5-6").

14. You can write tasks, assignments/projects, and events of which you know the dates next to their respective date in this Monthly Log.

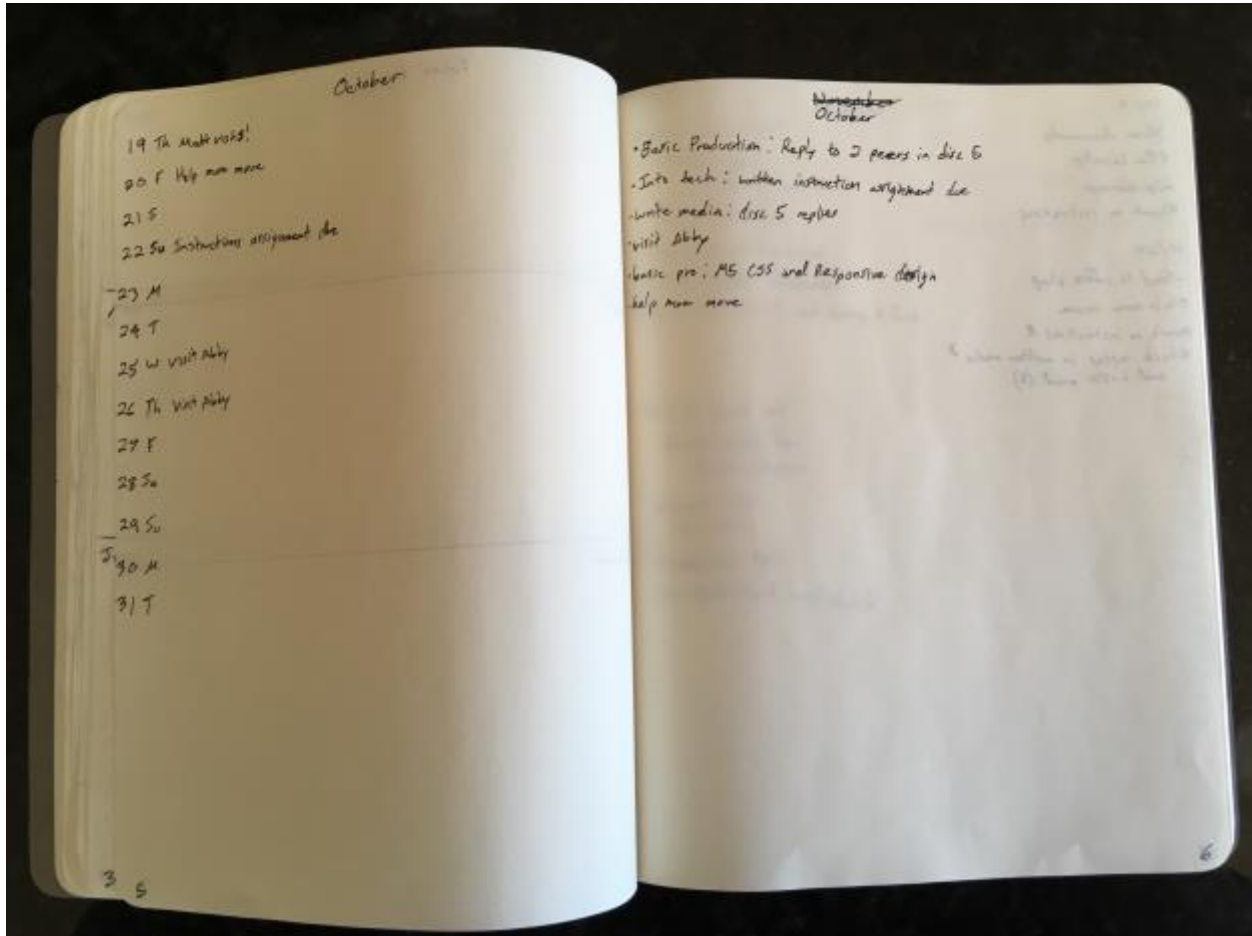


Figure 4. The Current Monthly Log

### Daily Log (See Figure 5 - the left page only)

13. Flip to the next page. This page will be your daily log.
14. Write down each day, and the tasks, events, and such for each day.
15. Tag each entry with signifiers. Circles can be for events, dots are good for single tasks, and dashes can mark notes to tasks.

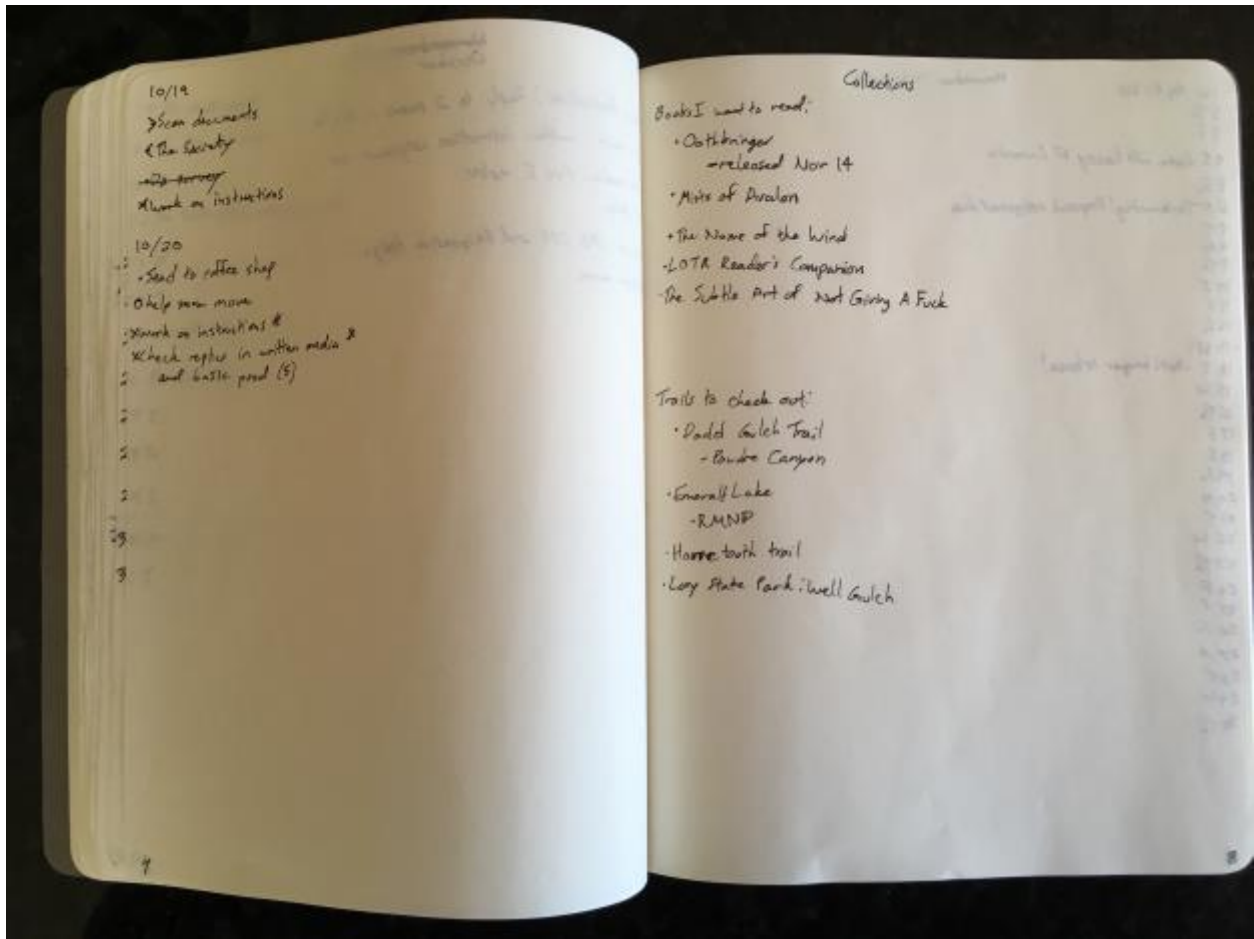


Figure 5. The Daily Log (left page)

### How it all works together

16. Again, number these pages and enter them in the Index (for example, "Daily October task list: 7").

17. At the end of each month, set up the next month's monthly log (mine is November). See Figure 6.

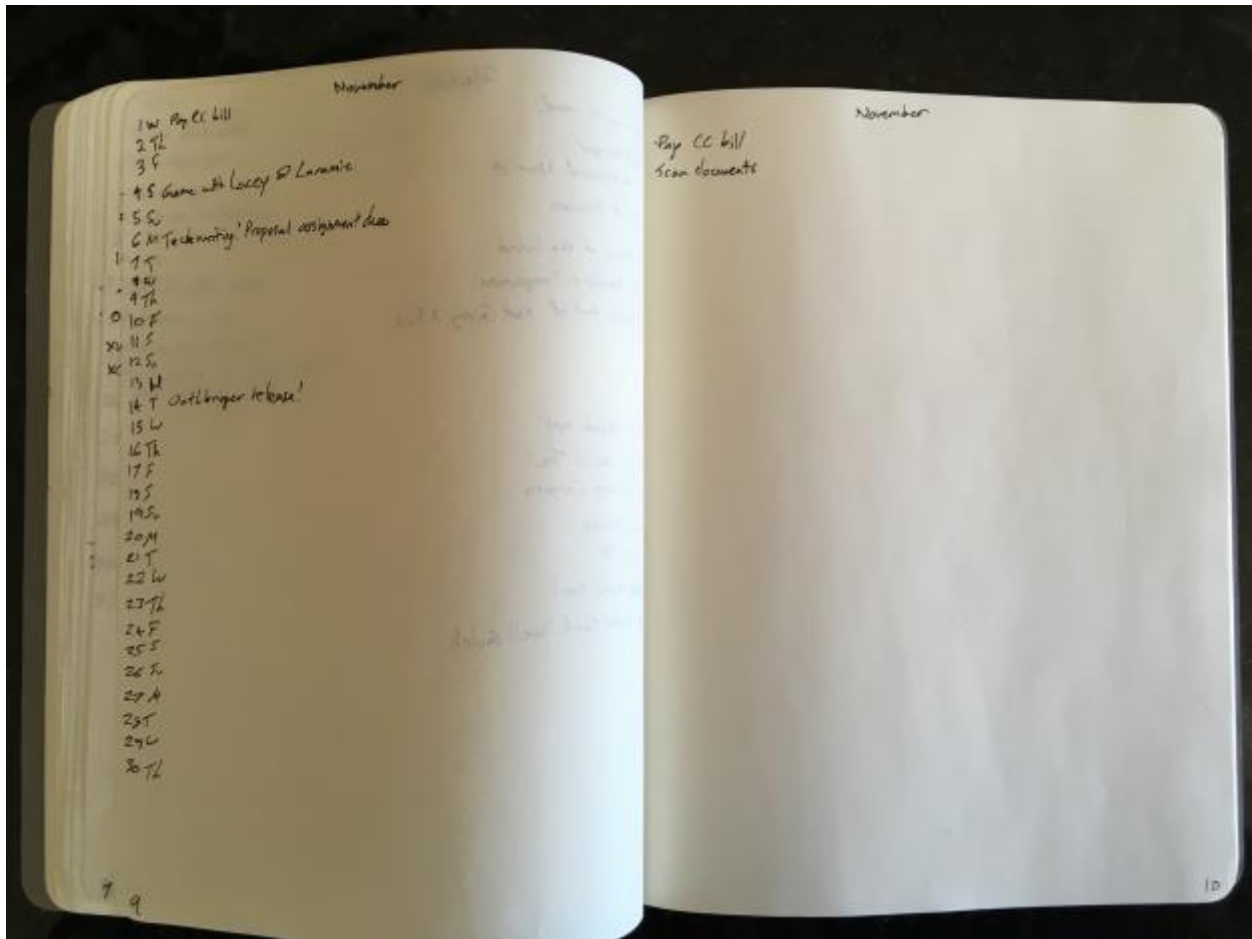


Figure 6. The Next Monthly Log

18. Look over your daily logs. "X" out the things that you've done.
19. For the remaining things to do, ask yourself if these are really worth needing to be done. If it's not, strike or black it out. (For example, I had a "do surveys" task. I decided that I really didn't need to do this, so I stroke it out).
20. If it is still worth your time, or needs to get done soon, turn that task's dot into a right arrow.
21. Copy that entry or task into the new month's Monthly Log.
22. If a task is due months (or longer) from now, turn that task's dot into a left arrow.



23. Copy that entry into the Future Log. (Note: these entries are things that are due long from now, or things that you want to eventually do someday).

### *Collections (See Figure 7 - the right page only)*

24. Flip to a blank page. This can be in between logs, or after your initial set up of your bullet journal.

25. Title the page "Collections".

26. Make sections of any related things you want to keep track of. These can be lists for books you want to read, movies you want to see, new restaurants you've tried and liked, or what I did - trails I want to hike.

27. Enter the *individual* lists in the Index (for example, "Books: 8" or "Trails: 8").

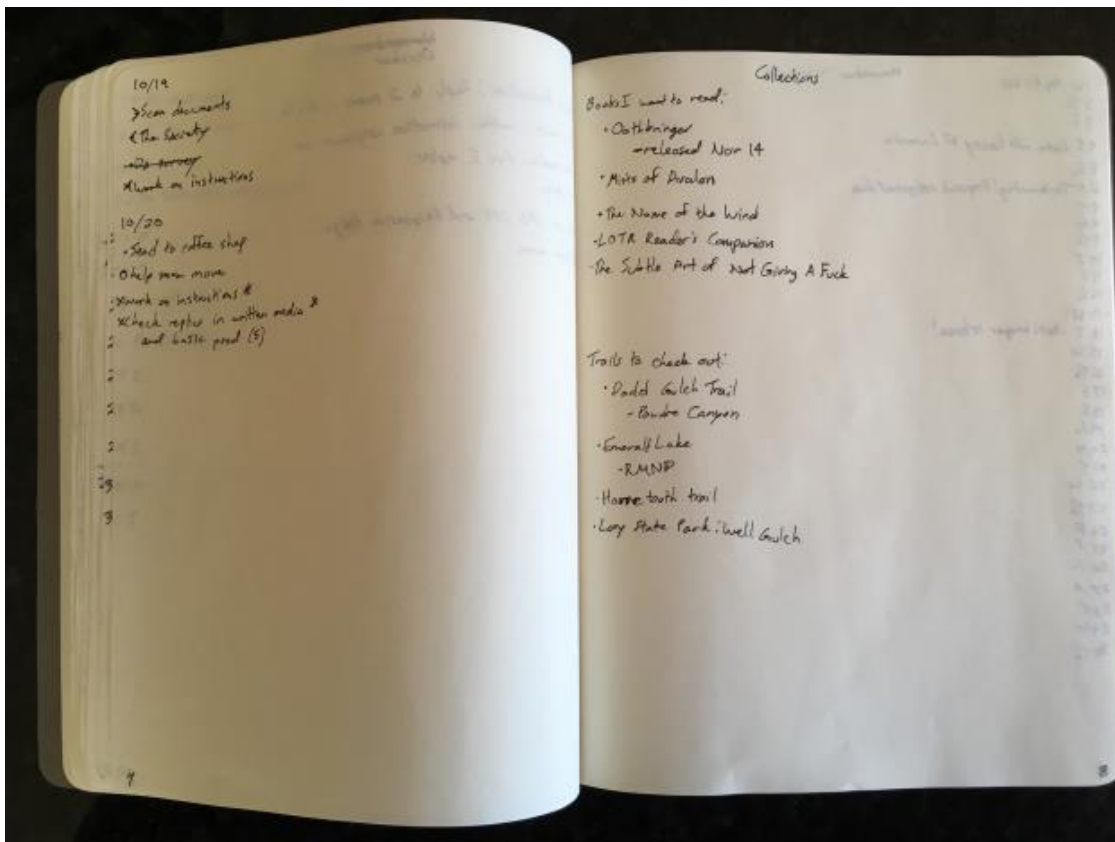


Figure 7. The Collections Page (right page)

## *Other Signifiers*

You don't have to be limited to dots, circles, and dashes. The point of signifiers is to give your entries more context, so these can be anything that work for you. You can mark tasks with stars (\*) to signal they're more important or higher priority. You can mark entries with, say, an explanation mark ("!") for insights you have, or ideas that pop into your head. You can use another icon to mark things that need further research or exploration, such as a topic for an assignment or project at work.

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## Conclusion

By now, you should have a few pages set up with the basic structure of the bullet journal: an index, a future log, a monthly log, a daily log, and a collections page. Your pages should be numbered for reference. Don't fret if you don't have a lot of tasks, events, and such filling up your pages just yet (I would actually envy you). For the bullet system to be useful, you don't have to be very busy. This system is just a way to get thoughts onto paper for easier reference.

Bullet journaling is a good way to track things that matter to you as well as keep you organized and less busy. The instructions in this guide are just the basics of what bullet journaling is, but they give you the necessary structure to get started and alter this system to match your life. It also doesn't have to be so utilitarian; this method of journaling allows for creativity and artistic expression. Bullet journaling can also be used in any part of life: as a student, a professional, a stay-at-home parent, or when pursuing hobbies.