



My Decision Matrix

Name the decision, list your options, weight what matters, score each option, add it up, check your gut, and choose a first step.

01 The decision and the deadline

Say what you are choosing in one sentence. 'Should I take the job offer?' is clearer than 'work stuff'. Then write when it has to be made, and who else it affects.

The decision I need to make:

It needs to be made by:

Who else it affects, and whether I need to ask them anything:

How much does this decision weigh on me right now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Hardly at all

A great deal

02 My options

List two or three. Always include 'keep things as they are', so you compare each change with what you already have. If you have only one option, take ten minutes to find a second, even if you doubt you would choose it.

Option

What it would mean in plain words

03 What matters: criteria and weights

A criterion is something you want from the choice, such as money, time with family, learning, or less stress. Choose three to six. Give each a weight from 1 (nice to have) to 5 (matters a lot). Not everything can be a 5. If everything is, you have not yet decided what matters most.

[illegible]

04 Score each option

Copy your criteria and weights into the first two columns. Write your three option names in the headers on paper, or in your head if you are typing. Then give each option a score from 1 (poor) to 5 (very good) against each criterion. Score the criterion, not the option as a whole. Go with your first thought.

[illegible]

05 Multiply and add up

For each cell, multiply the weight by the score. Then add up each option's column. Worked example: you give 'less stress' a weight of 5, and Option A scores 4 on it. That cell is $5 \times 4 = 20$. Do this for every criterion, then add up all of Option A's cells for its total. The highest total is the option your own scores favour. Close totals mean the choice is close, and that is useful to know.

Option	Total (weight x score, added up)	Does this match what I expected?

If the winner surprised me, which score or weight do I want to look at again?

06 Gut check

Numbers are only half the picture. Imagine the top-scoring option has been announced as final. Notice what your body does. You might feel relief, or a drop. A 'flip a coin' check works the same way: assign each option a side, flip, and notice whether you hope for a particular result while it spins. It is a way to notice your own feelings, not a method with proof behind it.

Picture the winning option as final. What do I feel, and where do I feel it?

If I flipped a coin, which result would I be hoping for?

If my gut and my scores disagree, what might my gut know that the criteria missed?

07 What would change my mind, and a small test

Write down what would make you pick differently. That could be a number, a conversation or a deadline. Then look for a small, reversible way to try the choice before you commit, such as a trial week, a chat with someone who has done it, or a visit.

What new information or event would change my mind? Who or what could tell me?

A small test I could run first, if there is one (a trial, a conversation, a visit):

What I will do about the test, and by when:

08 My decision and first step

Choose, in one sentence. Then write one step small enough to take in the next two days. A decision is more real once something has moved.

My decision, in one sentence:

My first step, and when I will take it:

A date when I will look back at how this is going:

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When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Did writing the options down change how the decision looked? What surprised you?
- Which criterion did you weight highest, and is that really what you care about, or what you think you should?
- Did the option 'keep things as they are' score better or worse than you expected?
- Is there someone whose view you want before you decide, and what exactly will you ask them?
- If you chose and it turned out badly, what would you do next? Does that make the choice feel less final?

Free worksheet from selfgrowth.org. Free self-growth worksheets for real life. Fill it in online and it saves as you go: selfgrowth.org/worksheets/decision-matrix-template



If things feel heavier than a worksheet can hold

These are self-reflection tools, not therapy. If you're struggling, especially if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out to someone now. In the US, call or text **988**. In the UK & Ireland, call **116 123** (Samaritans). Elsewhere, find a free helpline at findahelpline.com. If you're in immediate danger, call your local emergency number.