DAY 34 · Part 3 · What It Can Do

You've got a big job: where do you even start? — Making a plan

Five-Minute AI Lessons · Oct 10, 2026

Planning isn't knowing the right answer — it's breaking a big lump into small pieces.

In a nutshell

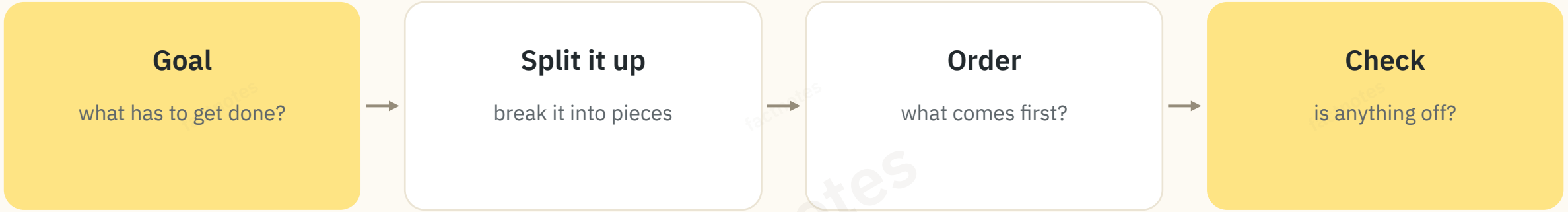
1. When you feel stuck, don't ask AI for the answer — **ask it to break the job down**. Planning isn't about knowing the right answer; it's about deciding what to do first.

2. There's a set shape for breaking things down: **goal → split → order → check**. Fill in those four boxes and you've got a plan.

3. AI research uses the same trick. When AI was made to **break a hard problem into small ones and solve them in turn**, it did much better than when it was asked all at once.

In one picture

The four boxes of a plan



The two end boxes get skipped the most: starting without writing down a goal, or running all the way to the end without checking.

Key idea: planning means breaking a big lump into small pieces and putting them in order

Experiment · Put it in order

Tap the four boxes in order

3-week project report

1. Write the goal in one line
2. Break it into tasks
3. Set the order and dates
4. Check in halfway

Split things up without setting a goal, and you end up working hard on the wron...

Sports day class shirts

1. Decide what shirt to make
2. List every job needed
3. Count back from the deadline
4. Review the mockup and fix

Count the order back from the deadline, not forward from the start, and nothing...

When AI makes the plan

1. Give the goal and limits
2. Get a split-up list
3. Ask it to reorder
4. Ask what's missing

Don't use AI's plan as is — ask one more time, "What's missing?" That one quest...

Tap the mixed-up pieces in plan order. Swap even one box, and you'll see right away why the plan falls apart.

Try it yourself in the web lesson · next-token.net/en/learn/day-34/

Quick check

Just three questions

Q1

What should you decide first when you make a plan?

① The to-do list
② The goal you have to reach
③ The deadline
④ Which friend to work with

Q2

Which is a better request when you have AI make a plan?

① Just handle all of it
② Just tell me the answer
③ Give goal and limits, ask it to break it down
④ Wait without saying anything

Q3

What does the "check" box do in a plan?

① Adds more work
② Erases the goal
③ Pushes back the deadline
④ Catches problems early

Know the why, too

Q1

② Without a goal, you can't even tell what to split up. The list and the dates come after the goal is set.

Q2

③ Without limits, AI makes up any plan that sounds good. Tell it how much time you have, how much work it is, and what you can do, and you get a plan you can actually use.

Q3

④ Checking doesn't add work — it buys you time to undo mistakes. Find out on the last day and there's no time left to fix things.

Planning isn't knowing the right answer — it's breaking a big lump into small pieces.



Tomorrow: Handing over a whole task — AI can even make the plan, but can you hand it the doing too?