CHAPTER TEN

Calendars: planning

Calendar introduction

Calendar management is one of the most powerful smartphone tools for independent living. Knowing what to do and when to do it takes a lot of memory stress away, and managing time is a valuable life skill. The Calendar is where healthy and helpful habits are born and grow.

It can be especially hard for spectrum Explorers to initiate new work, working on a Calendar together is a great way to build skills. Special Hockey games, doctor's appointments, birthdays, work schedules, study schedules, screen break times, family outings, dates, holidays — it all starts with the Calendar.

The great advantage of the Apple or Google smartphone Calendar is that a Guide can edit an Explorer's Calendar using Chrome or another web browser, including setting notifications for Calendar events. The Guide doesn't need to touch the Explorer's smartphone. This is possible because on both Apple and Google smartphones the Calendar on the phone is "synchronized" with a "cloud" computer owned by Apple or Google. The cloud Calendar can be managed by a web browser, and those changes quickly show up on an Explorer's phone. There's not much setup needed, the Chrome viewable cloud Calendar is created when a smartphone is first used.

With a Guide managed Calendar an Explorer is reminded of events and learn the habit of looking one day ahead. Many Explorers hate surprises, a Calendar can be a big stress reducer. If your Explorer works with an aide, they can receive invitations to important events, or even see a shared Calendar (the latter is easier with Google Calendars). Explorers may rarely create Calendar events, but most who are able to read at 2nd grade level will come to rely on an actively managed smartphone Calendar.

The "cloud" Calendars can be shared, so a Guide can view an Explorer's Calendar overlayed on their own, as in the example from one family's Google Calendars below. This is very useful for scheduling events.

Calendaring: support independence and personal growth

The smartphone Calendar, including Event notifications, is a powerful tool for independence and personal growth. You and your Explorer can use the Calendar to practice planning and thinking about the future, to create new healthy habits and routines, to manage unwanted behaviors, and to coordinate resources.

The first step towards these benefits is to reward use of the Calendar. To begin with there needs to be something on the Calendar. A Guide needs to setup work hours, outings and events, and routines.

Once there's a something to look at the "Guide's Toolbox" chapter describes a general approach to learning smartphone skills. In addition to those techniques a Guide can respond to most "when" questions by asking an Explorer to access and review their Calendar. Some Explorers may appreciate a reward for the first few weeks of routine daily review of the next day's Calendar. The reward will vary by Explorer and range from token-based rewards to verbal support and encouragement.

While many Explorers find a planned routine comforting, others may be stressed by the external structure. A Guide may need a mixture of patience, reward, support, persistence, strategic retreat, reframing, and the like.

Once a base Calendar is in place it can be used to support growth and independence.   Event notifications are particularly useful. A notification is

something that grabs a user's attention, typically it combines a "pop up" or alert message and a brief tone or sound. Any Event can have at least one notification, which may be set to minutes, hours, or days ahead depending on the smartphone Calendar app. With notifications set a daily exercise walk can have its own reminder. Similar Calendar Events and reminders can be created for medication administration, doctor appointments, weekly calendar reviews, birthdays, and bill or rent payments. Some Explorers may begin adding their own Events to their Calendar, a weekly calendar review is a good way to promote that skill.

With experience both Explorer and Guide will identify new ways to leverage a Calendar. For example, an Explorer may be working on an undesired habit or behavior. A daily Event with a notification can then ask the Explorer to send a text message or email with a progress report; the Calendar can then support "one day at a time" behavior changes.

Calendars: Apple and Google are not the same

Apple and Google both do the most important calendar functions well. With either solution an Explorer can view a Calendar on their phone and get notifications of events. Both allow a Guide to use a web browser, like Chrome, to add Events (such as appointments) with reminders to an Explorers Calendar. Both Google and Apple Calendars will automatically create Birthday Events based on birthday's entered in Contacts.

Beyond the basics though, Google and Apple part ways. Google has a more powerful but more complex Calendar solution than Apple. Apple's advantage is simplicity; that can be important for Guide and Explorer alike.

Google's Calendar does a good job with sharing Calendars, viewing public Calendars, sending and receiving invitations with both Google and Microsoft Calendars, and overlaying multiple color-coded Calendars to help with complex schedules. Many schools use Google Calendars, even schools that have iPads. Google Calendars work well with business Calendars like Microsoft Outlook.

Apple's Calendar is also known as the "iCloud Calendar". It does some of the same things as Google Calendar, but in a more limited way. Apple's iCloud Calendar works best with other iCloud Calendars, it doesn't "play well" with Google or Microsoft Calendars.

Android Explorers will almost always use Google's Calendar. It works well and there really isn't a good alternative on Android

iPhone Explorers have a choice. They can go the Apple Way and use Apple's iCloud Calendar, or they can use Google's Calendar on the iPhone.

In the rest of this chapter I'll discuss each option starting with The Apple Way, then The Google Way and lastly Google Calendars on the iPhone. If your Explorer uses an Android phone you can skip to Calendaring: The Google Way.

Calendaring: the Apple Way

Apple built its iPhone Calendar.app to work with several kinds of online calendar services, but most iPhone using Guides and Explorers should stay with Apple's iCloud for Calendaring, Contacts and Email. This makes setup simple and you can get support and training from your local Apple Store (www.apple.com/retail/personalsetup). You can use Apple's user guide and related books. (See: Learning the basics: User guides for iPhone and Android.)

When an iPhone is configured for iCloud use, including iCloud Calendaring, the Apple Settings should look something like the images below. The actual appearance is likely to change over time as Apple introduces new features, this image is current as of May 2016.

●●○○○ AT&T Wi-Fi 📶   **10:44 AM**   ⬈ ✳ 78% ▮▮

‹ Settings   **iCloud**

iCloud Drive   On ›

Photos   On ›

Mail   ⬤▬

Contacts   ⬤▬

Calendars   ⬤▬

Reminders   ⬤▬

Safari   ⬤▬

Notes   ⬤▬

News   ⬤▬

Wallet   ⬤▬

Backup   On ›

Keychain   On ›

Find My iPhone   On ›

●●○○○ AT&T Wi-Fi 📶   10:46 AM   ➹ ✳ 77% 🔋

‹ Settings Mail, Contacts, Calendars

Import SIM Contacts

CALENDARS

Time Zone Override   Off ›

Alternate Calendars   Off ›

Week Numbers   ◯

Show Invitee Declines   🟢

Sync   Events 2 Weeks Back ›

Default Alert Times   ›

Start Week On   ›

Default Calendar   John - Personal ›

Events Found in Mail   ◯

Turning this off will delete any unconfirmed event suggestions and prevent suggestions from appearing in the Calendar app.

    I recommend turning off the "Events Found in Mail" feature. It tries to use email information to automatically create appointments but it can create misleading appointments.

    Once an Explorer's iCloud Calendar is setup a Guide can use a web browser like Google Chrome or Apple's Safari to create Events and Reminders for the Explorer. You now have most of the power of smartphone calendaring with little complexity and few headaches!

There are a two other Calendaring features a Guide may want to take advantage of: sending invitations and seeing multiple calendars display together. These are "nice to have" features so they are best introduced after basic calendaring is working well. These features only work reliably if everyone involved is using Apple's iCloud calendars and iCloud email.

Invitations are a real time saver. If two people are attending the same event there's no need to create the same Event on two calendars. Instead one person creates an Event and "invites" the other to participate. If the invitation is accepted the Event appears on the guest's calendar. If the host changes the Event time the guest's Event will be updated too (might take a few minutes).

Invitations can be confusing though. An Explorer may not know what to do with an invitation email, especially since email links can be fake and dangerous to click on. The best way to handle a meeting shared between Guide and Explorer is for the Guide to borrow the Explorer's identity and, using Chrome, create the Event with the Explorer as host. Then the Guide can add an invitation that goes from the Explorer to the Guide's own email where it is accepted. It sounds complicated, but it's actually pretty simple to do.

Calendar sharing is another nice to have feature. It lets a user see multiple calendars at the same time. Apple makes this automatic for family members if you set up "Family Sharing". This image shows how shared calendars look when viewed in a Guide's web browser:

Calendar sharing is a useful feature for a Guide who may have to coordinate multiple calendars. When a Calendar is shared the recipient can edit it too. A Guide will often find it useful to log-in as the Explorer, then share the primary calendar with the Guide's account. That way that the Explorer's Calendar can be

updated without the Guide needing to switch to the Explorer's account.

Calendar sharing can be confusing though. Some Explorer's will want to see other people's Calendars, others don't want the distractions. Many Guides will want to learn Calendar Sharing and use the "overlay" view to coordinate schedules, but it's a feature that is best introduced after an Explorer is comfortable with basic calendaring.

There are some calendar "shares" (overlay calendars) that may be setup automatically. I mentioned that if a Guide setups up Apple's "Family Sharing" service they'll see a Family Calendar. The User Guide explains how to hide this. Birthday information entered in Contacts will show up in the Calendar as Events. These are easy to hide but can be convenient.

Two other calendar shares are a bit more mysterious and it can only be seen on the iPhone's built-in Calendar.app. They can't be seen by a Guide using a web browser.

One is US Holidays. Everyone sees this, it can be shown or hidden by tapping the "Calendars" button within Apple's Calendar.app (see User Guide).

The other calendar share is available if a Guide configures Facebook on the Explorer's iPhone (see Facebook). Calendar.app will automatically include a new "Facebook Calendar". Any Events the Explorer selects will appear on their iPhone. This can be convenient, but the Guide won't see these Facebook Events; they don't appear in the the iCloud web calendar a Guide uses. A Guide may want to turn this off — at least at first. Like US Holidays it can be shown or hidden by tapping the "Calendars" button within Apple's Calendar.app (see User Guide).

Calendaring: The Google Way

When you first configure your Explorer's Android phone you will enter their Google account credentials. (See: Setting up an Explorer's Smartphone.) Google includes a powerful Calendar with every user's Google account. The same Calendar, or set of Calendars, will show up on the Explorer's Android phone or when a Guide uses Google Calendar's web view as the Explorer.

The Explorer needs an app on their Android phone to work with their Google Calendar;. not every Android phone will have the same Calendar app though. As described in Setting up an Explorer's Smartphone you may need to install "Google Calendar" from the Google Play store (play.google.com). Android user guides and books (see: Learning the basics: User guides for iPhone and Android) briefly discuss Google Calendar but most of what you need can be found in the "Help and Feedback" part of Calendar.app setting or by using Google search.

Google's Calendar.app for Android is very similar to their iPhone app. It shows shared calendars in different colors, in the example below the green calendar belongs to the family, the red calendar is my son's primary calendar.
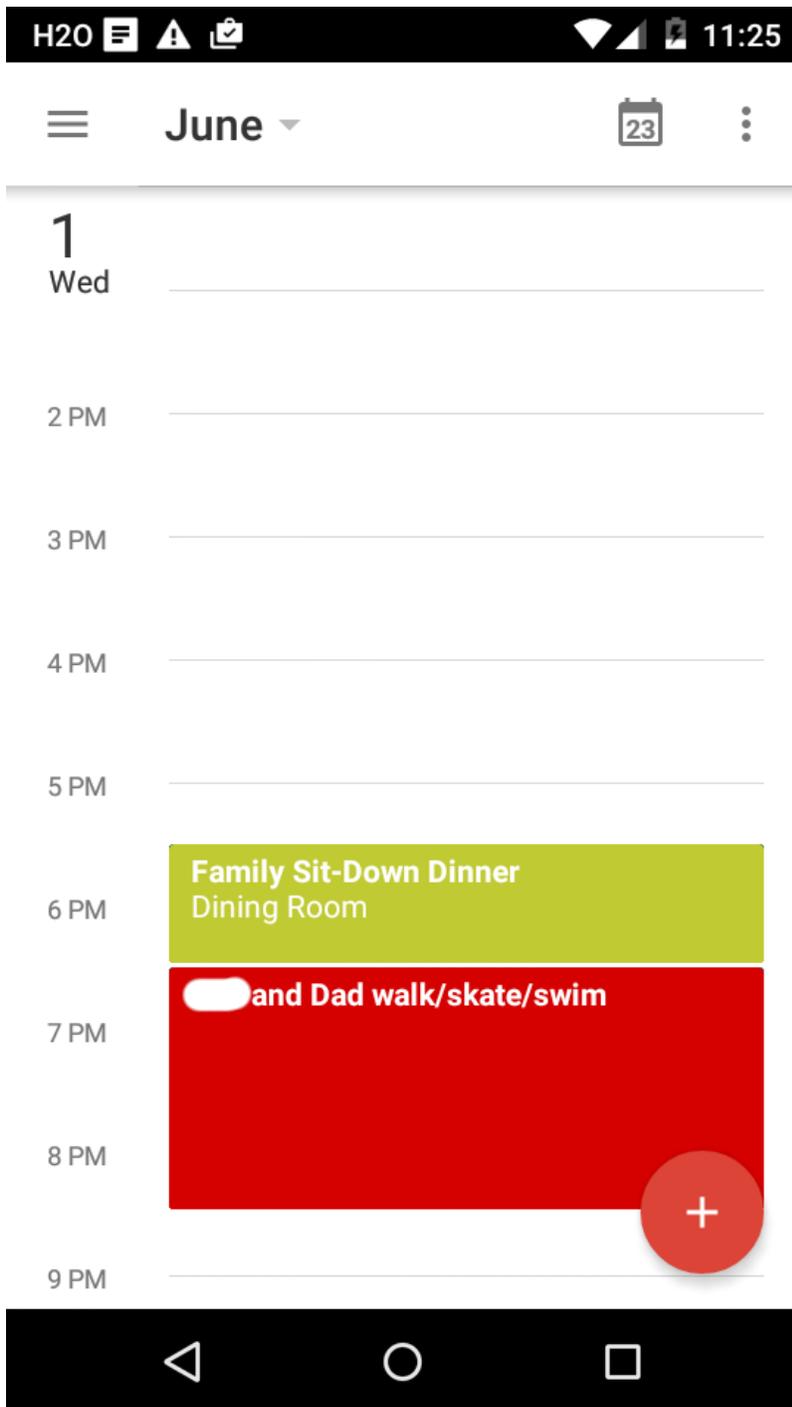
Calendar.app doesn't have many settings to worry about, it's quite simple to setup. Once an Explorer's Google Calendar.app is setup a Guide can use Google's Chrome web browser to log in as the Explorer and create Events and Reminders for the Explorer.

You now have most of the power of smartphone calendaring with little complexity and few headaches. Many Explorers will want to use their Calendar for

a while before adding new features.

There are a two other Calendaring features a Guide may want to take advantage of: sending invitations and seeing multiple calendars display together. These are "nice to have" features so they are best introduced after basic calendaring is working well.

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Calendar sharing is another nice to have feature. It lets a user see multiple calendars at the same time. The calendar screenshot above shows an Explorer's primary calendar in red, and a shared calendar in green.

Calendar sharing is a useful feature for a Guide who may have to coordinate multiple calendars. When a Calendar is shared the recipient can edit it too. A Guide will often find it useful to log-in as the Explorer, then share the primary calendar with the Guide's account. That way that the Explorer's Calendar can be updated without the Guide needing to switch to the Explorer's account.

Calendar sharing can be confusing though. Some Explorer's will want to see other people's Calendars, others don't want the distractions. Many Guides will want to learn Calendar Sharing and use the "overlay" view to coordinate schedules, but it's a feature that is best introduced after an Explorer is comfortable with basic calendaring.

There are some calendar "shares" (overlay calendars) that may be setup automatically. Google may include Birthdays (from Contacts), Holidays, and Google "Reminders"[1] on an Explorer's Calendar. A Guide can change which Calendars an Explorer sees by tapping on the top left "sandwich icon" (outlined in green oval, below) then selecting calendars to display (below).
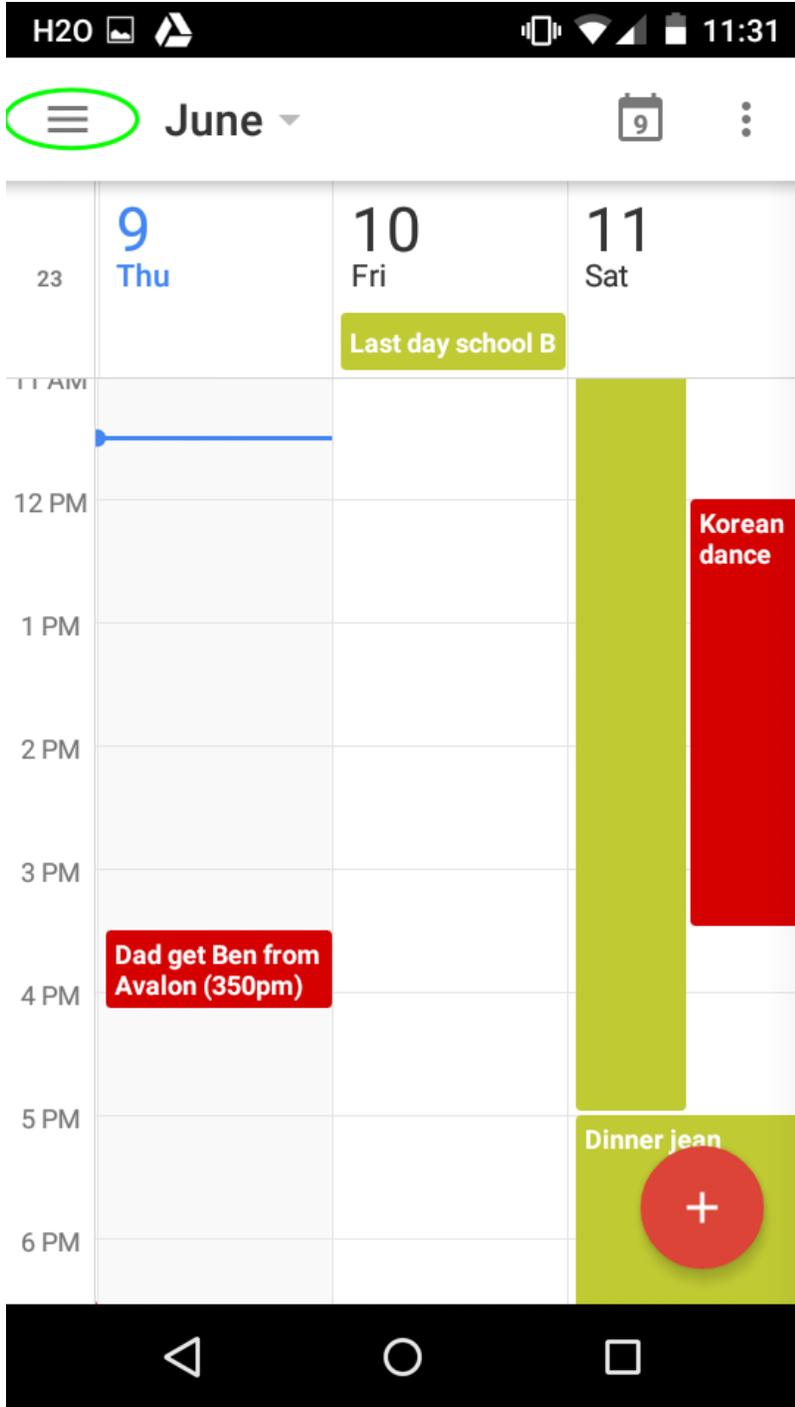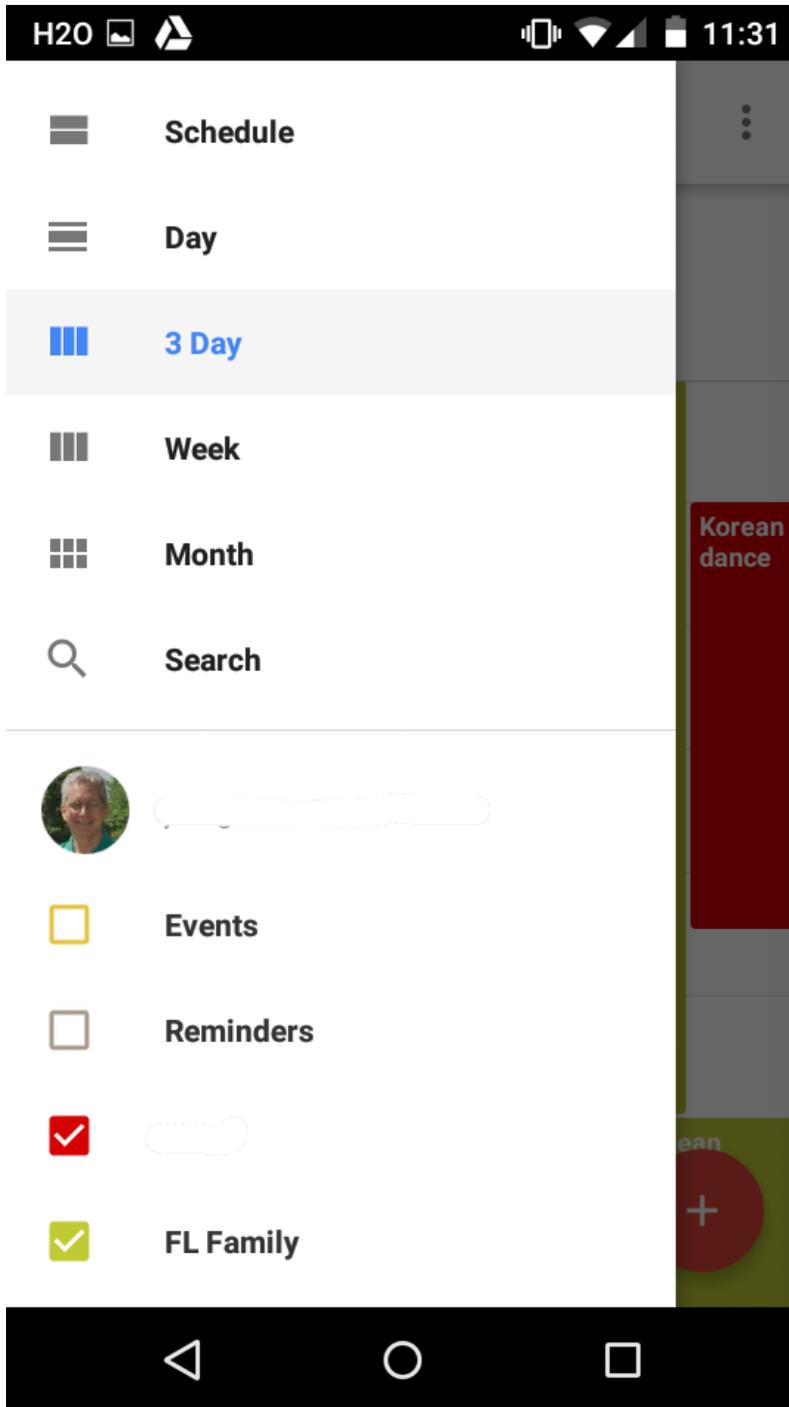
Calendaring: Google on the iPhone

If a Guide and Explorer are starting out on an iPhone I recommend using Apple's iCloud for email, contacts and calendaring. It's simple and you can get guidance

from the Apple Store or from Apple's well done User Guides or third party books.

Some Guides, however, will already have a lot of experience with Google Calendars. Explorers may also need to use Google Calendars at work or school. The good news is that an iPhone can be setup to use Google Calendars. The bad news is that it can be complicated.

Google describes how to do it in a web page called "Sync Calendar with a phone or tablet" (https://support.google.com/calendar/answer/151674). They recommend using their Google Calendar.app for the iPhone instead of Apple's built in Calendar.app. It's worth trying it with your Explorer to see how they like it. Google Calendar.app is almost identical on Android and iPhone, we discuss use of this app in Calendaring: The Google Way (above).

Another option is to use Apple's built-in Calendar.app. The Google "Sync Calendar …" link (above) explains the setup, but Apple's User Guide documentation is better. As long as you only want to add an Explorer's personal calendar, and you don't need to include other Google Calendars that may be shared with an Explorer, this option works well. For the Explorer this is little different than using Apple's iCloud Calendar. As with both Google and Apple Calendars it's simplest to have Event invitations go from the Explorer to the Guide and be created by the Guide.

If you want Apple's Calendar.app to show several overlayed Google Calendars though, you need to follow the links from "Sync Calendar with a phone or tablet" (https://support.google.com/calendar/answer/151674) and use an obscure Google web page to choose the available Calendars. tthis is for technically inclined Guides only.

There are also Apple App Store apps that work well with Google Calendar such as Readdle's *Calendars 5.app* and Flexbits' *Fantastical 2*. These will not be to the taste of every Explorer however, you'll need to try them. I personally prefer Calendars 5.app and it has worked well with my own Explorers.

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[1] I don't discuss Reminders in this book because I think for most Explorers Calendars and Notes covers much of the Reminders territory.