

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. I get a lot of questions about how I do it all and the first thing I always say is I do not do it, right? I have help. I cut things out. But I've talked about a lot of those mindsets or my methodology in the past. So today I thought it would be fun to dive into some of the very practical day to day ways that we save time in our homestead routine, whether it's the animals or the gardens or the chores. This is how we get it all done and have a few little tricks and tips that keep things running smooth along the way. I'm your host, Jill Winger. This is a podcast for those of you who are disenchanted with conformity. The ones who favor homegrown and handmade over cheap and mass produced, the ones who swim upstream.

Speaker 1 ([00:57](#)):

While this societal herd rides the river of least resistance. The ones who grow and shepherd nurture and produce, need and craft rather than only consume. The ones who are old fashioned on purpose and choose to truly live, not merely exist. If you're a trailblazer, a Maverick, a homesteader, a modern pioneer or a backyard farmer, you have found your tribe. So if you think about it, our modern lives aren't really set up for homesteading, especially when we compare, you know, 150 years ago and their daily routines to what we have now. The original homesteaders spent all day doing the things that we are trying to cram into a few hours after working a nine to five job all day or driving around town hauling the kids places or whatever our responsibilities are. We're trying to fit all of that food production and old fashioned living into a very, very modern Packed schedule.

Speaker 1 ([02:03](#)):

Most of us don't have all day to play in the kitchen or be in the garden or hang out in the barn. It's either the weekends or the evenings and that's it. So most of us have, you know, washing machines and dishwashers to eliminate some of that work, which our homesteading ancestors would not have had. So that levels the playing field a little bit, but it's still a lot that I know a lot of you are feeling that tension of okay, I still have to have a job to pay the bills. How do I have a garden and all the animals at the same time? Or even just if you're living in town, how do you have the garden and make the food? If you want to make the bread or the home homemade from scratch stuff, how do you do it all? Is it even possible?

Speaker 1 ([02:49](#)):

And I've talked in the past about my mindset of time management, which has been a big game changer, in how get things done and some of my different strategies and what I say no to because that is key. The saying no. But in this episode, I'm diving into some of my, just super practical, less abstract ways that we save time here on a daily basis on our homestead. Because like I've said before, time not money is my most valuable resource by far. So this is the down and dirty nitty gritty stuff. Not all of these tips will work for all of you, right? It depends on what animals you have, what setups you have. Some of this you might put on your vision board to work towards, but hopefully it will give you a little bit of inspiration as you are creating your own homestead, a vision and what you want it to look like in the future.

Speaker 1 ([03:54](#)):

Okay. Number one, I like to smother weeds. I don't pull them or at least actually I do pull them. I pull them as little as possible. Let me explain. I don't like weeding. I'm sure you don't like weeding either. I don't know a soul who loves weeding. And when you're limited on time spending hours and hours picking weeds that are little tiny in between the carrots or whatever and you barely make a dense, like that's a huge time eater, big time. So what I've done to reduce that, I won't say eliminate it because

there are still spots in our garden where I weed by hand, but weed fabric or weed barrier like mulch or something like that has greatly reduced the time I have to spend weeding in both like our yard and our beds and in the garden. A lot of these things are that you'll hear me mention in today's episode, they take a little bit more work to get going at the beginning and this is no exception, it takes a little more work to lay down the fabric to put down the mulch, but it's worth it in the long run.

Speaker 1 ([05:02](#)):

So some of the places I have mulched are, you know, we have raised beds, we have the walkways, we put down a weed fabric and then a bunch of wood mulch, bark chip things over the top of that, like pretty thick. That has helped a lot. Otherwise, like the, in the years prior to that being installed, the weeds in between the rows of the garden beds were ridiculous and I was not very good at pulling them out. So that has helped. There are still weeds and grass that pop up along the edges where they push, you know, the weed fabric away, which is fine cause it's still greatly reduced as compared to what it would be without it. I also like to, last year, especially, within my raised beds now, number one beds will help your weeding anyway cause it's more of a compact area, but there's still weeds in the beds.

Speaker 1 ([05:59](#)):

Even the best beds have weeds. So I started taking our grass clippings. We got a bagger for our lawn mower. And we don't spray our lawn with any sort of pesticide or herbicides. It's very clean and we would take all those grass clippings and I would use that as mulch in my vegetable beds. That helped a ton and it also put that organic matter back into the soil. Now, one application of mulch did not last the entire year or entire season, so I still had to go and reapply it. But that was a big game changer. You know, I'd let the, you know, put the tomatoes in and then I add the grass clippings around the tomatoes and um, definitely helped keep the weeds down. So still some maintenance there. But I think it saved me time for sure. As compared to weeding and weeding and weeding.

Speaker 1 ([06:52](#)):

Okay. Number two, which I kind of already gave away, but the beds, the raised beds really did cut down on my gardening time. There was still some weeding, there were still some maintenance, but it just helped me keep things a little bit more contained and manageable. Right. So it just, I dunno, I like organized things. Maybe you're not like that. We all have different brains and different preferences. When I feel like I can keep things organized and tidy, I just feel less stressed and that's part of it. So I think that's part of the perception as to why I felt like the raised beds were better for me. But also like there was less space to worry about weeds coming up and to manage because we had the walkways which were covered in bark and then we were walking on that helped match the weeds down so I could just come in, pick a bed, work on the bed, whether it's weeding or mulching or whatever, and it just was easier.

Speaker 1 ([07:47](#)):

So those were fit for me. That might not be a fit for everybody, but that was, that's been a game changer. Number three, again, another gardening tip, install drip systems. When we initially got ready to install the drip systems in our raised beds, I'm embarrassed to say I pushed back on Christian. It was his idea and I'm like, Oh, we don't need to do that. We don't know need to Invest in all of the sprinkler stuff. Let's just, I have a hose. I'm good at the hose, right? Actually, I'm not very good at using a hose. I actually don't do it very well. I don't do it very consistently and I skimp. So lo and behold, not only did it him installing the drip system saved me hours of watering like hours. Everything grows better when it gets

enough water. So we were able to put on the right amount of water and my vegetables grew better than ever before.

Speaker 1 ([08:43](#)):

Such a crazy phenomenon. You water a plant, it grows. I'm a slow learner. Anyway, so installing, we have a drip system in our garden and we have a drip little drip system in our herb garden, which is close to our house. It's been a game changer, the summer before with so many hours spent with a sprinkler, with a hose in hand, and now I don't have to worry about that at least in those two gardens. And that's saved me a ton of time. So if you can swing it, I highly recommend creating an automated watering system or a sprinkler on a timer or something that just makes that a little bit less hands on for you. Okay. Number four, this is for all of my dairy folks out there. If you're looking at getting a dairy goat or a milk cow or you already have them.

Speaker 1 ([09:34](#)):

I save a whole lot of time by milking once a day and I have a blog post on that. I can share that in the show notes, but that not only prevents me from having to bottle feed the baby goat or the cow, which is expensive and time consuming, but then I only milk in the mornings. We get enough milk for the house and then I'm not having to be in the barn at the same time twice a day. Now if you like milking twice a day, there's nothing wrong with that, but it was really hard for us to fit that into our schedule. So getting into that once a day format made things so much less stressful. Okay. Number five floats are your friend and I'm talking about water tank floats. Now, ironically, as I'm recording this episode, it's quite cold outside and our float is frozen, so floats are not your friend in the winter time, but they're fantastic in the summer.

Speaker 1 ([10:30](#)):

So we have a big, we have, we have multiple water tanks and buckets. So we have one big tank. That waters the majority of our horses and cattle. And what the way we set it up, we put it in close to a hydrant and we have a short little hose and the hose is connected to a float. And I'm assuming most of you know what it is, but basically it's this little plastic box with a little, I'm really not going to do a good job at describing this. We need Christian to explain this. A little plastic thing that when the plastic thing hangs down, the water runs and then as the water fills up, it pushes the plastic guy up and shuts the water up. So it self regulates. And when it's not freezing, it works like a champ because we leave the hydrant on all the time and the float regulates the water tank.

Speaker 1 ([11:15](#)):

So in the summertime when animals are drinking so much more anyway, it makes it a lot easier. We're not having to stand there with a hose and manually fill it up every day or every other day and it makes sure that they never run out of water. And speaking of that, tanks and water, if you can, a tank heater for your water tanks saves you a lot of time in chopping ice. If you live in a cold climate, um, you can just do the old ax method, but that tank heater, if you have electricity that can run to your water tank, it saves us a lot of time. On the medium cold days, it keeps the tank ice free on the super cold days, we still have to do a little bit of ice chopping, but it's doable. Like otherwise I'm talking, you know, there'll be 10 inches of ice otherwise.

Speaker 1 ([12:05](#)):

So it just reduces that even on the super cold days. And honestly, Mesa, my nine year old does most of the ice chopping, so it's manageable. Okay. Number six. Again, this is not one that every single person can do, but this is a big one for us. If you can feed large bales of hay, if you have livestock, like large livestock, right, horses, cattle, that's a huge time saver for us. Both in the stacking of the hay. We don't have to go out and stack a million small square bales. And in the feeding of the hay we feed a large round bale to our cattle and horses about once a week, maybe a little bit more frequently depending on the time of year. And it saves us a whole lot of time. We don't have to be out there twice a day, forking out the hay or giving the the bale or the flakes of hay and it just is a big time saver.

Speaker 1 ([12:59](#)):

It also enables us, when we go on a trip, we can leave the animals on a brand new bale and we know what we have, I don't know, good five days before they were going to run out, if not longer. Now the one problem we've had with that is our horses, we have a couple horses who are a little piggies and if they look at Hay, they get obese, they're quite large. So those horses haven't done well being on all you can eat round bales even if they're just grass. So with those horses we have to pull them off the round bale for portions of the day and then put them back on. So that's still, you know, hands-on. We have to be down in the barn and pulling them on, putting the, you know, closing the gate, opening the gate. But it's still, I think in the long run saves us time and not stacking little bales and moving little bales and handling little bales.

Speaker 1 ([13:48](#)):

Christian and I just do not like little bales. So big bales are our favorite. The downfall is you do have to have some sort of tractor or equipment to move them. Well I guess, let me, let me say you don't have to, back in the day, we would a man handle large round bales without a tractor, we had was ridiculous. We use like big straps and would strategically, it was a lot of physics actually, alot, strategically placed the straps on a bale and pull it with a truck to kind of roll it off a trailer to push it around. It was a lot of work. So you Def, I would say honestly you need a tractor unless you're really creative and strong and good at moving large, heavy objects by yourself. But um, so if you have a tractor though or a skid steer or something, big bales are the way to go.

Speaker 1 ([14:42](#)):

All right. And my last way that I save time is I batch things and I'm talking kitchen things. And this isn't a new concept. You've probably heard me talk about this before, but batch cooking ingredients or full meals or even my shopping saves me a lot of time. Like when you see me at Costco, you'll think I have like 19 children at home by the way my Costco cart looks, I go in bulk and I go in batches. That prevents me from having to go back to the store a lot. This gives me a lot of options. So a few of the things I like to make in big batches in my kitchen are things like homemade broth, um, home canned beans, like Pinto beans or black beans, ricotta cheese. If I have a whole bunch of milk then I will make ricotta and freeze it in little containers.

Speaker 1 ([15:33](#)):

It freezes very well. Homemade yogurt, we usually do a gallon of yogurt at a time or butter. If I have a lot of fresh cream from the cow, I save it up, make the butter and freeze it. So little things like that or even just, right now I try to do a freezer meal once a week cause we have our homeschool co-op on Thursdays. So I will make an extra, a double a recipe and freeze half of it, stick it in the freezer cause I'm going to be in the kitchen anyway. Cooking supper that evening. The dishes are already being dirtied so I

just make an extra portion or three and freeze the extra, eat the one batch tonight or the night of whenever I'm cooking it. And it just a little bit of timesaving bits here and there really do add up. So those are some of my more practical ways that we save time around our homestead with the animals and the garden and all those things.

Speaker 1 ([16:30](#)):

Hopefully that gave you some ideas. And remember the biggest thing to keep in mind if you are thinking about time management or struggling with time management is we have to let go of that pressure to do it all. And I know a lot of folks think I do it all. I really don't. There are parts of my life that I opt out of and I sacrifice or I don't do in order to do other things. And that's okay. That's a trade off. So tried to live up to that expectation of being everything to everyone just doesn't work. In order to homestead signs, we have to let other things go and that's okay. So do what you can and enjoy the process and save time where it's possible. So if you're feeling really excited to jump into this idea of old fashioned living or homesteading, but you're a little bit unsure of how or where to start, I have something that I think you'll enjoy.

Speaker 1 ([17:30](#)):

I've put together a library of resources, everything from a chicken coop guide to how to start a garden, to how to turn your kitchen into a farmhouse kitchen no matter where you live, and you can get all of those things for free over at [theprairiehomestead.com/grow](http://theprairiehomestead.com/grow) we'll drop in the show notes as well. One more time. It's [theprairiehomestead.com/grow](http://theprairiehomestead.com/grow) and that is it for today, my friend. Thanks so much for listening. If you're so inclined, I would love it if you could jump over to your favorite podcast player and leave a quick review so more people can find this podcast and that's it. Thanks for listening and we'll chat more on the next episode of the old fashioned on purpose podcast.