ASANATRACKER REVIEW

Asana Time Tracking: Native Features, Reports, and Limits

Review Asana time tracking options, estimates, reports, dashboards, integrations, billing use cases, and limitations.

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TL;DR Asana added a native time tracking field with a built-in timer on the Advanced plan and above. It records minutes against tasks, supports manual entry, and shows time rollups in dashboards and the API. Where it falls short is billing-grade reporting, screenshot or activity monitoring (intentionally not included), and exports formatted for invoicing. Most agencies still pair Asana with Harvest, Everhour, or Clockify for client-billable workflows. This page walks through what Asana's native timer covers, how to set it up, what reports look like, which integrations close the gap, and who should pick which approach. Feature availability verified against Asana's published pages on May 20, 2026.

Does Asana Have Time Tracking?

Yes, on the Advanced plan and above through a dedicated time tracking custom field. The field includes a start/stop timer at the task level and supports manual minute entry, alongside an optional estimate field for planned versus actual comparison.

Native time tracking was a paid add-on in earlier years and is now bundled into Advanced. The feature is intentionally light: it captures effort against tasks, not screen-level monitoring, mouse movement, or screenshots.

- **Native timer** — start/stop button on the task pane, also accessible from My Tasks
- **Manual entry** — log minutes after the fact when the timer is impractical (meetings, phone calls)
- **Estimated time field** — pair with actual time to surface variance in dashboards
- **Plan availability** — Advanced, Enterprise, Enterprise+; not available on Personal or Starter
- **What it doesn\'t do** — no screenshots, no app activity tracking, no idle detection

For organisations that want surveillance-grade monitoring, Asana is deliberately the wrong product. That is also why it survives easily in worker-friendly company cultures.

Native timer on Advanced and above tracks task minutes. No surveillance features — by design.

How to Set Up Time Tracking

Adding time tracking takes about five minutes per project on Advanced. Enable the

time tracking field, decide which views show it, and choose who can edit time entries.

Setup decisions matter more than the toggle itself. Three early choices determine whether teams actually use the feature beyond the first week.

- **Enable at the workspace level** first; then add the time tracking field to each project that needs it
- **Add the field to default views** — list and board both — so the timer button is visible without an extra click
- **Decide on permissions** — can collaborators edit each other\'s entries, or only the owner? Default to owner-only
- **Pair with estimated time** if variance is a metric you actually plan to act on
- **Train the team in one session** — a 10-minute Loom beats a written guide; ad-hoc adoption fizzles

Most agencies set "the assignee logs their own time" as the rule and audit during weekly status updates. Self-reported time has known accuracy problems; align expectations.

> *Enable workspace-wide, add to default views, restrict edits to the assignee, and train in one short session.*

Timesheets, Dashboards, and Reports

Reports show time totals by task, project, owner, custom field, and date range. Subtask rollup behaviour is the most-missed detail: subtask time can either bubble up to the parent or stay isolated, depending on a workspace setting.

The reporting depth is closer to "team time card" than "billing software". Useful for capacity and project health; not enough for client invoicing on its own.

- **Built-in cards** — total time per project, per owner, per status, per custom field
- **Subtask rollup** — toggleable per workspace; verify before the first month closes
- **Date range filters** — weekly, monthly, custom; useful for payroll cutoffs
- **Estimate vs actual** — variance card flags projects running over
- **Export** — CSV from any time tracking report; JSON via API for billing system pipelines
- **Billing-grade reporting** — not native; use Harvest, Everhour, or a BI connector for invoice-ready output

Numbers worth tracking: variance percentage (actual ÷ estimate), tracked-vs-untracked task ratio, and capacity (tracked hours ÷ available hours).

> *Built-in reports cover capacity and project health. Use Harvest or Everhour for invoicing.*

Best Time Tracking Integrations

When native time tracking isn't enough, the three most-used integrations are Harvest, Everhour, and Clockify. Each adds invoicing, deeper reporting, or richer

project-level controls.

Each integration has a sweet spot. Picking the wrong one is the most common reason time tracking adoption stalls in agencies.

Tool	Strength	Pricing band	Best for
Harvest	Invoicing, expense tracking, client billing	Mid	Agencies and consultancies
Everhour	Deep Asana integration; estimate vs actual at every level	Mid	Project managers tracking variance
Clockify	Free unlimited users; basic reporting	Free / Low	Cost-sensitive teams
Toggl Track	Distraction-light timer; team timesheets	Low / Mid	Freelancers and small teams
Asana API	Push to custom warehouse, BI tool, or HR system	Internal cost	Engineering-heavy orgs

- Harvest is the most common agency pairing because invoicing closes the workflow loop
- Everhour deepens the variance reporting and is favoured by teams obsessed with estimate accuracy
- Clockify is the budget choice; expect to spend extra time on report formatting

Avoid running two timers at once (Asana native plus Harvest, for example). Pick one source of truth and treat the other as a reporting layer.

> *Harvest for billing, Everhour for variance, Clockify for budget. Pick one source of truth.*

Common Time Tracking Limitations

Mobile timing, calendar gaps, and reporting edges are the three places where time tracking fails users. Combined with privacy and permissions, they are the topics worth a deliberate review before rollout.

Most adoption failures are predictable. Reviewing the list below before deployment removes 70 percent of them.

- **Mobile** — timer works, but app backgrounding on iOS sometimes pauses without notice; a manual entry habit is safer
- **Calendar bookings** — meeting time is not auto-tracked; teams must log manually or rely on a calendar→Asana integration
- **Reporting edges** — time on private tasks doesn\'t appear in shared dashboards; cross-workspace reporting is API-only
- **Privacy** — admins can see all time entries; non-admins can only see their own; align expectations in writing
- **Common complaints** — forgotten timers, mis-attributed entries (wrong task), subtask rollup confusion

- **Rollout pitfalls** — mandating time tracking without explaining how data will be used erodes trust fast

If a team is being asked to track time for the first time, share the dashboards they will see in week four. Transparency keeps adoption above 70 percent; opacity drops it below 30.

> *Mobile, calendar gaps, and rollup confusion break adoption. Share the dashboards up front to keep teams onboard.*

Who Should Use Asana for Time

Asana's native time tracking is sufficient for internal project teams, professional services on retainer, and capacity planning. It is not sufficient for high-volume client billing or detailed monitoring use cases.

Match the tool to the job. Asana\'s native timer is a wide-base solution; specialist tools win on the edges.

- **Best fit** — project teams tracking capacity, professional services on monthly retainers, R&D teams logging effort
- **Mixed fit** — agencies doing client billing can use Asana plus Harvest or Everhour; native alone is too light
- **Not recommended for** — payroll-grade time tracking with audit trails (use a dedicated time and attendance system)
- **Not recommended for** — screenshot or productivity monitoring; Asana intentionally doesn\'t offer these
- **Alternatives for monitoring** — Hubstaff, Time Doctor, ActivTrak; understand the worker-trust costs before deploying

A useful test: would the team be comfortable seeing their own time data in the manager\'s weekly review? If yes, Asana works. If no, a different tool — or a different management approach — is the real issue.

> *Asana native for internal teams; pair with Harvest/Everhour for billing. Skip it entirely for surveillance use cases.*

FAQ

Does Asana have a built-in timer?
Yes, on the Advanced plan and above. The time tracking field includes a start/stop timer on the task pane and a manual entry option. Personal and Starter plans do not include native time tracking; integrations like Clockify or Harvest cover those tiers.

Can I track time on subtasks?
Yes. Subtasks support the same time tracking field as parent tasks. Whether subtask time rolls up to the parent is controlled by a workspace setting — verify it before assuming dashboards show totals correctly.

Does Asana track screen activity or take screenshots?

No. Asana intentionally does not include surveillance features. Tools like Hubstaff and Time Doctor do, and operate as separate products. That design choice keeps Asana acceptable in worker-trust-sensitive cultures.

How do I export time data for invoicing?

Export a CSV from any time tracking report, or pull through the Asana API. For invoice-grade output, most agencies pair Asana with Harvest or Everhour because those tools produce client-formatted invoices natively.

Is the time tracking integration with Harvest free?

The integration is free; Harvest itself is paid. Pricing depends on Harvest's plan tier and is separate from Asana's subscription. Verify both costs on the respective vendor pages before committing.

Full article: https://asanatracker.com/asana-time-tracker