

Creating Routines for Home-based Learning: A Guide for Parents

1. Create a dedicated classroom space within your home.

Create a space within your home that your family can use as a dedicated learning space. Clean out the home office or set up a desk in your child's room where lessons and activities can be carried out. Make this space as comfortable as possible and allow kids to personalize the space with their artwork or completed assignments.

2. Maintain a consistent wake-up time.

Try to maintain the regular school day routine. Have your child get dressed, eat breakfast, brush their teeth, and do any typical "before school" chores or activities. Wearing pajamas signals to children that their day hasn't started or that they are on holidays.

3. Maintain consistent meal times.

Your school-aged child can likely tell you exactly when lunch is, and their body and brain will function best if they're kept on that schedule. Consider packing snacks and lunches in their usual lunchboxes to mimic their school ritual.

4. Create a schedule that includes academic time.

Children need structure and that includes dedicated time into each day for learning. Depending on your family's work schedule or other responsibilities, create a schedule for weekdays that includes time throughout the day for learning. To make your plan, think about the times you think your child is most likely to give his or her best work and attention. For most children, this means that late morning and early afternoon are the most optimal times for schoolwork. Consider posting a visual schedule somewhere prominent (in a common area, on the fridge, in your child's "classroom space"). It may help to maintain a similar visual schedule to that used in his/her/their classroom.



3. Consider different *kinds of* activities as you build your schedule:

- Family connection time □ Quiet time
- Independence learning time □ Independent play time
- Semi-independent learning time □ Screen time
- Meal and snack time □ Helping time
- Outdoor time

4. Take breaks throughout the day.

You might have heard your child's teachers talk about giving students "brain breaks", which basically amounts to letting kids rest in between challenging activities. It is important to schedule learning activities for short bursts of time throughout the day, and to give kids ample brain breaks where they do something fun or physical to keep them energized.

5. Don't forget about off-screen activities.

In today's digital age, families may have a ton of tech tools, but may lack resources to use offscreen. As always, it's important to give children real practice with hands-on learning activities. These include thousands of free, printable worksheets available for download. It also might mean leaning on tools and objects you have at home. For example, if you don't have manipulatives used in the classroom – use something like pasta. For a lesson about surface area, have kids count how many tiles are in the kitchen or how many steps it takes to get from one side of the room to the other.