

# 10 Tips to Help Get Your Child Organized

By Lexi Walters Wright

## **Break tasks into chunks.**

Help your child break school projects or household chores into smaller, more manageable steps. This will show your child that each project has a beginning, middle and end, which can make projects feel less overwhelming.

## **Make checklists and to-do lists.**

Once your child knows all the steps involved with a particular task, help her add it to an overall to-do list. Include regular homework and chores on the list. Encourage her to keep the list in a place where she'll see it often and to check off accomplishments as she goes. She might create it using a [smartphone app](#), write it on a dry-erase board in her bedroom or print out a list to carry around with her throughout the day.

## **Teach calendar and time-management skills.**

Encourage your child write down important tasks in a digital calendar or on a paper one. Then help her estimate how much time each task will take. After she completes the tasks, ask whether the time estimate was accurate or not. If needed, suggest adjustments for next time. It may also help to have your child write the due date directly on school assignments.

## **Establish daily routines.**

Creating a regular schedule can help your child learn what to expect throughout the day. Use picture schedules, clocks and other time-management strategies.

## **Introduce idea organizers.**

Show your child how to use outlines, graphic organizers or concept webs to organize ideas for school projects. Encourage her to take class notes in two columns, like the [Cornell note-taking system](#). This system uses a narrow column on the left for main ideas or questions and a wide column on the right for all the details. Later, when your child is studying for a test, she can look at what's in the narrow column to review the big ideas and see if she can remember the details.

## **Use color-coding.**

Assign colors to each school subject. For example, green folders and notebooks may be for English and blue for math. Use brightly colored pocket folders for items that need to be signed and returned. Suggest that your child use colored pens to help shift from the role of writer to the role of self-checker and editor.

## **Create fun memory aids.**

Show your child how to create her own silly sentences, songs, acronyms or cartoons to remember information. (One popular mnemonic, "Never Eat Soggy Waffles," helps kids remember north, east, south and west.) She can use these memory aids for anything from preparing for an exam to recalling her locker combination.

## **Create an organized workspace.**

Set aside a space at home where your child can work without interruption. It might work best if this is somewhere near you for times when she needs your assistance. Keep school supplies and technology such as calculators, tablets or laptops nearby.

## **Do regular backpack audits.**

Schedule a time each week for your child to clean out and [organize her backpack](#).

## **Help your child think ahead.**

Before bedtime, review plans for the next day with your child. This can make her feel more secure. Together you can plan how to handle things if a change comes up in the schedule.