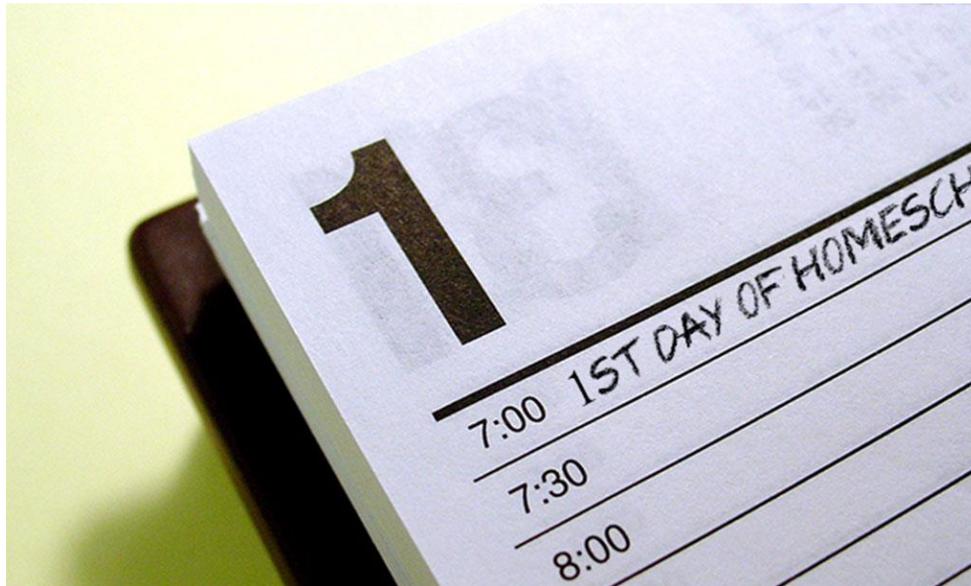


How To Set Up A Homeschool Schedule That Works



Scheduling is one issue that trips up many families during this coronavirus homeschool adventure you are now in. Scheduling, or the lack thereof, is one of the many issues homeschool moms and dads struggle with when deciding how to start. When should the school day begin? How do I keep kids of varying ages and levels on task? Should I be more rigid? Should I be more flexible?

If you're new, struggling, or need to start fresh this year, you're probably wondering how to set up a homeschool schedule that works for your family. Look no further.

How to Set Up a Homeschool Schedule

Children need schedules but putting undue pressure upon ourselves and our children is not good. Remember that the two most important factors of a routine in a growing child's day do NOT revolve around the timing of class work. If you want to know how to set up a homeschooling schedule, start with the most important part of your child's day: sleep and nourishment.

Consistent mealtimes, and a clear bedtime routine that involves winding down are the key elements to healthy brain growth and development.

If you have to work in some school activities on the evenings or weekends, you are not causing one bit of damage. Homeschooling is flexible. That's the joy of it.



The Needs of Varying Age Groups

Having different ages within your homeschool classroom can make finding and sticking to a homeschool schedule difficult. However, it is certainly manageable, and actually increases patience, flexibility, and the ability for children to interact with different age groups and/or generations – an invaluable REAL WORLD skill. There will always be time for catch up down the road. Some homeschool parents need to work outside the home as well – but there are always ways to make it work.

What Real Homeschool Moms Do

When we wanted to learn how to set up a homeschool schedule, we decided to talk with several homeschool parents “from the trenches” to learn how homeschool families operate and what works for them. Here’s what they had to say:

- Sarah: We all thrive on routines and schedules. Because of my son’s special needs, if we don’t have our schedule written out, the day simply doesn’t work. So, we spend 5 minutes each morning writing out what we’re going to accomplish as a family and then I spend time with each kid writing out what they need to do in a spiral notebook. We also plan 1 day to just have fun, explore outside, or do field trips. Usually this is Friday so we all work hard to get our daily work done so we can enjoy the day!
- Jen: “Basically, if it doesn’t benefit survival, homeschooling, writing, or family time, it gets scheduled where and when it can. I make sure that everyone knows that certain things must come first. So when they ask for certain freedoms or activities, they know they might very well get a no.”

- Mary: “I will sometimes take a day off, totally unscheduled, just because. Sometimes that unscheduled break does more for getting things done than anything else.”
- Steve: “We usually keep classroom hours from 9 to 1. Every day we will do math and reading for an hour each. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays is science. Tuesdays and Thursdays is history. Left over time is art, documentaries, or other subjects – whatever we have picked for the week. Friday is always a light day, I “test” what they have learned with small quizzes, and I never start anything new on a Friday. Always, I avoid being too strict – it sucks the fun right out!”
- Wendy: “As far as getting children of different ages on the same page, I just make sure they realize their school day is over when we finish what’s planned for the day. If they’re done by 10 or 11, the rest of the day is theirs. If they take until 3, 4, or even 5 – well, that’s less time outside, or on the computer or video games, or whatever. Basically, they’re in charge of how much playtime they get, by how hard they work. That’s pretty good motivation for getting them both focused and ready to work.”



Common Sense Application

Learning how to set up a homeschool schedule that works is really all about common sense, trial and error, and learning to shrug off what doesn’t work – and trying again. Any, or all, of these ideas can be adjusted to fit your household or the needs and personalities of your children. The key is to find what’s going to fit your individual family best at this season in life. And this should and will look different for each family!

To find out what works for you, start with your non-school life. Does your family accomplish more in the morning or evening? Do you like to go with the flow or need a more structured plan for the day? Do you prefer to have goals written

out or to explore what interests you or them as you go? After you’ve figured out your



“scheduling style” make sure to leave some space and room for doing nothing, catching up, or allowing your kids to set their own schedule. Finally, be ready and willing to adjust as needed if something isn’t working.

The beauty of a homeschool classroom is the flexibility to apply what works for your family and discard anything that doesn’t. Every day is a work in progress.

If you’d like help setting up a homeschool schedule we have several homeschool mothers on staff with Cord of Three, give us a call at [912-282-0992](tel:912-282-0992) or email us at info@cotcs.org.