

Help! It's Homework Time!

Has homework time become stressful for you and your child? It's likely that your child spends many hours each week completing homework. For some students, homework time can be a tedious and frustrating experience. Here are some tips to help your child make homework time more manageable:

At the start of the school year, gain an understanding of the teacher's expectations. When is homework due? How will your child receive feedback on the completed assignments? What percentage of the grade is determined by homework? General guidelines suggest students complete 10 minutes of homework for each grade level. Based on these guidelines, a second grader would have 20 minutes of daily homework while a fifth grader would have 50 minutes.

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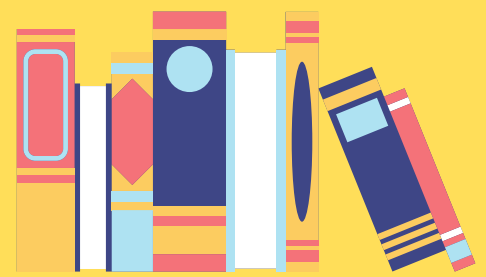


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Help your child understand the importance of using a planner. Some schools supply planners for student use and require parents to sign them each day. Other schools may use digital planners. Review the daily notes in your child's planner, and show how the planner can be used to keep up with long-range deadlines.

Establish a homework station. Provide an organized area with minimal distractions where your child can complete homework. Have all necessary supplies such as a stapler, scissors, glue, tape, highlighters, index cards, and pencils organized at the station.

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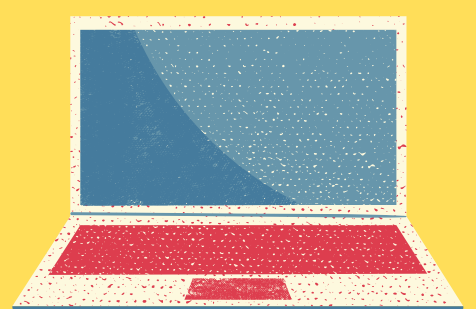


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Designate a place for paperwork. Have a basket, bin, or file folder located near the homework station where your child can place graded work, notes from the teacher, school announcements, and project requirements.

Use a color-coded system to help your child stay organized. Assign each subject a color (orange for math, green for reading, and so on) and purchase folders, spiral notebooks, sticky notes, markers, and highlighters in those colors to go with each subject. Purchase a large desk or wall calendar and use the same color-coded system to record assignment due dates. The color-coded system can also be used with a digital planner.

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Review the daily homework assignments with your child. When it's time to begin the homework routine, ask your child to share all tasks that must be completed. Consider having your child complete more difficult tasks first when attention span tends to be longer and frustration level is lower.

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Help your child with time management. Set a regularly scheduled homework time, and find what works best for your child. Some children prefer an uninterrupted block of time while others may be more successful working in 15-minute increments with short breaks. For larger research projects, help your child break down the assignment into manageable tasks, and record the deadlines for each task on the color-coded calendar or digital planner.

If your child is required to read silently for 20 minutes, consider using this time to sit with your child and read a book of your own.

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Post a checklist or picture schedule at the homework station. The list should include anything your child needs to take to school on a regular basis such as homework and library books. Ask your child to refer to the checklist and make sure that all materials are packed before bedtime. Routine and predictability help students stay organized.

Offer praise for progress. While the guidelines call for children to have 10 minutes of homework for each grade level, it's very likely that your child's homework time exceeds that limit most days. Encourage your child and offer praise for focus and perseverance!

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