

Back to School Without Losing Your Mind

A teen-friendly guide for getting through the start of the school year.

SAME YOU. BRIGHT THINGS AHEAD. ♥

Progress
not
perfection
♥

KINDER
BRAVER
MORE YOU
THIS YEAR
♥

1 What's totally normal

You're not alone. Lots of teens feel this way.



Feeling nervous

It's normal to feel some worry about new classes, teachers or friends.



Not knowing people yet

It takes time to find your people.



Having your sleep off

Summer schedules are hard to change — you're not lazy, your body just needs time to adjust.



Feeling social pressure

It can feel like everyone else has it together, but most people are figuring it out too.



Feeling rusty

It's normal to feel a bit out of practice with school routines. You'll get back into it.

New beginnings can feel messy and exciting at the same time. Both can be true. ♥



2 Before school starts

Set yourself up for a smoother start.



Shift your sleep a bit earlier

Even 15-30 minutes can help. Consistent sleep helps your mood, focus and energy.



Pack your bag

Supplies, charged device, water bottle, SNACKS (always a good idea!).



Plan your first morning

Know how you're getting there, how much time it will take, and what to bring.



Find one person you can check in with

A friend, family member, or supportive adult can help you feel more grounded.



Know where you need to go

Check your schedule, find your classrooms (if you can), and locate key spots like the office, washrooms and cafeteria.

A little preparation today can mean a calmer tomorrow. ♥



3 First week survival moves

Small steps make a big difference.



Say hi to one person

A simple "hi" can be the start of a new connection.



Ask one question

About the class, the teacher or even where something is. It's a great way to break the ice.



Write things down

Use a planner, app or notes on your phone to keep track of important info.



Leave a bit earlier

Give yourself extra time, especially at first.



Take short reset breaks

Breathe, stretch, get water, step outside or take a few minutes in a quieter space.



Don't expect yourself to have it all figured out

It's a process. Focus on progress, not perfection.

You don't have to do everything. Just take the next right step. ♥



4 If anxiety spikes

Try these grounding tools. You've got this.



Slow exhale

Breathe in for 4, out for 6. Do it a few times.



Feel your feet

Notice them on the ground. You're here. You're safe.



Name 5 things you can see

Look around and find five things. This can help bring you back to the present moment.



Text or talk to a safe person

Reach out to a friend, family member or trusted adult.



Take it one class at a time

You don't have to handle the whole day at once.

It's okay to feel big feelings. You're still capable and resilient. ♥

5 When to get backup

It's important to reach out for support if you notice:

- ✓ Panic or anxiety that won't settle
- ✓ Bullying (in person or online)
- ✓ Not sleeping (even when you're tired)
- ✓ Not eating or big changes in appetite
- ✓ Refusing to go to school
- ✓ Feeling like everything is too much

Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. ♥

You can talk to a parent, caregiver, school counsellor, trusted teacher, or reach out to a mental health professional. You don't have to do this alone.

You do not have to feel confident to show up. Sometimes brave just looks like walking through the door. ♥

- NEW CLASSES
- NEW PEOPLE
- REAL GROWTH
- A BRIGHTER YOU

