

Plan a Great Homeschool Year in Five Steps

School Year

Student

Grade

Date

Step One:

Assess and Reflect

The first step in the homeschool planning guide is figuring out where you are now. Because homeschooling is a natural extension of parenting, a successful plan will consider your family life as a whole.

Evaluate each child's current strengths and weaknesses and whether they are growing in each area. For older kids, sit down and fill out the worksheet together. Kids are more likely to participate cheerfully when they are part of the process 😊

We recommend planning your homeschool year assessing four areas: academic, health, character, and social.

Continue to the "Whole Child Assessment" →

Whole Child Assessment

Name:

Date:

Academics

Health

Character

Social

Step Two:

Set Priorities

As you plan your homeschool year, your priorities will vary dramatically from child to child and year to year. For a kindergartner, your primary focus may be social, while with older kids, academics will likely play a larger role. For elementary school, you may prioritize exploring interests, while in high school you may be focused on completing the required coursework for college.

Sit down with your spouse or a close friend and discuss your observations from Step One and your long-term goals for each child, then decide what to prioritize this year. Make this year's goals about this year's need. You may want to focus on supporting your child through a transition like the birth of a new sibling, moving, starting new as a homeschooler, or going through a medical crisis. Balance developing their strengths and attending to weaknesses. Think about what kind of learning works best for them and what they need to be happy and relaxed.

For teens and independent tweens, be sure to include them in the process - they may surprise you with what they want to take on! Homeschooling works best when parents lead by example and are learning and growing, so fill one out for yourself too 😊

Continue to the "Priorities" worksheet →

Priorities

Name:

Date:

Main Priority

Needs

Wants

Stop

Academics

Health

Character

Social

Step Three:

Find Resources

Now that you know what your homeschool planning guide goals are, it's time to look for resources and brainstorm. As you are thinking about how to meet each child's goals, look for ways to meet multiple goals at once.

For example, starting a history-themed book club could encourage a reluctant reader, act as your history program for the year, and provide social time. You could study nature or geology while hiking.

As you make choices, consider how they impact your main priority for the year. Not every choice will be able to incorporate your top priority (sometimes a math curriculum is just a math curriculum), but work it in where you can, and try not to undermine it.

Continue to the "Resource Evaluation" worksheet →

Resource Evaluation

Student:

School Year:

Grade:

Resource:

Source:

Cost:

Description

Category

☐ Academic

☐ Health

☐ Character

☐ Social

Pros

Cons

Step Four:

Put It All Together

Now that you have lots of options, it's time to choose which work together best for each child. Start with things you are sure you will continue from the previous year, then move on to meeting needs from the priority guide.

As you add to your plan, consider how your addition impacts the main priority and whether it fits into your schedule and budget.

Be sure to leave room in both your schedule and budget to allow for adjustments later.

Continue to the "Planning Worksheet" →

Planning Worksheet

Name:

Date:

Main Priority

Cost

Resource

Needs/Wants Met

Step Five:

Assess and Adjust

Now that you have a homeschool planning guide, you need to be sure to check periodically that things you have chosen are working the way you envisioned and meeting the needs you intended them to meet. It can be easy to feel like the key to a successful year is making your kids work through your curricula, but it's most important to make the curricula work for you.

Set aside time once a month to go over your plan for each child and assess how well each resource on the list is working, and whether together, they are supporting your main priority. Then, make adjustments.

Take the time to notice what is working well and celebrate successes and highlights 😊

Continue to the "Monthly Review" worksheet →

Monthly Review

Name:

Date:

What IS working?

What is NOT working?

Milestones

Highlights