

How to Create a Family Schedule

As a parent or caregiver, you know how hard it can be to juggle daily responsibilities. From work and education to meals and transportation, families have to organize an intricate schedule of tasks and activities. While it can be overwhelming, creating a family schedule can help with identifying what needs to happen when, by who, and for how long.

Every family is unique, so create a schedule that works for yours. It can be as loose or as firm as you need. The best type of schedule is a schedule that meets your family's needs. To get started, follow the steps below and work together as a family to identify what does and does not work.

How to create a personal or family schedule:

Step 1 – Print out a copy of the Schedule Planner on pages two through five.

Step 2 – Fill out your family's schedule priorities, routines, and wants.

- Start with yourself. When done, move to another family member. Depending on the size of your family, you may need an additional paper for brainstorming.

Step 3 – Add in your priorities, routines, and wants into the calendar.

- Start with your priorities and block off dedicated hours for those tasks. That will make it easier to identify open times for other tasks or wants.
- Invite your family members to make their own schedules. This encourages them to be a part of the planning process and helps them better understand their schedules and routines.
 - You can work with young children to create a schedule together. Ask them to talk about what they do after they wake up, at school, before bed, and in between!

- If the calendar is not big enough, use it as inspiration and create your own! Make it playful by decorating it in different colors, writing utensils, stickers, and more. Or draw it on a whiteboard or chalkboard so you can update it as needed.

Step 4 – Talk about your schedules together. What looks the same and what looks different?

- Keep your schedule on hand, post it on your fridge or a wall, or add it to your phone calendar. Make sure children can easily access their schedules every day.
- Making copies can be useful for when children stay elsewhere, such as at a family or loved one's house. Keeping at least the required elements of the schedule consistent helps maintain your child's well-being and ability to transition successfully.

Step 5 – Review your schedules together at the beginning of each day and refer to them throughout the day. Let children know if something in the schedule needs to change on a particular day and why it is changing. Try to keep your schedule as similar as possible each day.



What must you complete?

Make a list of tasks you must complete on a daily basis and how long they typically take. Examples include drop-off, pick-up, grocery shopping, working, bathing, cooking, homework, and medications.

What routines and rituals do you have in place?

List three routines or rituals (morning, family meals, etc.) you have in place and the required steps.

1. _____	2. _____	3. _____
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•

What would be nice to accomplish?

Make a list of tasks that would be nice to accomplish throughout the week and how long they typically take. Examples include activities, hobbies, and social gatherings.

What is recommended for children?

- At least 15 to 20 minutes of reading per day.
- Opportunities to play throughout the day.
- A variety of play activities throughout the day for children ages three to five and at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day for children ages six to 17.

For more physical health recommendations, read our family guide: bit.ly/phys-health

When	Time	What I'm Doing
Morning		
Evening		
Night		
Notes		

When	How Long?	What I'm Doing
Morning		
Afternoon		
Evening		
Notes		

Recommended Activities List

Cut out these activities and add them into your schedule! Add in your own ideas in the blank spaces below! For young children, it would be helpful to write short words in big letters and draw a picture of the activity.

Making and Eating Breakfast	Drop Off _____ at _____	Going to the Playground
Making and Eating Lunch	Pick Up _____ at _____	Going on a Walk
Making and Eating Dinner	Brushing and Flossing My Teeth	Singing and Dancing Together
Making and Eating a Snack	Taking a Bath / Shower	Spending Time Outdoors
At Work	Changing My Clothes	Play Time
Doing Laundry	Putting on My Shoes	Creative Time and Self Expression
Doing the Dishes	Packing My Backpack	Reading a Book or Storytelling
Taking Out Trash or Recycling	Medication	Snuggles with Someone I Love
Sweeping the Floors	Homework	Visiting a Friend or Loved One
Mopping the Floors	Set the Table / Clear the Table	Watching TV or a Movie Together
Taking Care of My Pet	Quiet Time	Talking About Our Days Together
Cleaning the Bathroom	Nap Time	Dedicated Time with _____
Cleaning Up	Bed Time	Playing Tag
Grocery Shopping	Family Outing	Doing Animal Yoga

Additional Resources

Developmentally Appropriate Parenting Series

Developmentally Appropriate Parenting is a family resource content series developed by Trying Together as an effort to empower caregivers to create high-quality experiences at the earliest stages of their child's life. To learn more, visit:

tryingtogether.org/parenting-resources

Zero to Thrive

Zero to Thrive believes that the period from pregnancy through early childhood is an essential time for mitigating the multi-generational effects of inequity, trauma, and adversity. Their website features resources on routines, transitioning to child care, and more. To learn more, visit: zerotothrive.org/z2t-resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website features printable resources on creating a family schedule checklist, family rules, and chore charts. To learn more, visit: bit.ly/cdc-schedules



To learn more, visit: tryingtogether.org/parenting-resources

