

# Organization

32 Genius Tips for Homeschool  
Organization & Productivity



# 32 Genius Tips for Homeschool Organization & Productivity

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## tip 1 : purge



It's better to purge homeschooling materials that you aren't using than it is to store them. Over time, the materials can become homeschool clutter. If you don't have a specific purpose for an item you should, sell, donate or pitch those items to maintain a more organized homeschool.

*Renée Aleshire Brown, [Great Peace Academy](#)*

## tip 2 : the night before



A successful homeschool day often starts the night before. I find it difficult to work in clutter, so I like to take sure that our work area and the kitchen are clean before I go to bed. It doesn't always happen, but I function better when it does. Make sure you have pencils and paper. Make the copies or print-offs you're going to need the next day. Check to see if you have everything you'll need for the science experiment or the history project.

*Kris Bales, [Weird, Unsocialized Homeschoolers](#)*

## tip 3 : money is replaceable



Is what you're using getting you what you want? If not, it is time for a change. Don't fret over money lost on a bad-fit curriculum! Money is replaceable, a wasted academic year is not.

*Vicki Tillman, [7 Sisters Homeschool](#)*



## tip 4 : segments

You can do anything for 20 minutes. The most odious task broken into 20 minute segments becomes infinitely more bearable. When 20 minutes is done take a five minute break and then get back to work.

*Ticia Messing, [Adventures in Mommydom](#)*

## tip 5 : never settle

Regarding scheduling activities and events: never settle for the good at the expense of the best! Sometimes less is more...

*Pat Fenner, [PatAndCandy.com](#)*

## tip 6 : purposeful living



When people ask me how I accomplish so much, I tell them that I live life deliberately. At any particular time of day, I am doing something on purpose. Choose what you will do with your time. Don't just let it go by. Time is one of those things, that when it's gone, it's gone forever. You can't get it back. Plan your time wisely.

Susan Evans, [Hands-on Learning](#)

## tip 7 : go minimalist



Keep your to-do list minimal. In addition to homeschooling, we also have homes and families to manage, but sometimes we get a little too ambitious with our to-do list. I try to keep my non-school-related to-do list pared down to 3-5 items. These are typically things that have to get done that day along with a few things that I can reasonably expect to accomplish. If you tend to list everything you need to do along with everything you might be able to do if the stars align, it helps to have a separate list. You can then plan on tackling a couple of items from the "if I have time list," well, if you have time. Then, the items that don't get crossed off aren't mocking you and stressing you out.

Kris Bales, [Weird, Unsocialized Homeschoolers](#)

## tip 8 : no fear



Do not be afraid to stop a book or curriculum that is not working for your child. He might need a little more time to mature or it might not fit his learning style. There are too many options that will work to continue plugging away at something that is causing stress and tears.

Crystal Wagner, [Triumphant Learning](#)



## tip 9 : morning meetings

Clear communication is key for a productive homeschool. A prepared morning meeting with prayer and announcements can initiate a positive day. Expectations and reminders can be given to guide and support. Taking time to talk and get everyone on the same page sets the stage for homeschool plans to be accomplished.

Amy Milcic, [Busy Boys Brigade](#)

## tip 10 : don't drudge along

The cost of making curriculum changes to something potentially better could not be more expensive than getting a hair transplant because you pulled all your hair out drudging along in a curriculum that didn't work.

Kathy Gossen, [Cornerstone Confessions](#)

## tip 11 : switch it up



Switching things up can really help prevent burnout. If you always do school in the same order every day, switch it up for a week or two. Maybe just focus on one subject where your students are struggling the most for a week or so.

This can help bring them back to the right level and will prevent them from feeling overwhelmed with too much work. A student who is near the end of a book may feel encouraged by finishing the book before the next holiday break. Maybe you can do all school lessons in three days and have the other two days for creative endeavors.

*Brenda Priddy, [Schooling a Monkey](#)*

## tip 12 : simple records



There is no need to purchase anything in the beginning to help you keep records. Being new to homeschooling, you will change your mind, maybe several times, before you find a system that you like. If you live in an area that requires strict record keeping, then simply track what your children do each day in a notebook or on the device of your choice. When you have homeschooled for a few months, then reassess your needs. Record keeping can be simple for now.

*Tina Robertson, [Tina's Dynamic Homeschool Plus](#)*

## tip 13 : get help



How do you teach a subject to your kids when you absolutely don't like it yourself? Speaking from personal experience, there are really only three directions in which you can head: Bite the bullet and teach it anyway; ignore it and hope your kids will be well-educated in spite of you; or get help. How do you get help? Find a “grab-and-go” curriculum, swap with a friend, hire a tutor, or enroll your child in an online or in-person class.

*Kendra Fletcher, [HomeschoolingIRL](#)*



## tip 14 : housework

Sometimes homeschooling suffers because you're overwhelmed with housework. If you're cleaning so much because you're behind on housework and can't get ahead enough to sit down and do school – I have been there. I do understand the importance of getting caught up enough you can stay on top of it, but we also have to gently remind ourselves there's no such thing as “all caught up” or “all done” because it never ends. If you're buried under housework and overwhelmed, you definitely need to focus on that for a week, or even two. Put homeschool on pause, get the kids involved (or send the kids to grandma's for a day), ask a friend to come help out – whatever you can do to feel like you've got your head above water. Once you've caught up enough, identify your problem areas, make a plan to do a set minimum every day (plus a little more so you can get a little further ahead each day.)

*Amber Oliver, [Classic Housewife](#)*

## tip 15 : use clipboards



If your kids like to move around a lot (like mine), give them each a clipboard with their assignments for the day. That way, they can easily see how much work they have, take their work anywhere in the house, and put it down when they need to move a bit. Plus, it's an easy way to keep their work organized when you're ready to grade it!

Selena Robinson, [Look! We're Learning!](#)

## tip 16 : stop saying yes



When someone asks me to help with a project, I always tell them I'll have to think about it. I go home, talk to my husband, and take at least 24 hours to respond. This way, I can get a better look at the time involved, see what I already have on my 'commitments plate' and get my husband's opinion. Instead of spouting out a knee jerk "YES!" that I'll end up regretting when all the cards are on the table, I'm making a conscious decision to evaluate all the variables before signing up. THIS has saved my sanity, as well as my family's.

Dianna Kennedy, [The Kennedy Adventures](#)

## tip 17 : short, easy tasks



The reason so many of us struggle to get and stay organized is because we don't have a plan. A plan isn't pinning school room ideas, downloading free printables, or researching curriculum. A plan is a schedule of short, easy tasks that will help you achieve the peaceful, ordered homeschool you crave.

Melanie Wilson, author of [The Organized Homeschool Life](#)



## tip 18 : digital files

We've accumulated a huge digital library in our six years of homeschooling. It can be quite a challenge to keep all of these worksheets, e-books, and supplemental materials under control, but it can be done. I recommend organizing files by subject and then using topical sub-folders within each subject for easy access. The most important thing to remember, though, is to save your files to the appropriate locations immediately. That keeps them from getting lost in a folder with 500 random documents and going unused because they can't be found.

*Emily Copeland, [Life at the Table](#)*

## tip 19 : the end in mind

Planning with the end in mind is not about getting it right; it's about having a place to start.

*Kathy Gossen, [Cornerstone Confessions](#)*

## tip 20 : what to include



No one can 'do it all' so to speak, but I do take time to plan out our year so that I'm not scrambling to keep up with things. We also have a schedule that includes laundry, cleaning, groceries, as well as school and extra-curricular activities. We try to make sure that we're being productive on any given day. But we also try to make sure we have some free time for everyone as well!

Erica Arndt, [Confessions of a Homeschooler](#)

## tip 21 : use boxes



Simplify your homeschool organization as much as possible. The more complicated your system the easier it is to become overwhelmed. One simple method - every student (and mom!) gets a box for all their books and binders, one art caddy for everyday school supplies, and one binder divided by subject for each student to file their completed work. It's a simple system, but it's easy to stay organized.

Tonia L, [The Sunny Patch](#)

## tip 22 : rise early



I have come to realize that the biggest obstacle I face in trying to reach my homeschool goals and follow-through with plans is myself. It is hard to be present and accomplish goals in a mindful way when you are distracted by your own must-dos and to-dos. Because of this, I wake up at least one-hour before my [early rising] children. This allows me time to sit, to think, to plan, to exercise, or to write. Then, when my children arrive in my kitchen full of energy and scrambling for their breakfasts, I can appreciate the moment and adhere to our homeschool routine in a way that I cannot when I do not have this quiet morning time.

Caitlin Fitzpatrick Curley, [My Little Poppies](#)



## tip 23 : rainbow days

How can we find balance between homeschooling and homemaking together, in attempt to have more “rainbow days” than “avalanche days?” It seems that generally the cooking and cleaning suffer the most at the expense of homeschooling. What has helped me find balance is identifying my problem areas, creating a plan of attack, sticking to a menu plan, creating a routine, and watching the clock.

*Amber Oliver, [Classic Housewife](#)*

## tip 24 : touch base

Sit down for a few minutes with each child, even if they're independent learners or in high school. I find my homeschool goes more smoothly when the children and I touch base regularly and correct problems. It also allows me to tell when a curriculum may not be working and begin research before serious problems begin.

*Sara Dennis, [Classically Homeschooling](#)*

## tip 25 : it starts with you



It starts with you. The saying “be the change you want to see” is definitely true when it comes to how time management works in your homeschool. The freedom of having no set schedule, sleeping in late, and staying up late can quickly become a tyranny of unproductiveness. And your children will follow your cue. If you slog around in the morning, trying to wake up, unprepared for the day ahead, guess what your children are going to do?

*Chelli, [The Planted Trees](#)*

## tip 26 : re-adjust



If your current schedule isn't working, don't feel like (or call it) a failure. Life requires constant readjusting. By modeling a positive attitude and willingness to change, you are giving your child the "golden ticket" to life. They will learn flexibility and the ability to handle the inevitable curveballs life will through them - and might even learn some sense of personal organization in the process!

*Pat Fenner, [PatAndCandy.com](#)*

## tip 27 : resist the urge



For a new homeschooler, resist the urge to buy it all at once. Curriculum is a must-have to start homeschooling, but you don't need it all at once. You will want to buy curriculum that fits each child's learning style and that takes time. Relax, grab a few inexpensive workbooks, visit the library for an armload of awesome action packed books and take your time in choosing curriculum.

*Tina Robertson, [Tina's Dynamic Homeschool Plus](#)*



## tip 28 : cultivate

Don't ever feel locked into a curriculum or book or any method of study - at the end of the day, it's important to remember that your child's future is not dependent on your lesson plans. Cultivate character and relationship, and education will naturally follow.

Pat Fenner, [PatAndCandy.com](http://PatAndCandy.com)

## tip 29 : self-care

Self-care for a homeschool mom means moving. Moving (which is my term for exercise because exercise sounds like something that involves machines or choreography) has a ton of benefits for us homeschooling mamas: it helps reduce stress, it helps us sleep, it gives us a time to focus on our own care, and it keeps us in fighting form and healthy.

Kara Anderson, [Quill and Camera](http://Quill and Camera)

## tip 30 : minimize clutter



I keep my homeschool curriculum organized by subject so it's easy to find when needed. I keep whatever we'll be using for younger siblings, but then purge the rest so we don't end up with a bunch of clutter!

Erica Arndt, [Confessions of a Homeschooler](#)

## tip 31 : plan ahead, or don't!



I don't plan for our new year until I finish the current one. Give yourself a breather before diving in to another project, after going through the paperwork and finalizing the year you just completed.

Sam Kelley, [Sam's Noggin](#)

## tip 32 : curriculum



If you've given a certain curriculum a good shot, but it's just not working change it! Sell it to recoup your costs and find something more suited to your family! The relief and peace you'll feel when you find the right curriculum is worth it!

Erica Arndt, [Confessions of a Homeschooler](#)

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