

Organized for School Success



Now that your child is in middle school, she may have six or seven desks, classrooms, and teachers—plus a locker! And she's expected to take increasing responsibility for her own learning and success, laying the groundwork for even more responsibility in high school and beyond.

All of that change means organization is more important than ever. Here are ways to help your tween organize her time, study efficiently, and make sure assignments are finished and turned in.

Manage time wisely

Being a good time manager includes knowing what you have to do and what you want to do, as well as accurately judging how long each activity will take. Consider these ideas for helping your child learn to manage time well so she can maximize her learning.

Write it down

Encourage your tween to think of her student planner as her sidekick on her journey through middle school. Suggest that she use one color to write required tasks (homework, band practice) and another color for those she'd like to make time for (riding bikes with friends, organizing her photos). Let her know in advance about appointments or family events so she can include those, too. Having all of her commitments written down in one spot will let her see them at a glance so she always knows what's ahead.

Learn to estimate time

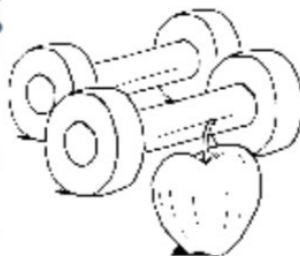
Have your middle grader time himself doing activities like studying or researching. For instance, he may plan to spend 30 minutes on Saturday doing library research for a social studies report, but find out that

it actually takes him an hour. By paying attention to his start and stop times, he can estimate more accurately in the future and set aside the time he will need.



Stick to routines

Regular daily routines often lead to better organization and greater school success. Suggest that your tween develop the ones that work best for him. They should include 9–11 hours of sleep, healthy meals and snacks, at least an hour of exercise, and time for family and friends. Help him make adjustments if a routine isn't working. If it's hard for him to get started on homework right after school, perhaps he'll decide to relax for 15 minutes rather than jumping in immediately.



Set mini-deadlines

Your tween can manage time better by breaking tasks into chunks. She could write down deadlines for specific parts of her work. If she starts studying for a history test at 5 p.m., she might plan to read and take notes on one chapter by 5:30 p.m., then quiz herself until 6 p.m. If she has a science project due in two weeks, she could give herself one week to complete the experiment, two days to write up her findings, two days to make a poster, and three days to practice presenting her project.

continued

Middle Years