

back-to-school checklist

2 months before school starts

- Schedule physical examinations as needed.
- Send or bring necessary forms to the doctor.
- Review summer reading lists and any other school packets that the kids need to complete over the summer. Schedule time to visit library/bookstore and get necessary books.
- If you have not done so already, sign up your kids for fall sports and after-school activities.

6 weeks before school starts

- Sort through the kids' fall clothing; donate or hand down what does not fit.
- Sit down with your planner and write in the entire school calendar for all schools attended by your children. Also, put all sports practices, games, and other after-school activities in the planner. Budget a full hour to complete this task!

1 month before school starts

- Purchase backpacks, lunchboxes, and water bottles as needed.
- Purchase basic wardrobe necessities for each child as needed.
- Check progress on summer reading and math packets.

3 weeks before school starts

- Gather your old shirts for art smocks; place in backpacks.
- Set up a "launch pad" in a convenient location near the door in your house. Get one basket or crate for each child; use these baskets for your kids' belongings, e.g. books, hat, gloves, sports equipment.

2 weeks before school starts

- Start getting your kids back on their school year bedtime routine, including setting aside time for reading if you have let that slip over the summer.
- Get your babysitter schedule set up in advance so you have time in your schedule to work out, run errands, have date night with your hubby, and enjoy an occasional well-deserved girls' night out!
- Check progress on summer reading and math packets. If necessary, set aside time each day to complete summer work.

1 week before school starts

- Schedule kids' haircuts as needed.
- Make a "favorite foods" list for each of your children. Make sure to note what they like best for lunch, snacks, and dinner so that you'll remember those foods at the grocery store.
- Bulk shopping: visit your local big box retailer and stock up on non-perishable basics like juice/milk boxes, napkins, sandwich bags, and snack foods like pretzels. You can also stock up there on supplies like permanent markers, pencils, pens, tissues, and looseleaf paper.

5 days before school starts

- Gather supplies for you: scented candles for after-school stress relief; lined journals for recording notes and thoughts; big sunglasses and tissues if you are anticipating an emotional first day of school!
- Make sure your camera is charged and ready for the first day of school.

3 days before school starts

- Plan meals for the first week of school.
- Grocery shopping: Be sure to make a list; include items needed for your meal plan and from your child(ren)'s "favorite foods" list.

1 day before school starts

- Prepare lunches and snacks for the first day of school
- Pack supplies in backpacks
- Lay out clothes for first day of school
- Set alarm clocks

First Day of School: Enjoy!

A friend has a great "First Day" tradition that I'd like to share with you. She takes a picture of her kids in the same spot every year on the first day of school. Doing this is a great way to see how your kids have grown from year to year!

