

Structure?

(What is the best way to do this?)

Hoping for an article that will tell you all the right answers on how to schedule your school day? Stop reading! This isn't that article!

Seriously, there is no one right way to school your children at home. Schedules are nice. Schedules are helpful. However, the homeschool schedule must be flexible to fit with the different stages of family life. I recommend setting up a basic schedule to which you would like to adhere, paying attention to flexibility for unexpected happenings and planning school around life in general.

I am a morning person. My day seems to go the best when it starts with a bang. What I mean by this is getting a lot of things accomplished early on in the day. Having the kids start their schoolwork by 8:00 or 8:30 is my basic goal. Not working on school after 2:00 is another basic goal. Very simplistic schedule, but that is what my basic school schedule goals are.

Within my basic goal plan, I have flexibility. I print out weekly schedules for the younger kids. They can pick and choose what they will work on first. They can choose doing one subject a day, or they can spread it out over the week. Sometimes if they need help and I can't help them at that time, they have to be flexible and choose a different subject. The older kids plan their own schedules. They know they can't go and do fun things if they don't get the school work done, so it is entirely up to them.

Sometimes school happens later than 2:00 or earlier (rarely) than 8:00. This is due to what is going on with our family life. Sometimes we want to do something during the day together for fun. If this is the case, school may happen in the evening or on a Saturday. If the kids were up really late for some activity, they may not get school started the next day until 10:00 or so.

Occasionally big things happen to mess up the school schedule for a long period of time. This can include sickness, a new baby, vacations, etc. When this happens, as difficult as it may be at the time, remind yourself that eventually you will get back on track and then do it as you can.

Having a large family (nine people), I have learned and am learning all the time how to best make schedules work. Every Sunday we plan out our week as a family so that we know what everyone's expectations are. This reduces the number of surprise scheduling problems. On a regular basis we also look forward through the month and year. We plan things out the best we possibly can and then we try to just "roll with it" when things aren't exactly as planned.

Structure? Definitely needed, but should not be strictly heeded. Below I have listed a couple of sites that may give you some more ideas to help you plan your days.

This site, <http://homeschooling.about.com/od/scheduling/a/dailyschedule.htm>, gives examples of many different family's home school schedules. It might give you some ideas on how to work things for your family.

To get a somewhat humorous view of how one family's schedule changed over the course of the year, visit <http://www.donnayoung.org/blog/2007/11/13/homeschool-schedule/>. I say humorous, simply because sometimes the ideal schedule that you start off with doesn't come off without a hitch.

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