

How to support home learning

Optional guidance to help create a positive learning environment at home

Be realistic about what you can do

- › **You're not expected to become teachers** and your children aren't expected to learn as they do in school. Simply **providing your children with some structure** at home will help them to adapt. Use the tips below to help you make this work for your household
 - › **Experiment** in the first week, then **take stock**. What's working and what isn't? Ask your children, involve them too
 - › **Share the load if there are 2 parents at home**. Split the day into 2-3 hour slots and take turns so you can do your own work
 - › **Take care of your own health and wellbeing**. This will be new for your entire household, so give it time to settle. Take a look at the links at the end of this factsheet for some advice on mental health and wellbeing
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Keep to a timetable wherever possible

- › **Create and stick to a routine** if you can. This is what your children are used to. For example, eat breakfast and lunch at the same time and make sure they're dressed before starting the 'school' day – avoid staying in pyjamas!
 - › **Involve your children in setting a timetable** where possible. It's a great opportunity for them to manage their own time better and it'll give them ownership
 - › **Check in with your children and try to keep to the timetable, but be flexible**. If a task/activity is going well or they want more time, let it extend where possible
 - › If you have more than 1 child at home, **consider combining their timetables**. For example, they might exercise and read a book together – see what works for your household
 - › **Designate a working space if possible**,
 - › **Stick the timetable up on the wall** so everyone knows what they should be doing when, and tick activities off throughout the day
 - › At the end of the day **have a clear cut-off to signal school time is over**
 - › **Distinguish between weekdays and weekends**, to separate school life and home life
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Make time for exercise and breaks throughout the day

- › **Start each morning with a [PE lesson](#)** at 9am with Joe Wicks
 - › If you have a **garden, use it regularly**. If you don't, try to get out **once a day** as permitted by the government (households can be together outdoors but 2 metres apart from others)
 - › Get your children to **write in a diary what they did each day** – this can be a clear sign that the 'school' day has ended
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Other activities to keep children engaged throughout the day

- In your timetable, **make time for some activities you can enjoy together**. Play a board game or do a jigsaw together. Add some creative time or watch a dance video from [Go Noodle](#) to get the heart-rate going
- Get your children to **write postcards** to grandparents, friends or to pen pals
- Ask **grandparents to listen to your children read** on FaceTime (or ask grandparents to read to younger children)
- **Give them chores** to do so they feel more responsible about the daily routine at home
- Ask them to **help you cook** and bake
- Accept that **they'll probably watch more TV/spend time on their phone** – that's ok but you might want to set/agree some screen time limits

Examples of home-learning timetables

- Horniman Primary School in Lewisham created [this timetable](#) for its parents
- [Five Minute Mum](#) has a timetable including lots of activities for younger children

Most importantly, this could be a valuable opportunity to spend time with your child, doing something you can enjoy together.

Have fun. Learn a new skill or explore a hobby that you didn't have a chance to do together before:

Make that recipe you saw in a magazine or that craft project you saved on Pinterest.

Draw portraits of each other – even if they are terrible!

Have a go at knitting or sewing.

Make playdough.

Find shared interests and **don't be too rigid in your expectations.**

See guidance on supporting your mental health and that of your children:

- [Coronavirus and your wellbeing](#) – Mind.org
- [Supporting young people's mental health during this period](#) – Anna Freud Centre