

# Create your School & Activities Book

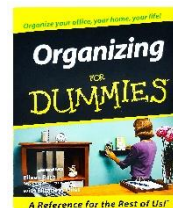
For all the  
School & Activity  
information  
you want at your fingertips



Everything in its Place®



Eileen Roth  
Author





**Everything in its Place®**

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# Create your School & Activities Book

## Why create this book?

- ❖ Have you ever scrambled to find information about school or activities your child is in?
- ❖ Do you wonder if your child will eat today's hot lunch or you need to make a lunch?
- ❖ Do you know which days are holidays, early release, or parent conference days?
- ❖ Do you have the number to call if your child is sick?
- ❖ Do you know the schedule for before/after school activities like band, dance, sports, or scouts?
- ❖ Do you want to schedule a dentist or doctor appointment so your child doesn't miss an important or difficult class?
- ❖ Do you know when the Parent Organization meets?
- ❖ Do you know the schedule for school events like music programs and football games?
- ❖ Do you know when it's your turn to drive for the carpool?

While most of this reference information is on a school website, some of it is not. Plus, it's so much easier to flip a page in a binder to find the information faster, especially if you have two or more students to track all their activities. For all these reasons, it's a good idea to create a School & Activities Book.

The School & Activities Book will have sections for each of your children's different schools as well as a place for all of their activities, whether the activities are through the school or not.

# Find Information Fast with these Tools

The key idea is to find information fast and to protect the pages since this information book will be used often. To do that, you will want a binder that is going to be used frequently along with inside protection called Sheet Protectors. Dividers with plastic tabs will help you find the information fast. These are the 3 highly recommended supplies:

1. Binder
2. Dividers
3. Sheet protectors

## 1. Binders

Consider purchasing a 3-ring binder with all these features:

Heavy Duty  
Binder for Sheet Protectors  
Color  
View binder  
Spine Label  
D-rings  
Locking rings

This list may seem like a lot of features, but this binder needs to be durable to last a long time. Each feature is explained below.

*Tip:* These two have all the features and are 11" wide:

**Avery's® Heavy Duty One Touch EZD binder** (order online)  
**Staples Better Binder®** (hard binder -rubber edges)

### Heavy Duty

Heavy Duty means the binder is sturdier than other binders. As this binder will have consistent use, it's a good idea to buy a very durable one, especially if you have several children.

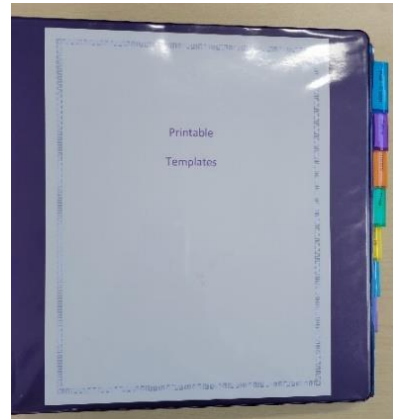
There will also be more activities with two or more children. A 1-1.5" inch binder should be sufficient for two schools and several activities. For more children and/or many activities, you will want a 2-3" binder.

## Binders for Sheet Protectors

Some binders say “for sheet protectors” or are 11” wide which are recommended for these binders. (see *Sheet Protectors*).

The sheet protectors are 9.25” wide and the dividers “for sheet protectors” are 9.25 wide (10” with the tabs). So the binders “for sheet protectors” need to be 11” wide to prevent the divider tabs from sticking over the edge of the binder and bending.

*This is what you do **NOT** want to happen. You can't see that there are 8 tabs with the last 3 bent. (This is a 10” binder).*



## Binder Color

Choose a color that allows you to find the binder fast. There's a good chance you will want to keep this binder in your kitchen area, so you want it to be easily found. That probably means choosing a color other than white or black if either of those are your main kitchen colors.

*Tip:* You might want to choose a color that your children like as they may use this reference book, especially in middle and high school, maybe as young as 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

## View Binder

View binders have clear protective covers on the front and spine of the binder, and often on the back cover too. It's called a View Binder because you can view the name of the binder on both the spine and the front cover. (see *picture above*)

You can label the binder front with a regular piece of 8.5 x 11 paper and slip that inside the protective cover. For the spine you can create a spine label. (see *Spine Labels*)

*Tip:* Even if you have no artistic skills, you can make a simple border and a title in any Word program under Mailings > Page Borders just like the border on this page. If you want a different border, canva.com (join for free) has free templates to create your front cover. It has graphics you can use for personal use too.

## Spine Labels:

A new binder will tell you how many inches wide it is, or you can measure the width. Make the label .5" smaller than the width. *i.e.* It's easier to put a 1.5" width label into a 2" binder spine than a 2" spine label that will hug the sides of the protective cover.

Plus, the .5" shorter spine insert will leave some binder color surrounding the sides of the spine label.



It's easier to insert a spine label in the binder when the front, spine, and back are **open** in a straight line, or even slightly bent backward.

Trying to insert the spine label when the binder is closed is difficult. There's no give to keep the clear spine protector away from the binder itself. So if you push, the paper will bend and then it won't go down to the bottom.

Use card stock if you want a stiffer piece of paper to make it easier.

You can even use colored paper or card stock, especially on white or black binders.



Wilson Jones® has clear plastic Spine Inserts which also make it easier to put paper spine labels into the binder spine.

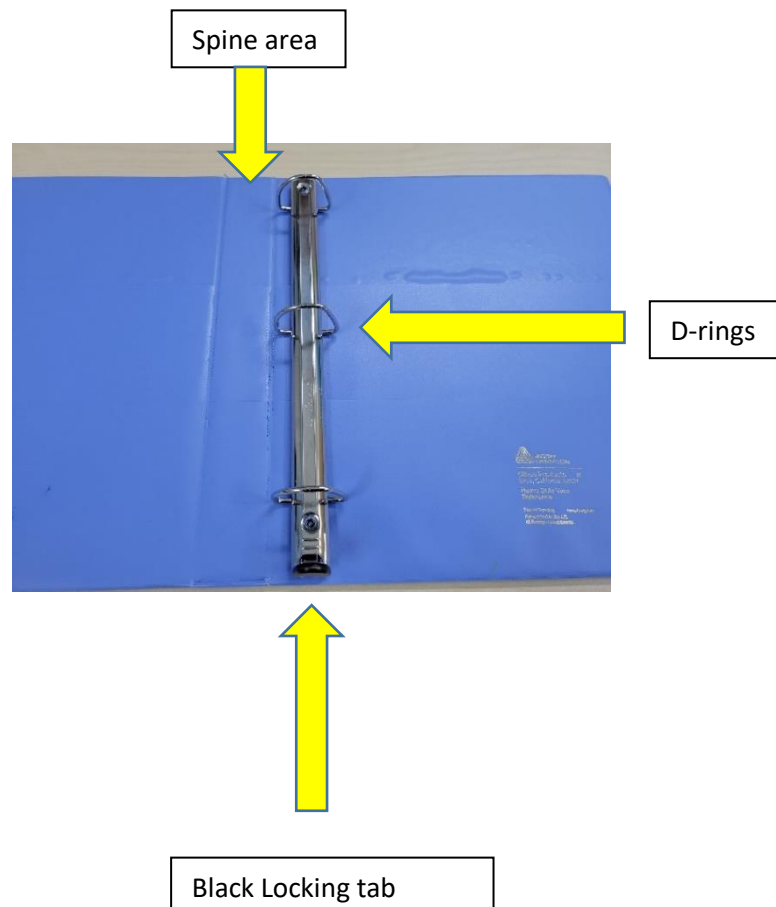
(Sleeve opens to put paper into sleeve)

## D-rings vs. C-rings

- ❖ C-rings look like a circle on the ring bar which sits directly on the spine of the binder.
- ❖ D-rings are flat on one edge of the ring like the letter “D”,  
And the ring bar is on the bottom panel of the binder next to the spine.

D-rings hold more papers than C-rings.

If you have 3 or more students, the D-rings will be better because each child's activities will use more space in the binder, especially in high school.



## Locking rings

There is a black tab on the edge of the metal ring bar to keep the rings locked together. Whether your children are very young or in high school, locking rings prevent wasting time re-organizing a binder when it drops and everything spills out of it. Be sure the binder says locking rings.

## 2. Dividers

Dividers are your binder sections and will be handled constantly, so they need to be durable. Since sheet protectors have an extra strip for the 3 holes, making them 9.25" wide, the dividers need to be extra wide (9.25 x 11) to cover them. It appears no one makes full plastic dividers in Extra Wide size anymore. I even called the Avery® office. As of this writing, I found paper dividers with colored, plastic tabs as extra wide: [Avery Big Tab Insertable Dividers #11220 - 5 tabs; #11222 – 8 tabs](#). Online at Staples, Office Depot/Office Max, Quill, and Amazon. The [Office Depot Big Tab Extra-Wide Insertable Dividers, #574929 – 5 tabs, and #574978 - 8 tabs](#) at Office Depot/Office Max stores. (clear tabs are available too).

### Color or clear divider tabs

Clear tabs work fine, but color tabs help you find a divider tab faster. And it's a little more fun for both the parents and the kids to use, especially if there are different schools. You and the kids get to know which color is their School and which is their Name section.

### 5 or 8 Dividers (sections)

This is your choice. If you have only one child, 5 divider sections are probably plenty, but you could divide up different activities like music, sports, drama, dance, or scouts into 8 sections. **Move the white card insert** to move child Name tabs as they go to the next school level.

With kids in different schools: Elementary, Middle/Jr. High or H.S. (tab names), make:  
School tabs for general school information  
Child's name tab (behind their school tab)

Each child's name tab holds:  
individual **Bell Schedule – Classes**  
individual **activities**

It's your choice if you want some activities as separate divider tabs: like Scouts or Sports - especially if two or more children participate in the same activity. You could also have a tab called Local for museums, park district, and local events or just label one Other or General.

Need more tabs? Create two sets of 5 dividers (10 tabs) or two sets of 8 dividers (16 tabs) for 4+ kids. If several students are in high school, consider a separate High School book.

Ex: These 8 divider tabs show 4 children: 2 in Elementary, 1 in Jr. High and 1 in High School  
Each child's name is behind their school with their **Bell Schedule-Classes and activities**.  
General school info is under the school tab.



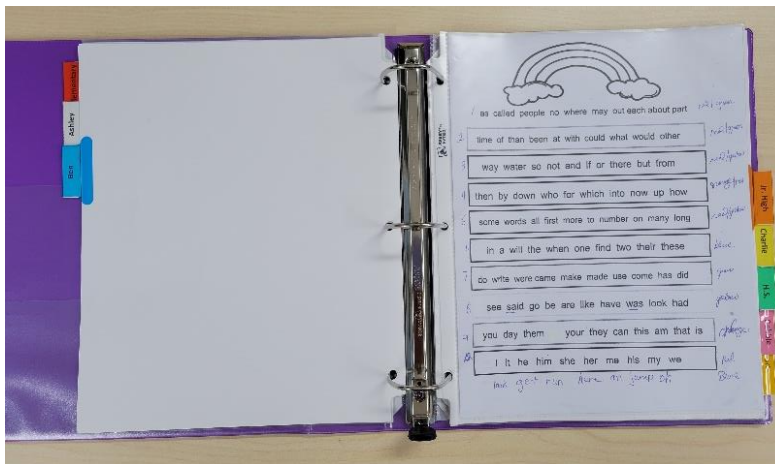


## Divider Tab Labels

Most dividers come with card stock to make labels on the computer. If it's a full sheet, type each label name **twice** - once on the left column and copy to the right column. **Use font size 18 (Arial or Calibri) and center** your typing.

Fold each insert sideways to put it in the divider tab. Put the fold in last to pull out easier. *(Use Return Address Labels below if you only have a small piece of card stock for the labels.)*

- ❖ Folding the insert will make the insert thicker so it will not easily fall out.
- ❖ You can also read the divider tab whether it's on the right side or the left side when the binder is open. It's easier to go back to a previous tab when **words face the rings**.



**Don't toss the extra card stock.** Once you print a sheet of tab labels, it won't go into the printer again as a full sheet. To use the rest of the card stock use the labels below on it.

**Return Address labels fit** on tab card stock with a little trimming. **Cut the right side** to move the tab name more to the right. Trim the top to move the name up. Use [Avery #5167 for laser/ #8167 for ink jet](#). Place the labels on the card stock when you change the name of divider tabs. **Center the label** and use readable fonts like **Arial or Calibri in bold and Font size 18**

The labels also work if you have a small sheet of card stock with only 5 or 8 tab inserts. In that case, label the front and back to make the card stock thicker inside the divider tab.

Create your own return address labels too, so it's worth the purchase.  
*Computer type is so much easier to read than handwriting!*

*Tip:* Make a set of divider labels for another binder at the same time to use the tab card stock in one shot and save the second full sheet as a spare.

## Divider Pockets – not need

They no longer make extra wide dividers with pockets. You don't really need pockets because you can unfold a brochure and put it in a sheet protector just like a flyer.

### 3. Sheet Protectors

Sheet protectors are clear plastic sleeves in which pieces of paper can be inserted in the middle. When you receive school information or flyers (or print from the website) that you want to refer to again, put them into these sleeves. The sheet protector protects papers from:

- ❖ being bent or torn
- ❖ getting dirty
- ❖ children trying to write on them

Put two pieces of paper back-to-back in one sheet protector to use the front and the back of it. Of course, a two-sided document shows on the front and back.

Medium or heavy weight is best. And the package should say “acid free” or “archival safe” so the ink doesn’t stick to the protector.

There is a reinforced white strip with the 3 holes across the left side of the sheet protector to keep the holes from ripping. The extra strip makes the sheet protector 9.25” wide, which is why the dividers need to be 9.25” wide (10” with tab) and the binder needs to be 11” wide to cover the tabs. The dividers or binder may say “for sheet protectors” or “extra wide.” Check dimensions.

#### Glare vs. non-glare

Sheet protectors come in glare and non-glare protectors. The first protectors were glare – they picked up reflections from light making it hard to read through the sheet protectors. Today most protectors are non-glare.

Glare



Non-Glare



# Items to put in your School & Activities Book

Create a section for each school, especially if you have children at different schools for Elementary, Middle, and High school.

If you only have one child, you can just call that section School. The recommendation is to call it Elementary, Middle/Jr. High. or H.S. vs. the specific school name, just in case you move and the children change schools. *It's also a shorter tab name!*

It's best to keep all children's activities in one book as they may occur before/after school or on weekends, **even if the activities are not through the school**. Some of these items will be on the school website or come as flyers from the school. Others are personal activities. These lists are alphabetical so you can make your own order inside the binder.

## For each School

Before/After school care  
Bell Schedule –Classes \*  
Bus Schedule  
Calendar  
Field Trips  
Fundraising events  
Homework Resources  
Map

Meal Program Costs  
Monthly Menu  
Parent Organization Information  
School Rules – including Dress Code  
School Uniforms  
Special Days: red day, hat day,  
Spelling Lists  
Supplies List

## Before and After School Activities

Activity Bus Schedule  
Activity Information  
Activity Schedules (Dance, Music, Drama, Newspaper, Yearbook, Student Govt., etc.)  
Carpool Members \*  
Carpool Schedule – Daily \*  
Carpool Schedule – Weekly \*  
Local city events for children  
Museums  
Park District programs  
Public Library hours and programs  
Religious School Schedule  
School Events - Theater, Music, Dance Performance Dates  
Scout Meetings & Location  
Sports Games  
Sports – Practices & Meets (Football, Basketball, Tennis, Golf, Gymnastics, Cheerleading, etc.)  
Uniforms for sports, music or scouts

*\*Items with an asterisk have spreadsheets included for you to use.*

# Organizing Tips for your School & Activities Book

## School Calendar

Print the School Calendar from the school website.  
Color code the calendar with 4 different colors:

	<u>Color suggestion</u>	
School Holidays	Blue	
No School days (other than holidays)	Pink	(important if need child care)
Early Release days	Yellow	(may need child care)
Parent Teacher Conferences	Green	("go" - may need child care)

*Tip:* Only yellow highlighters do not show when paper is copied.  
Use yellow for Early Release in case it changes.

## School Map

This may not be provided as more schools have added stricter security and only allow people into the main office area except for school functions like a music concert or sports event.

## School Menu

You can leave the menu in the book, or you may want to hang it up on a bulletin board in the kitchen where each child can see the hot lunch meals provided. If you make school lunches, you may want to sit down each night when dinner is over and ask each child if they want to bring lunch. Then you can prepare lunches the night before.

## Bell Schedule – Classes

Elementary School children do not usually change classrooms, except for lunch, physical education, music or art classes. So they probably don't have a bell schedule except for the beginning and end of the day. Ask your student what time lunch is so that you can arrange doctor appointments around the lunch schedule if possible.

Middle School and High School students change classes and follow a set schedule. There is a spreadsheet called **Bell Schedule - Classes** provided that even includes passing times between classes. It will help you to arrange for doctor appointments that are not during classes that are either important or difficult for your student. The Excel spreadsheet will open in Google Sheets.

Important - Copy this spreadsheet before using it so you have a form for each child and each school year.

## Carpool Schedules

You will find 3 different spreadsheets for carpooling. They will open in Excel or Google Sheets. Important - Copy each form to use from year to year and for each child's activities.

### Carpool Schedule – Members

This spreadsheet is designed to list all drivers and the days they are driving under one Activity. It includes the addresses of all the Activity participants. If you start with this as your planning sheet, complete it in pencil. Then you can erase if someone needs to change dates. Afterwards, type the final schedule and share it with all the carpool members for that Activity. Each member of the carpool should have all other parent's phone numbers in their phone in case of an emergency on their driving day.

### Carpool Schedule - Daily

You can list all the days, dates and drivers on each separate line. This is great if you just have a few activities, and your child can see when s/he needs to be at practice or meets for that activity. There's plenty of space for the driver name and phone number in case you need to call.

### Carpool Schedule – Weekly

This spreadsheet is designed to list all activities on a weekly basis. Put the driver's name under the day of the week. This is great for swim practice or football practice where your student is carpooling multiple times in a week as well as listing all practices on a weekly basis.

*Tip:* Driver names might be Mrs. Parker, or just Parkers

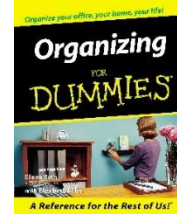
For practices that meet more than once a week, parents can decide, based on their availability, if it's better for one parent to drive for one week or for each parent to drive a certain day of the week so no parent is tied up for an entire week or forgets what week they are driving.



# Everything in its Place®



## Eileen Roth *Your Organizing Tour Guide*



As the author of *Organizing For Dummies*®, Eileen Roth demonstrates how to be more productive, reduce your stress, and save time and money. Eileen named her company Everything in its Place® because she truly believes that you can find a place for everything.

Eileen is a national speaker, trainer and productivity expert in the areas of:

**Office Organization**  
**Time Management**

**Home Organization**  
**Student Organization**

She helps people learn how to put everything in its P.L.A.C.E.™ This reduces stress and people find things WHEN they need them. In fact Eileen Roth's organizing principles are simple to remember, easy to implement, and maintenance is minutes a day to stay that way.

Eileen Roth's background stems from over 15 years in office and association administration. Clients include corporations, associations, and research facilities such as: Argonne National Labs, Northwest Airlines, the Paper Industry Manufacturer's Association, Wisconsin Bankers Association, ABA-New England and TAP Pharmaceuticals.

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