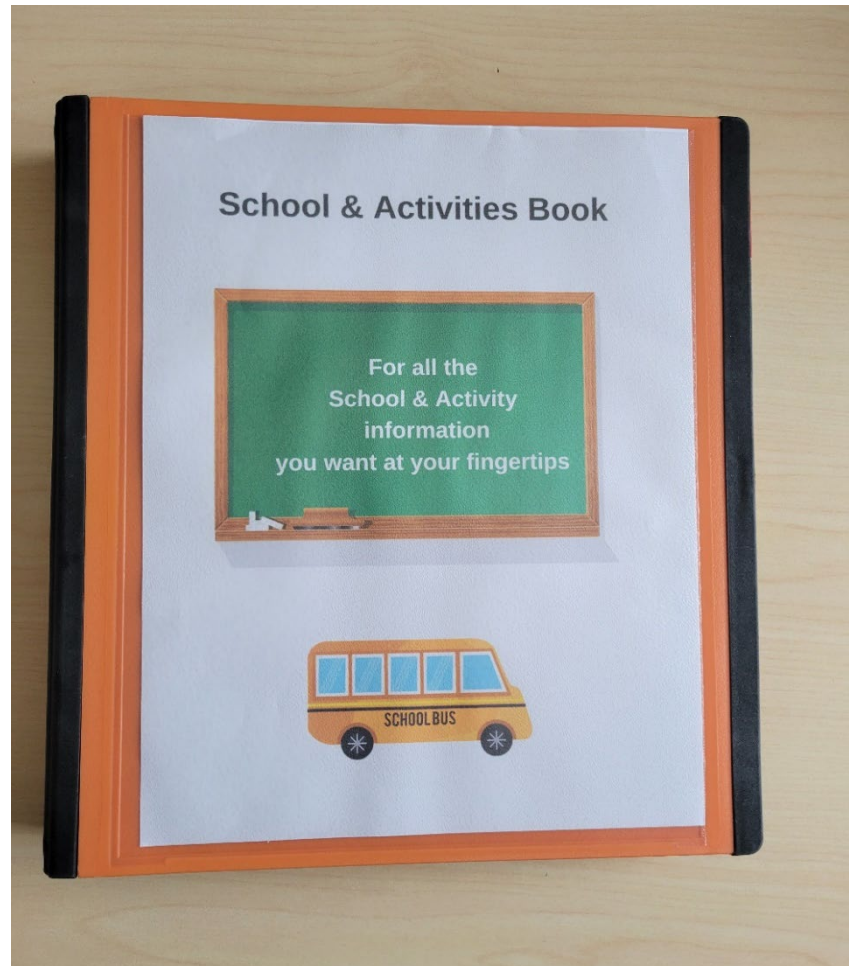
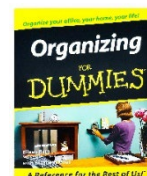


Stop the Stress: How to Organize a School & Activities Book



Eileen Roth
Author





Everything in its Place[®]

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How to Organize a 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 know the schedule for before/after school activities like sports, dance, 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?

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

While most school information is on a school website, many Activities are not. If you track 2 or more children's school and activity information, it's easier to just open a binder and find all the information in one place than open the computer for school information and search other websites for other Activities.

IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ THIS

Very specific binders, dividers and sheet protectors are explained in this document as this book will probably be used daily as a reference book.

Consider how many times you or your children will look up Class Schedules, Menus, School Events, Activities, Carpool Schedule, etc. You can choose not to use sheet protectors but expect papers to get torn and/or dirty if you do not use them.

Specific products are listed because you need an **Extra Wide binder** to cover both the sheet protectors (9.25") and the **Extra Wide dividers for sheet protectors (9.25" but 10" with tab)**. So please **do not buy anything until** you read through this guide.

While specific products are listed when they are explained in these boxes, look for a separate page that lists all product numbers on one page.



Find Information Fast with these Tools

The key idea is to find information fast and to protect all the pages. So we need to start with what the tools are to understand how this books works. Then you can add information.

1. Sheet Protectors

Sheet Protectors are clear plastic sleeves in which pieces of paper can be inserted in the middle. When you receive information (or print from the website) that you want to refer to again, put it into these sleeves. Take it out to update sheets, and then return them into the sheet protector.

Think about the end of the school year. What condition was your child's binder in?

Were papers folded, torn or dirty?

Were some of them coming out of the notebook because the holes are torn?

Do you think all papers made it for the whole year, or some might have been missing?

Did your child have sheet protectors? Were those papers in good shape?

The sheet protector protects papers from:

- ❖ being bent or torn - especially around the holes
- ❖ getting dirty from student's hands
- ❖ younger children writing/drawing on them

Put two pieces of paper back-to-back in one sheet protector to use the front and the back of it. A two-sided document shows on the front and back and should be just one sheet.

Medium or heavy weight sheet protectors are best. Look for packages that say "**acid free**" or "**archival safe**" so the ink doesn't stick to the protector, especially if it will get updated often – i.e. school menu is updated monthly.

The sheet protector has a reinforced white strip with 3 holes down the left side to keep the ring holes from ripping out of the binder. The extra strip makes the sheet protector 9.25" wide instead of 8.5".

Glare vs. Non-glare

Sheet protectors come in glare and non-glare protectors. The first protectors were glare – which means they picked up reflections from light making it hard to read through. Today most protectors are non-glare, but check your package.

Glare



Non-glare



2. Dividers for Sheet Protectors - Extra Wide (not regular dividers)

Dividers save you time finding items. 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. *(10" with the tab so the tab extends beyond the sheet protector.)*

It is difficult to find full plastic dividers in the Extra Wide size. I even called the Avery® manufacturer, but they stopped making them. So these dividers are paper with plastic tabs.

As of this writing, these dividers are Extra Wide with colored, plastic tabs:

Avery Big Tab Insertable Dividers #11220 = 5 tabs and #11222 = 8 tabs

Online at Office Depot/Office Max, Quill, and Amazon.

or

Office Depot Big Tab Extra-Wide Insertable Dividers, #574929 = 5 tabs, and #574978 = 8 tabs

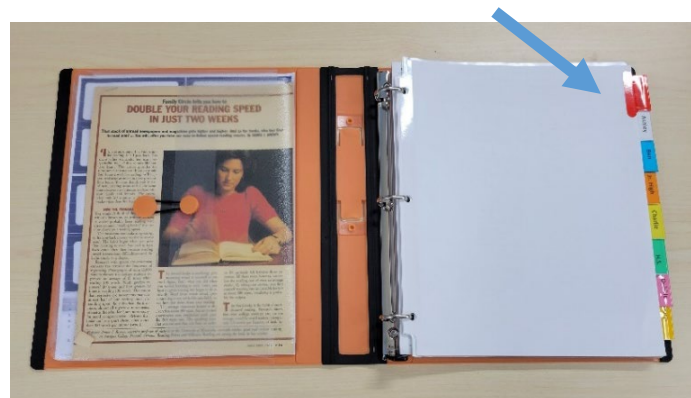
Office Depot/Office Max stores and Amazon



Extra wide dividers

Dividers need to extend over sheet protectors

Clear binder pocket on left side of this binder



Color or Clear divider tabs

Clear tabs work, but colored tabs help you find a specific divider tab faster. And it's more fun for the kids to use. You and the kids get to know which color is their School tab and which is their Name tab for their personal Activities for that year.

5 or 8 Divider Tabs *(see picture below as you read)*

This is your choice. If you have only one child, 5 divider tabs may be enough.

With 8 tabs you divide up schools and can use each child's name for their specific Activities.

School Tab Names: Elementary, Middle/Jr. High or H.S. *(do not use specific school names)*

Under School tabs: General school information - Menu, Parent organization, Rules, etc.

Under Name tabs: Each Child's personal Bell Schedule, Activities, Special Events, etc.

Each child's Name tab goes right after their School tab.

Move the divider tab inserts when children change schools. This means they will not have a permanent color Name tab and you will have to move tabs some years.

It's your choice if you want some Activities as separate divider tabs: like Sports, Scouts or Religious schools, especially if two or more children are in the same Activity. You could also consider a **Local tab** for information on local events including museums, park district, public library, etc.

Need more tabs? Create two sets of 5 dividers = 10 tabs or two sets of 8 dividers = 16 tabs.

Ex: The example below uses 8 divider tabs for 4 children: 2 in Elementary, 1 in Jr. High, 1 in High School and 1 extra tab for everyone's Sports -- which often occur on weekends and the whole family attends.

Even if you don't need all 5 or 8 tabs now, keep them in the book; you may want to add categories later or in another year. If you only have 1 child, you could separate more Activities.

Tip: Turn the divider inserts inside out to rename them or put new labels on the tab insert.



Divider Tab Insert Names

Most divider packages come with 1 full sheet of card stock to print tab names on the computer. Type each tab name **twice** - once on the left column and copy that column to the right column.

Use a readable font, size 16 or 18, and center or right align your typing.

(left align is blocked where tabs overlap – see Sports tab on pg. 5)

Tip: If you happen to need 2 sets of divider tabs for two different binders, make both sets on one card stock and save the second full sheet of card stock tabs as a spare.

Fold each card insert sideways to put it in the divider tab. Put the fold in last to pull out easier.

Folding the insert:

- ❖ Makes the insert thicker so it will not easily slip out.
- ❖ When the binder is open, you can read the divider tab on either side to easily go to a different tab, especially when **words face the rings on both sides**.



Don't toss the extra card stock. Once you print a sheet of tab names, it won't go into the printer again as a partial sheet. To use partial card stock or change tab names, use labels. You could use a label maker or Return Address Labels.

Return Address labels.

Use [Avery #5167 for laser/ #8167 for ink jet](#)

Return Address Labels fit on tab card stock. Cut the right side to move the tab name more to the right. Trim the top to move the name up.

Labels also work on 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 so it won't slip out.

While you don't need a whole package of return address labels, you can use them to label anything and/or create your own return address labels. *Computer type is so much easier to read than handwriting!*

Note: Divider Pockets

They no longer make Extra Wide Dividers with pockets.

So unfold a brochure and put it in a sheet protector just like a flyer.

2. Binders

Consider purchasing a binder with all these features:

- ❖ Heavy Duty
- ❖ Binder for Sheet Protectors (important)
- ❖ Color
- ❖ View binder
- ❖ Spine Insert
- ❖ D-rings
- ❖ Locking rings



Avery 11" wide



Staples Better Binder 11" wide

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. And the width is extremely important and not the usual 10 ¼" width. You want to cover the divider tabs and they are **extra wide** to cover sheet protectors. So you want a binder that says **"binder for sheet protectors."**

Tip: These two "binders for sheet protectors" have all the features and are **11" wide**.

Avery's® Heavy Duty View Binder - One Touch EZD with locking D rings (not C rings)
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 during the year, it's a good idea to buy a very durable one. It's even more important if you have several children using it, especially if they are young. The Staples Better Binder is a hard binder, heavier than the Avery binder, but more durable for long-term.

1" D-ring binder holds 250-275 pages and should be sufficient for 1-3 children.

1.5"-2" D-ring binder may be better for 4 or more children, especially if some are in high school and have many Activities.

Binders for Sheet Protectors

“Binders for sheet protectors” are recommended for these binders.

The sheet protectors are 9.25” wide and the “dividers for sheet protectors” are 9.25” but 10” with the tabs. So the “binders for sheet protectors” need to be 11 -11.5” 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.
The 8 tabs are sticking out beyond the binder
And the last 3 are bent because they stick out
And are not protected by the binder.
(Avery Heavy Duty 10” binder shown.)*

Use an 11-11.5” binder width to cover the tabs.



Not sticking out like this

Binder Color

Choose a color that allows you to find the binder fast.

You might want to choose a color that your children like as they will probably use this reference book too, especially in middle and high school, maybe as young as 2nd or 3rd grade.

View Binder

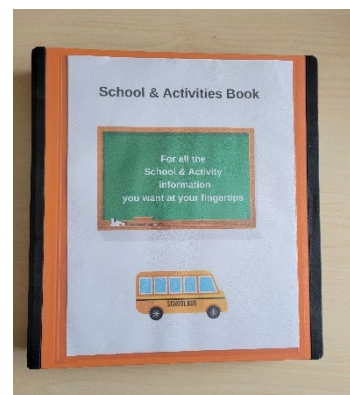
View binders have clear protective covers on the front and the spine. You can insert a front cover and the name of the binder on the spine which is what you usually see first – the spine.

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 insert. (see *Spine Inserts*)

For the cover, you can make a simple border and a title in any Word program under Design > Page Borders just like the border on this page. If you want a different cover, you can join canva.com for free to find graphics to create your own cover.

Bonus:

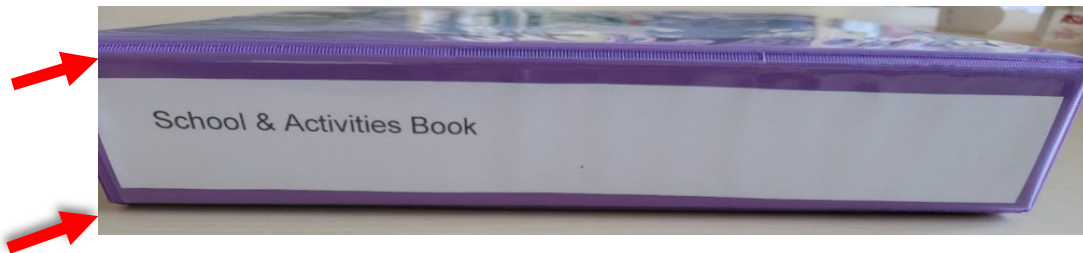
**This front cover is
included in the downloads.**



Spine Inserts:

A new binder will tell you how many inches wide it is, 1, 1.5, 2, or 3". Make a spine insert .5" smaller than the width. *i.e.* It's easier to put a 1.5" width spine insert into a 2" binder spine than a 2" spine insert that will tightly hug the sides of the spine and be hard to get down.

Plus, the .5" shorter spine insert will leave some binder color surrounding the sides of the spine insert. (See the extra purple around the spine insert below?)



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. You want it full length to easily get it in and out. Sometimes a tweezer helps get an insert out when you want to change it.

It's easier to put a spine insert in the binder when the front, spine, and back are **open** in a straight line, or even slightly bent backward. To do this, stand the binder on its bottom edge and bend it slightly backward. The spine plastic protector will separate more from the binder.

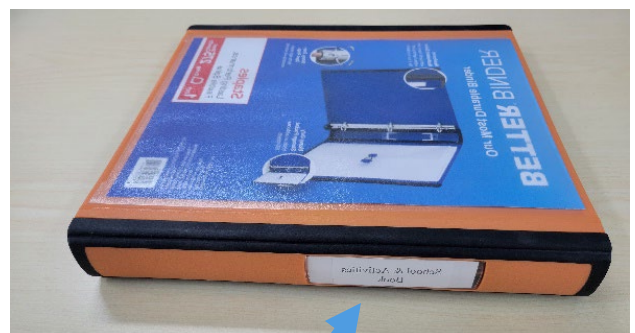
Tips: Card stock is easier to load than regular paper because paper bends easily. Use colored paper or colored card stock and match the cover and spine inserts.



Wilson Jones® has clear plastic Spine Inserts which also help to label the binder spine, especially small binders (1/2 or 1")

Sleeve opens to insert paper.

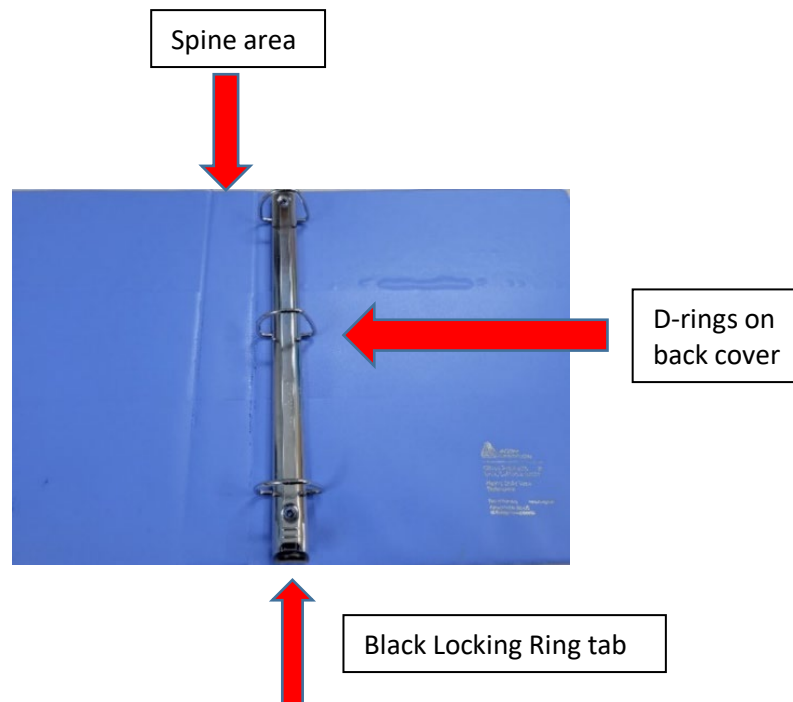
Some binders have a small slot like the [Staples Better Binder](#). Write or use a label (Avery 5160 address labels) or a label maker on the small tab to identify the spine. If you change the name, you can always make a new label and cover it or just use a piece of paper cut to size.



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 and are recommended.



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 young or in high school, locking rings prevent wasting time re-organizing a binder when it is dropped and items spill out.

4. Supplies Summary

That probably seems like a lot of directions, but I hope you see why it is important to have the right supplies. Here's a quick list of the supplies with requirements. Be sure to read the Divider Tabs section for how to name the tabs and where they go. This is important for the efficiency of finding things in the binder.

1. Sheet Protectors: 9.25" wide

Non-glare

Archival safe or Acid Free

2. Dividers: 9.25" wide (10" with tab)

for sheet protectors" or Extra Wide

5 or 8 tab (one or two packages – plan your tabs)

Colored or clear tabs

Avery Big Tab Insertable Dividers

#11220 = 5 tabs and #11222 = 8 tabs

Online at Office Depot/Office Max, Quill, and Amazon.

or

Office Depot Big Tab Extra-Wide Insertable Dividers,

#574929 = 5 tabs and #574978 = 8 tabs

Office Depot/Office Max stores and Amazon

3. Binders: 11" wide

"for sheet protectors"

Avery® Extra Heavy Duty View Binder – one Touch EZD with Locking D rings

Staples Better Binder®

Optional items:

Wilson Jones Spine Inserts

Avery Return Address Labels 5167 /laser or 8167/inkjet

Label Maker

Next: What to put in the School & Activities Book.

Items to put in your School & Activities Book

Create a divider tab for each school, since each child will at some time be in Elementary, Middle/Jr. High, and High School. If you only have one child, you can just call that section School. When the youngest child has completed the earliest school, you can stop using that tab name. (Youngest is out of Elementary school.)

The recommendation is to call the tabs: **Elementary, Middle/ Jr. High or H.S.** vs. the specific school name, in case you move and/or the children change schools. It's also usually a shorter tab name than the actual school name.

It's best to keep all children's activities in one book, **even if the activities are not through the school** or happen on weekends. Then there is one organized place to look for the information.

- ❖ Some of this information will be on the school website and can be printed out.
- ❖ Some will probably come as flyers or can be printed from the website.
- ❖ Others are personal activities.

The lists are alphabetical, but you can make your own order inside the binder. Put the school info behind the school tab and the personal/individual activities behind that child's name tab. This includes their personal Bell /Class Schedule.

Using the spreadsheets:

Copy the spreadsheets to re-use them for other children and for next year.

These are Excel Sheets, but they can be used in Google Sheets. When it's filled in, keep it inside a sheet protector to protect it. You can fill them in on the computer or handwrite in the rows.

If you have never used a spreadsheet, it's like a table.

- ❖ Click inside a box that you want to enter information.
- ❖ Type in that box.
- ❖ Hit the Enter key to save that box.
- ❖ The Enter key moves to the next row in that column. (down)
- ❖ To move across a row, you can skip ENTER and just use the right arrow → or click into the new box. The arrow automatically saves like Enter.
- ❖ Save the document every so often. Don't wait until you are done.

Correcting type:

You can backspace or delete if you have not yet hit Enter. If you already hit Enter, click back into the box you want to fix and type there OR type in the upper long white box in Excel. It's right above the column names. It duplicates the type in the box you are currently in. It's the formula box in Excel.

You can also handwrite the information, but it's so much easier to read computer type and update information or copy it – particularly the two Carpool sheets.

School and Activity Information

The spreadsheets are in Excel but can be used in Google Sheets. (see youtube)

Rows are larger to handwrite on the spreadsheets, however computer type is easier to read.

A period is near the bottom of each spreadsheet in order to print blank rows.

An asterisk** means it is an ***included spreadsheet. (12 templates)

Behind Each School Tab

Before/After School Care

Bus Schedule

Bus Schedule for Activities (before/after school)

Calendar (School and any Activities calendars)

Field Trip Checklist*

Fundraising Events

Homework Resources

Map (inside school)

Meal Program Costs

Menu

Parent Organization (PTO, PTA)

School Rules – including Dress Code

School Uniforms

Special Days: red day, hat day,

Behind Each Student Tab

Activity Schedule by Child* (example included)

Activity Schedule by Day* (example included)

Bell Schedule – Classes*

Carpool Members* (example included)

Carpool Schedule* (example included)

Computer Logins* can type inside the form, print, and keep on separate USB

Field trip Checklist *

Scouts - Meetings, Location and Uniforms

Special Events * (Theater, Music, Dance, Sports Meets, Field trips)

Spelling Lists

Sports - Practices, Meets and Uniforms (Football, Tennis, Golf, Gymnastics, Cheerleading)

Supplies List

Syllabus or Outline of Class Topics

Tracker – Assignments*

Tracker – Reading Log*

Tracker - Reports, Quizzes, Tests*

Tracker – Report Cards*

Local Tab

Fairs, Holiday events, Special programs

Museums

Park District or Public Library programs

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:

School Holidays

No School days (other than holidays)

Early Release days

Parent Teacher Conferences

Highlighter Color suggestion

Blue

Pink (important if need child care)

Yellow (may need child care)

Green ("go"- may need child care)

Tips: Only yellow highlighters do not show when papers are copied.

School Menu

You can leave menus in the book, and/or you may want to hang menus on a bulletin board in the kitchen where each child can quickly see their school's menu.

Each night before dinner is over ask each child if they want to bring lunch. Or on a weekly or monthly basis, have each child use their first initial to mark that they will eat the school lunch on that day. (no mark means need a packed lunch).

Mark on the menu all field trips that need a packed lunch with the child's initials.

The menu tells you when you need to make school lunches, and you can do it the night before.

School Map

This may not be provided as more schools have added stricter security. If it is, put a copy in the student's notebook at school.

Bell Schedule – Classes

Elementary School children do not usually change classrooms, except for lunch, physical education, music or art classes. So they may not have a bell schedule except for the beginning and end of the day.

Middle School and High School students change classes and follow a set schedule. This spreadsheet even includes passing times. Keep a copy in the student's notebook at school and hanging in his/her locker.

Bell Schedules will help you arrange doctor/dentist appointments that are not during classes that are important or difficult for your student.

Syllabus

Copies of these can be online and in the student's notebook at school for fast reference.

Activity Schedule by Child (example included)

Create the original list grouping Activities under each child's name and put a copy under each child's divider tab. Try to organize it by day, with anything daily first, then anything starting on the earliest day of the week, even if it also meets on another day. Highlight each child's name on the first entry so you don't have to make separate lists for each child.

Activity Schedule by Day of the Week (example included)

Sort the Activity Schedule by Day. If something is more than 1 day, put the item under each day so you can see everything that occurs on each day of the week. Then you can keep your list in the very front of your School & Activities Book or choose another place, like a bulletin board, so you know what each day's schedule is for all children.

Carpool Members (example included)

This spreadsheet is designed to list all drivers grouped under each Activity. It includes the addresses of all the members for driving the children home.

Carpool Schedule (example included)

You can list all the days and drivers on each separate line. There's space for the driver's name and phone number in case you need to call. You may also want a copy of this list in your car at all times in the event you need to reach a driver.

Tips: Driver names might be listed as Mrs. Parker or by first name depending on what your children call other parents.

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.

Special Events

This could be music programs, plays, field trips, dances, sports games the student and/or the family wants to attend. This could include personal events too like birthday parties, bowling league, family camping trips, etc. *Don't forget to add these to your family Calendar.*

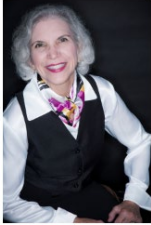
Questions or ideas for something you would like a form for?

Let me know by email: speaker@everythinginitsplace.net
Please use this Subject Line: School & Activities Book

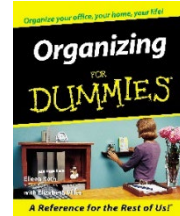
All comments welcome.



Everything in its Place®



Eileen Roth *Your Organizing Tour Guide for Success*



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 takes minutes a day.

Major National Media

Today Show
Oprah
Real Simple
Self
Reader's Digest
Self
Men's Health

Business Publications

Fast Company
Successful Meetings
Office Pro
Event Solutions
ASTD's Training & Development (ATD)

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everythinginitsplace.net

Visit my Etsy store called **Printables for All Ages** for more products.
Visit the website for more information on being organized.