

20 Must Do's Before School Starts {Checklist}

1. **Assess clothes and make necessary additions.** Clothing your children does not have to be expensive. With a little planning, strategic shopping, and timing, you can be clothing your kids on the cheap in no time.
2. **Get haircuts or hair styled.** Don't wait until the last minute or the barber shops and beauty salons will be packed.
3. **Assess and buy school supplies.** Done haphazardly, it can be tiring and expensive. However, with a little planning and preparation, it can be accomplished quickly and inexpensively.
4. **Review school schedule,** including starting and ending times.
5. **Attend school orientation and / or open house.** We will also participate in the "Back to School" night, usually held during the first week of school, to meet teachers and see my son in this new environment. I'll note friends, frenemies, and potential trouble makers. 😊
6. **Research the school and/or teacher.** You might want to write your child's teacher a note if there's anything in particular that he or she should know about your child.
7. **Prepare for the first day** (layout clothes, label supplies with your child's name, pack book bag with supplies), the week before school starts. Here are 5 Simple Ways to Prep the Night Before.
8. **Discuss meals** (breakfast, lunch, snacks, and dinner). Ask the kids what types of foods they would like. Make these items part of your regular grocery list.
9. **Discuss transportation** (before- and after-school).
10. **Start a school calendar,** if the school doesn't publish one.
11. **Decide how you will handle / process school paperwork.** My best tip: the easy way to sort and process school papers is to empty your child's book bag, each day, and sort the papers like this.
12. **Discuss the upcoming school year** (your child's thoughts, expectations, and concerns). This is especially helpful if you are Preparing for Kindergarten, Preparing for a New School, or Preparing for Middle School.
13. **Review general school rules and good citizenship.**
14. **Start going to bed early 5-15 minutes each night,** beginning a few weeks before school starts. I have shared a few tips before with The Easiest Way to End Bedtime Battles.
15. **Make sure registration paperwork** and required medical immunizations & exams are in order.
16. **Create a homework center** stocked with supplies, in an appropriate setting.
17. **Make childcare arrangements** for before- and after-school.
18. **Decide screen time guidelines for the school year** (TV, video game, and extra-curricular). You don't want to miss this One Simple Way to Limit Cellphone Screen Time.
19. **Enjoy a special night before** or weekend before school starts ritual / special activity.
20. **Get up a few minutes early** and plan to arrive (at school, at the bus stop, etc.) a few minutes early. If you're wondering what our morning routine looks like, you can check it out here.