

Back to School Time Management Tips For Busy Parents and Their School-Aged Children

By [Jacquie Ross](#)



Summer break is ending and it's time for the kids to go back to school. If you find yourself running out the door each morning feeling disorganized and stressed, I have some tips that will help your mornings run a whole lot smoother. A lot of the chores that need to be done before your child leaves for school can easily be done the night before. If you follow just a few of these suggestions you will be surprised at how much more time you have in the morning.

Just Ten More Minutes...

Waking up a few minutes earlier is one of the most under utilized time management tips today. Yet it is one of the easiest ways to help eliminate the morning rush. Start your day 10 or 15 minutes earlier and combine it with some of the following tips, and you'll be amazed at how much more relaxed your mornings will become.

Jacquie's Quick Tip: Set your alarm clock 10-15 minutes earlier before you retire to bed tonight.

I've Got Nothing to Wear!

For each child, select up to 5 outfits for each day of the week. This is a task that you can do on weekends. Consider the upcoming forecast when choosing the outfits and include your child in the process. If your weekend is extremely busy, don't throw your hands up in the air and give up - just pick another day of the week. It doesn't matter if it's Wednesday. Just do enough for the next few school days. Hang the outfits in the closet and have your child select which one they would like to wear the following day.

Jacquie's Quick Tip: For the first few weeks, make a note in your planner to remind yourself to select your child's outfits. Soon it will become a habit and will be one less thing to worry about during the morning rush.

Can I Take Your Order Please?

1. Set the breakfast table the night before and involve your children in the process. Consider setting up a rotating schedule for your children and have it be their job to set the breakfast table each evening.
2. Take breakfast orders the night before and post the orders on the refrigerator.

Jacquie's Quick Tip: *Make it fun. Have your children take the orders. They can pretend to be "Chef of the Night"!*

What's for Lunch?

If your child brings in a packed lunch to school, you can prepare it the night before. Sandwiches can be made ahead of time and sealed in plastic wrap or sandwich bags. If you are making the sandwich more than one day ahead, double bag it into a zippered bag before refrigerating.

I'm Starving!

If your child comes home immediately after school, have some snacks ready. You can prepare your own or purchase items from your local supermarket.

Jacquie's Quick Tip: *Running out of lunch or snack ideas? Do an internet search or look for books at your local library on the subject.*

My Mom Forgot to Put My Homework in My Backpack!!

1. Have each child place completed homework assignments into their backpack. Remind them that it's their responsibility!
2. Check to see if you have any forms to sign and give to your child to place into their backpack.

Jacquie's Quick Tip: *Create a check-list of things that you or your children need to do before bed and post it in a convenient place.*

By taking care of routine tasks the night before, your mornings will be less stressed and you will be far more productive for the remainder of the day.

Jacquie Ross is a Maryland based Professional Organizer, writer and owner of CastAway the Clutter! A member of the National Association of Professional Organizers, she teaches homeowners how to reclaim their time and space. Jacquie can be reached at jacquie@castawaytheclutter.com. Visit CastAway the Clutter to sign up for her free organizing tips at www.castawaytheclutter.com.