



# Tips for creating The Optimal Homework Environment

If a student struggles with organization, staying on track and goal setting, homework time can be one of the biggest challenges of the day. If homework takes forever, help set a student up for success by creating the optimal homework environment.

## CHOOSE YOUR SPACE WISELY

Quiet bedroom or a public space? The best spot is a personal choice, and you'll have to balance the need for oversight with potential distractions in any room. No matter where you decide to do homework, make sure it's a spot that's quiet and out of the way of household foot traffic.



## KEEP SUPPLIES ON-HAND

Keep a supply caddy packed with the basics: pencils, erasers, markers, highlighters, glue, white-out, extra paper, etc. This can sit atop the desk or be stored in a cabinet near the dining room table or kitchen island if you choose to set up in a more public room. The caddy should be part of a "get ready ritual" as a cue that it's homework time. A simple routine released every day will help your child settle into the task at hand.



## GET CHARGED UP

While we recommend kids keep their screen time to minimum, most students rely on a laptop or tablet for online learning, virtual textbooks and/or teacher e-communication. As such, it's important that all homework environments include a charging station to ensure school devices are charged and ready to go for the next school day. Plus, having their laptop on hand is also useful if they need to reach out to their teacher with questions or employ an online tutor for extra help.



## ENCOURAGE AN ORGANIZED APPROACH

A pack of Post-it notes to jot down questions to be addressed later can help kids with ADHD and learning differences stay on task if they know they can "park" their curiosity and know that it will be satisfied when they're done with their work. A large calendar can also be useful, as it serves as a guide to when assignments are due or when tests are coming up. Use a different colored marker for each subject: for example, math projects noted in red, English in blue, and social studies in green. Breaking down long homework projects into manageable blocks on the calendar can make it easier for students to stay on track.



## PROVIDE BREAKS & BRAIN-FRIENDLY SNACKS

Kids often benefit from having breaks every 10 to 20 minutes during homework periods. Giving kids a snack break ensures they don't become overwhelmed by long periods of work. Bonus points if it's a brain-friendly snack like blueberries which have been linked to faster learning, sharper thinking, and improved memory retention.



Brain Balance Centers offer a holistic, drug-free program designed to improve focus, behavior, social skills, anxiety, and academic performance. The program takes an integrative approach to strengthening brain connectivity through sensory engagement, physical development, academics, and nutrition. Over the past decade, this unique and effective program has helped thousands of individuals nationwide to improve critical life skills and create a brighter path for their future.

# PRODUCT RECOMMENDATIONS

## homework tip!

Ensure workspaces are quiet and dedicated solely to homework, preventing easy distractions and ultimately minimizing the amount of time it takes to do work.

### SLANT BOARD

The **Visual Edge Slant Board** offers a unique 22 degree angled surface that reduces eye strain because the text remains in focus down the entire page. When writing at the 22-degree angle, students incorporate the use of the muscles in their forearms, which increases control, and penmanship.



### CLOCK

Consider using a “working clock” that you can mark with dry erase pen to show how long a task should take. A visual timer like the **Time Timer Original** can be used to solve time perception problems at all ages and ability levels. In a teaching or therapy environment, it has proven to be very useful with students with sensory processing disorder or who have difficulty with transitions.

### CHAIR

Help wiggly students improve focus with a chair specifically designed for kids who need sensory input like the **Gaiam Kids Balance Ball Chair**.



### HOMEWORK TIP!

Visuals are a powerful way to help your child develop schema, or systems, in the brain for breaking down complex processes into simple steps. Label a piece of yellow construction paper “Get Ready,” a green sheet “Do” and a red sheet “Done.” Gather all the materials needed for an assignment and place them on the yellow sheet first. Place the assignment on the green paper as a placemat. Your child can then begin their assignment and complete the work. Finally, finished work is moved onto the red page, where it is checked for completion and accuracy.