

How Many Hours to Homeschool Quicklist

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Below, I have separated the lessons out by stages to make it easier to find where you are at in your homeschooling journey. I have also separated subjects by “basic”—which means the barebones of what should be taught to that age group—and “extras”—which means the additional subjects that could comprise your child’s homeschool day. Things that I consider to be essential to homeschooling (intelligent conversations, reading aloud, Bible and discipleship) are not included here because I do not consider them “subjects” but rather part of a well-rounded LIFE.

ELEMENTARY AGE

THE BASICS:

- Math = no more than 30 minutes
- Phonics = no more than 30 minutes (Once the basic mechanics are in place, switch this to a required Reading Time of 15 minutes—more if they like.)
- Handwriting/Copywork = no more than 10 minutes (do not do if any other subject requires a lot of writing that day).

THE EXTRAS:

- Science = no more than 20 minutes formal (and as much informal as they like—exploring, observing, etc.)
- Grammar = no more than 30 minutes (I do not recommend formal grammar prior to 4th or 5th grade, and even then, I prefer an overview with a follow up in junior high and high school.)
- Spelling = no more than 20 minutes. ([I only teach spelling if there is a need](#)—I have several children who are natural spellers and a curriculum would be a waste of their time and mine. If you are interested, you can also read my thoughts on [teaching vocabulary words](#).)
- History (and similar studies) = no more than 20 minutes unless you are using a vibrant curriculum that utilizes living books and interesting projects. If using the latter, work as long as you have their attention.
- Art = no more than 30 minutes (use lessons that are non-stressful and do not require a lot of prep work. I recommend [See the Light Art](#).)
- Music = lessons are typically 30 minutes in length; do not require practice times beyond that length.
- NO HOMEWORK EVER! There is no need at this age. Every subject they do should be done within the allotted time. They can certainly “work” on their own time in subjects that interest them, but drawing a subject out too long will squash your child’s love of learning.

SUMMARY:

A basic elementary age school day = 70 minutes or less

JUNIOR HIGH

THE BASICS:

- Math = no more than 45 minutes
- Science = no more than 45 minutes
- History = approximately 1 – 1.5 hours, based on how integrated the curriculum is with other school subjects and how interesting it is to you and your student.

THE EXTRAS:

- Composition = no more than 30 minutes—preferably this is part of your history integration.
- Art = as desired (if you are forcing a child to do art at this age, you are wasting everyone's time.)
- Music = as desired (same as art—by the time a child is this age, he or she is either passionate about music or not. Let your child pursue the arts if this is a passion. Feed that passion as needed.)

SUMMARY:

A basic jr. high school day = 3 hours or less

HIGH SCHOOL

THE BASICS:

- Math = no more than 1 hour
- Science = no more than 1 hour
- History = approximately 1 – 3 hours, based on how integrated the curriculum is with other school subjects and how interesting it is to you and your student.
- Literature & Composition = approximately 1 hour—(preferably this is part of your history integration.)

THE EXTRAS:

- Electives = approximately 30 minutes a piece (base these classes on what your state requires, what your child's college of choice requires and/ or family preferences and child's interests.)

SUMMARY:

A basic high school day = 4 – 6 hours total

A quick note on high schoolers (and even junior high schoolers—by that age, they should be doing a lot of their work independently. You don't need to block yourself out 4-6 hours, you simply need to be available to guide and answer questions. (If you would like to learn more about teaching children to work independently, see that chapter in my book - [Large Family Homeschooling](#).)