

Organization Tips For Middle School Students

There are many different ways to organize anything. Everyone organizes in his or her own way. You have to decide which way of organizing is easiest and best for YOU! Below are tips and ideas that may help you decide how to BETTER organize yourself and your belongings for school. Read the items below and decide how you want to plan to organize and then do it. ***The ultimate goal is to be organized so that you will know where your things are, where to put things, and when things are due.*** You don't want to lose homework and possibly suffer a lower grade because you can't find work to submit to your teachers, nor do you want to lose important papers that need to be taken home to your parents.

LOCKERS

- Color-code notebooks and folders by subject area.
- Have a special folder or place for homework and for notes to parents. Carry this folder to all classes and home every day.
- Place all binders so that they are facing the same direction.
- Put binders in chronological order as to when your classes occur.
- Keep your items for the same class together so that they are easy to grab.
- As you finish a class, put the binder, papers, and homework assignments you need at home in your backpack. That way at the end of the day, you are already packed to go home.
- Have a separate project folder to keep all your project information and papers together in one place.
- Keep all papers neatly in folders so they don't get crinkled in your locker.
- Use a zippered binder or accordion file to carry materials so that items do not fall out.
- Anything you don't need at school, take & keep at home immediately (ask your teachers first).
- Take home anything that you are not using regularly, such as papers and jackets.

MATERIALS – BINDERS, BACKPACKS, & OTHER SMALL THINGS

- Some people recommend getting a binder with pocket folders for each class. Others prefer an accordion file.
- Use plastic folders instead of paper folders because they are more durable and last longer.
- Use subject dividers, even if your binder is just for one class. You can always divide up a single-subject binder for warm-ups, notes, homework, graded papers, etc.
- Make sure your binder is big enough for that class.
- Try using page protectors for sheets that you will need to use regularly in your class.
- Go through your binder regularly and make sure all the papers are in order. If you spend just two minutes every day doing this, your binder will always be organized!
- Keep binders and folders organized. Periodically, such as after a unit of study or a quarter, take home your folders and clean them out. So that you are not overwhelmed, take home a different folder every day until you have cleaned them all out.
- Empty out your backpack at least once a week and organize any loose materials.
- Do not use your backpack as a trash can!
- Ask your teachers how they suggest you should be organized for their class. They have great ideas, too!

AGENDAS & CALENDARS

- Use a binder clip on your agenda to clip together previous weeks.
- Use color in your agenda
 - Different colors represent different subjects –OR–
 - Different colors represent different kinds of assignments (homework, quiz, test, project)
- Be consistent with WHEN you write in your agenda – at the start of the class –OR– at the end of the class. Make this a habit.
- Try using an agenda binder – it can be used in combination with a homework folder.
- Make big assignments (tests, projects, quizzes) stand out! Highlight them, color-code them, or bubble them!
- Look at your agenda
 - At the start of the day
 - Every class period
 - When you get home
- When you start a big project, make a list of the things you need to do for the project. Then, number them in order – now you have a to-do list! Assign mini-deadlines for you to complete those steps.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

- Talk to your teachers about how they feel you should be organized for their classes.
- Ask your friends how they organize their belongings or how they use their agenda.
- Observe your classmates and their organizational strategies.
 - When do they write in their agenda?
 - How do they organize their binder?
- Try new things – but stick to it for a couple of days/weeks! It might be hard at first because you haven't established a habit yet, but don't give up!