

# How To Start Homeschooling

*Homeschool 101: A Quick Guide To Get You Going*



# Part 1: Getting Started

Whether you're considering if homeschooling is right for your family or you're ready to begin the journey, there are a few key things you need to do before you can get going.

## A. Research your state's homeschool regulations

Each state has different laws and requirements regarding parents' homeschool responsibilities. Before you make any plans or decisions, be sure to learn about and follow all state laws and guidelines, including public health orders.

Review your state laws [here](#).

## B. Find your people

One of the most rewarding things you can do early on is to find a community of like-minded homeschooling parents and caregivers. You can help support each other, share tips and best practices, and answer questions. Here are some ways you can create your community:

- **Find some homeschooling groups, either online or face-to-face.** A2Z Homeschooling has a helpful list of groups [organized by state](#). We're also big fans of SEA, Secular Academic Education Homeschoolers. They have a great [Homeschooling 101 resource](#) and an active [Facebook group](#).
- **Consider joining ongoing interest-based classes.** These classes will help your child connect with fellow learners who are passionate about the same things. It's a fun way for kids to meet friends outside their usual circles and bond over a common and potential lifelong interest.
- **Lean into your existing communities.** Your learner may thrive by continuing after-school activities and sports, and having play dates with friends from school and elsewhere. You can also research to see if there are any good local homeschooling co-ops in your area. Whenever possible and safe, participating in in-person meetups are an invaluable way to build your kids' social skills and confidence.

# Part 1: Getting Started

## C. Discover your resources

When it comes to initially finding a curriculum, it can be incredibly helpful to ask other people going through the same situation which resources they found the most beneficial and why. Here are some fantastic online resources to get you started:

- Live online classes in a variety of topics and formats via Outschool
- High-quality free apps and websites like Khan Academy, TED-Ed, and DuoLingo
- Public libraries and the interlibrary loan system for enriching books, videos, and audiobooks
- Museums for full immersion and exploration, docent-led tours, and classes
- Community centers, park day meetups, and recreation centers for extracurricular activities

For some, homeschooling is a short-term solution to a specific need or a way to supplement outside education. For others, it's a full-time new lifestyle. Either way, know that there are plenty of resources out there to answer your questions, support you, and set you up for success.

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# Part 2: Classes \$

## Easy and Affordable Ways to Provide Homeschool Classes Outside Your Expertise

Something we hear over and over at Outschool from our homeschool families is that a time will come. A time when you want to provide a class that's outside of your expertise or comfort zone. Whether it's 9th-grade biology or 5th-grade science, you probably won't feel equipped to teach all subjects to your children for each age and stage of the foreseeable future.

But seasoned homeschooling families know that it's helpful for everyone to identify the "gaps" in what you want and are able to teach. While it can be difficult to admit that you can't, or don't want, to do it all, don't panic, you have several options.

### Homeschooling Supplement Options

#### Hiring a Private Tutor or In-Home Teacher

Private instruction is the obvious solution. It's ideal in many ways because it means a lot of one-on-one help for your child, and you can be as involved as you'd like. The downside, of course, is that it's typically expensive—you're responsible for the full cost of that teaching time. Plus, the number of educators and topics is usually limited.

#### Joining a Small-Group Class

Doing [small-group classes](#) is a much more affordable option because you share the teaching cost with other families. The downside is, while small, it's not one-on-one. However, if you're open to doing a digital class, the world is your oyster in terms of options.

For example, online learning is [Outschool's](#) specialty. We offer live, digital classes from over 5,000 vetted and experienced teachers. Your kids can study everything from Minecraft to cooking to semester classes on core subjects, like algebra and world history. With an **average cost of \$15 per class**, it's an affordable and easy way to supplement your homeschooling curriculum. (For families in need, consider seeking financial assistance with [Outschool.org](#).)

# Part 2: Classes \$

There are several class topics and styles to choose from, including:

- **Semester-long classes** – are a favorite among homeschoolers. These courses are the perfect way to supplement your core curriculum on an ongoing basis. Rather than stress about teaching a subject outside your wheelhouse, you can turn your kids over to an enthusiastic expert.
- **Ongoing classes** – are interest-led, discussion-based classes and clubs. They meet weekly and are an easy way to provide extracurricular activities and help your child create a sense of community.
- **Outschool Pods** – are an all-in-one academic pod. They're a great help for families transitioning from "regular" school to homeschooling.

## **Joining a Co-Opp**

Your community may also have some excellent homeschooling co-op options. They can include everything from interest-based groups like theater, dance, and debate to structured teacher-led classes. The advantages of joining a co-op are that your family will get to know people from your area, and get in-person support. However, they can be fairly limited in what they offer and how many families they can accommodate. Also, they may not have the focus you're looking for. For example, many larger co-ops are faith-based, etc.

## **Leveraging Community College Courses**

For your high school-aged kids, early college courses can be a great option. Many community colleges will let students start taking credited classes before they are 18. It's a great option if you're looking to graduate them early and slowly make the transition. (Check your state laws for rules and restrictions.)

On the pro list, it's a good way to get your learner ready for the college environment and start earning credits. It's also a nice mid-option for young adults who aren't sure if they want to go to university or what they want to focus on. The downside is, courses can be pricey, and they don't always transfer. Plus, since they'll be exposed to college-aged peers, you have to consider everything that goes with that.

# Part 3: Inspiration

## Tips & Inspiration from Real-Life Homeschooling Families

Nothing is more inspiring than learning from your peers. You can read all the advice and best practices in the world, but it doesn't come close to hearing from people who have been in your shoes and can show you the way. That's why we love sharing real-life homeschooling stories.

Full disclosure, these stories are from our Outschool community. Yes, we share them because they're customers, and it highlights Outschool. But more importantly, because we are inspired by our families and learners every single day.

### [The Naficy family: How Outschool Helped a 13-Year-Old Launch His Own Business](#)



**“CYRUS TOOK THIS SMALL IDEA FROM HIS OUTSCHOOL CLASS AND TURNED IT INTO A FULL-FLEDGED ONLINE TUTORING BUSINESS FOR KIDS.”**

# Part 3: Inspiration

## The Snyder Family: Lessons Learned From a Decade of Online Homeschooling



"THIS SUMMER, WE WERE STUCK AT HOME, AND MY DAUGHTER TOOK A LOT OF THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLASSES ON OUTSCHOOL. THEN, SHE TOOK A FEW CLASSES ON INTERIOR DESIGN, AND EACH WEEK THEY DID AN INTERIOR DESIGN CHALLENGE. SHE ALSO TOOK A SKETCH UP CLASS TO LEARN 3D MODELING.

"SO ALL THESE THINGS TOGETHER HELPED HER, AND SHE **CREATED AN ETSY SHOP**. I THINK THAT IT WAS, TO ME, MORE VALUABLE THAN ANY MATH CLASS. THESE ARE THE **TOOLS THAT ARE GOING TO MAKE YOU SUCCEED** IN THE FUTURE."



# Part 3: Inspiration

## Teaching Kids Resilience by Example



“BECAUSE MY HUSBAND CANNOT RISK ANY KIND OF HEALTH CRISIS, WE WON’T BE ABLE TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL. WE KNOW WE’RE IN THIS FOR THE **LONG HAUL**. AS AN EDUCATOR, I FEEL GOOD ABOUT PUTTING TOGETHER A CURRICULUM FOR MY KIDS.

“IN TERMS OF OUTSCHOOL CLASSES, WE’RE GOING TO LEAN MORE INTO THE **CORE CLASSES** FOR THE FALL. OUTSCHOOL WILL HELP **CREATE A ROUTINE**.”



# Part 3: Inspiration

## This Outschool Mom Helped Her Son Discover His Superpower



"I THINK PARENTS ARE USED TO TEACHERS OR THERAPISTS COMING IN AND TAKING OVER. BUT WHAT I'VE LEARNED IS THAT **PARENTS ARE THE #1** EDUCATOR AND THERAPIST FOR THEIR KIDS.

"WE HAVE INSTINCTS, WE KNOW HOW THEY LEARN. YOU HAVE TO TRUST THAT YOU CAN DO A GOOD JOB."

# Part 3: Inspiration

## [Meeting Taylor Swift, Earning \\$2,000, and More: How Nicole Olson's Family Does Unschooling](#)

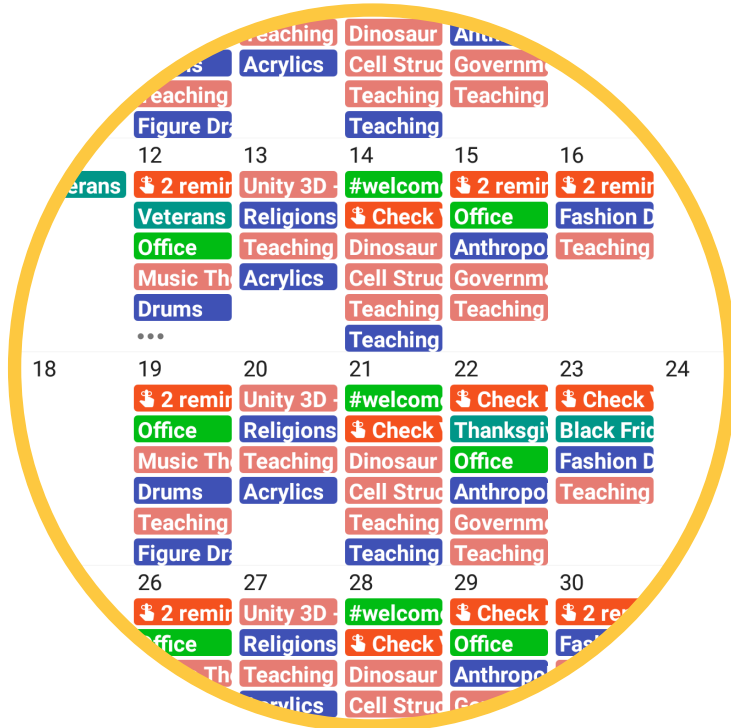


"WE DID **ONE YEAR OF FORMAL HOMESCHOOLING**. I SET UP A LITTLE CLASSROOM, AND I PROCEEDED TO DELIVER KINDERGARTEN AT HOME TO A CLASS OF ONE. IT WAS A VERY TRADITIONAL APPROACH, AND THE REASON THAT WE SHIFTED WAS BECAUSE MY **SON REFUSED TO DO IT**. HE WAS LIKE, THIS IS RIDICULOUS. I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE MAKING ME COUNT SPIDER'S LEGS. WHY CAN'T WE JUST PLAY?"

"BY THE FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER, I HAD BEEN INTRODUCED TO THE **UNSCHOOLING PHILOSOPHY** AND HAD GOTTEN COMFORTABLE ENOUGH THINKING ABOUT IT THAT I WAS LIKE, WELL, IT'S ONLY FIRST GRADE. HOW BAD CAN IT BE IF I MESS IT UP? SO WE TRIED IT, AND WE **NEVER LOOKED BACK** BECAUSE IT WAS JUST SUCH A PERFECT FIT FOR HIM AND FOR MY OTHER KIDS WHEN THEY CAME ALONG."

# Part 3: Inspiration

## How To Do Full-Time Child-Led Learning With Outschool



"I GET TO WATCH THEM BE CURIOUS AND FORWARD-THINKING AND WORK ON IMPROVING THEMSELVES. I DON'T HAVE TO NAG, WHICH IS AMAZING. THEY DO THEIR SCHOOLWORK,

"THEY TELL ME THE THINGS THAT THEY'VE BEEN LEARNING, AND I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY. IT'S **WONDERFUL.**"

# Part 3: Inspiration

## [These Three Moms Travel the World to Educate Their Kids](#)



"AS A FAMILY, WE FEEL **HOMESCHOOLING IS THE ABSOLUTE BEST** FOR US! WE HAVE FREEDOM! FREEDOM OF TIME, SPACE, WHAT TO LEARN, WHEN TO LEARN, **HOW TO LEARN, WHERE TO LEARN**. WE FOLLOW GENERAL CURRICULUM GUIDELINES TO KEEP HIM WITHIN STANDARDS. BUT TO BE HONEST, WE VEER OFF TRACK A LOT."

We love these stories because they highlight all the different ways homeschooling can be done. Whether you get your homeschool inspiration from your hometown or an online group, nothing is better than knowing you're not alone.

### More Advice From Parents

- [How to set up at-home learning spaces: best tips and photos from families](#)
- [How to keep kids healthy & active during remote learning: tips from parents](#)

# Next Steps

We hope that wherever your homeschooling journey leads you, that you feel a little bit more empowered. Knowing you can expand the way your family learns whether they're full-time at home, at an external school, or in between.

Meanwhile, help your kids **rediscover the joy of learning** by creating your [free Outschool account](#) now. There are no strings attached, and you'll get instant access to our full library of live online classes, so you can see what interests you and your family.

If you'd like some suggestions on which classes might benefit your kids, we'd love to help. Fill out our [Planner form](#), and we'll follow up ASAP.

## About Outschool



Outschool is an online education platform that puts kids in the driver's seat. Learners connect with real-life teachers in small-group settings, to take classes on everything from Minecraft and Pokemon, to Algebra and Literature.

With over 150,000 online classes offered by educators around the globe, **any child aged 3-18 can explore their interests**. Outschool helps families supplement and expand their education. Our mission is to inspire kids to love learning and discover new passions.

Learn more at [www.outschool.com](http://www.outschool.com)