

# **Back to Homeschool: tips, tricks, & fun for starting a new homeschool year**

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# Introduction

**For homeschoolers, going “back to school” looks a little different from the public or private school experience. And now, after several months of summer fun, it’s time to reign in your schedule and get your kids on track for studying.**

**Maybe they’re unhappy about the prospect of starting school again, you’re looking for ways to prevent a stale start, or maybe you just want to add some more cool activities to your arsenal. Do you need some fresh, unique ideas to help your kids feel special and excited about going back to school? We’ve got you covered!**

**This short resource has a few fun, brilliant ideas for homeschooling parents who want to make their kid's education an exciting and enriching experience.**

**Let’s jump in!**

# 1 **Make it exciting and special**

**Kids are pretty easy to impress. Here are a few ideas that just might hit the spot for you and your child:**

**Take them shopping for school supplies or do a school supplies treasure hunt.**

**Getting to pick out their own notebooks, pencils, markers, etc. is surprisingly special for many homeschool kids.**

**Rockyourhomeschool.net suggests doing a school supplies scavenger hunt on the first day of school to start your kids off with something fun and rewarding.**





## **Give a curricula sneak peek**

**Spark some intrigue in your child by giving them a little sneak peek into what they'll be studying in the upcoming school year.**

**Study.com says, "Be strategic and choose the [subjects] you know that [your student will] find interesting, like dinosaurs or astronomy - whatever your child is into. Share some interesting, attention-grabbing facts, and ask open-ended questions that will get your child's mind going."**



# First day of school food and drink bar

**To make the first day of school fun, Rockyourschool.com suggests doing a food and drink bar. Pick a meal and make it fun! For example: “For breakfast, you could make a pancake, waffle, french toast, bagel, muffins, eggs, cereal, and/or donut bar. For lunch, create a salad, sandwich, pasta, and/or pizza bar. And, of course, an ice cream sundae bar is always a special treat!”**

**If you don't have time to make an entire buffet, no sweat! It's okay to pick up pre-sliced fruit and veggies, frozen pizzas, dips, chips, etc. for your kids to snack on!**

**Psst...you could pull out the food bar trick a few times throughout the school year and give your kids a fun tradition to look forward to!**



# Plan Field Trips!

**One of the most unique things about homeschooling is the almost-endless flexibility. When you sit down to plan your school year, include your kids in field trip planning so they have something to look forward to...and gain a satisfying sense of ownership!**

**Our Journey Westward says, "You might supply a list of possibilities or expect them to research their own possibilities. Either way, if they are old enough, encourage them to make any necessary calls and reservations."**



Don't worry, field trips don't have to be expensive. And better yet, field trips are a wonderful medium of learning that will positively reinforce your child's education.

**Tip Top Brain Blog says, "Children are active learners as they are constantly making connections with the world around them. With an innate drive to learn and explore, field trips are the perfect way for children to learn outside of a typical classroom setting."**





# Orison Orchards has some neat field trip ideas:

***Explore Your Community:*** "Call around to local restaurants, eye doctors, dentists, and veterinarians and ask if they give tours. Once we took a tour of a local pizza place, and they let each of the kids make and bake a pizza to take home. Be sure to consider unusual community offerings, too, such as mining operations, movie studios, newspapers and such. Many business owners love to talk with children about what they do and your students just might discover a future career."

***Visit a Museum:*** "Science museums are fun because they typically provide so many hands-on exhibits for kids, which will really get your kiddos thinking and asking questions. Natural history museums, art museums, and historical museums [are] all over the place. Our local children's museum has a reciprocal agreement with other children's museums, so we can get free admission other places with our annual pass to our own museum."

**PRO TIP**

**Additionally, check into military bases. They generally have museums that offer free admission—no matter how small the museum! Simply googling museums in a particular area can lead to discovering tons of small, affordable mom-and-pop style places full of unique, local history.**

**This resource allows you to search for field trip opportunities by state!**

***Base Your Field Trip on Your Children's Interests:* "Do you have an animal-lover in your house?" Orison Orchards continues. "Call your local animal shelter for a tour. Do you have a young artist? Visit an art gallery or two. Young thespians will be inspired by the theater and young cowboys by the rodeo. Or find an active archaeological site and volunteer to help dig!"**

**Using your child's interests to generate field trip ideas guarantees a successful field trip."**



# 3


## Find some extracurriculars!

Are you concerned that your kids won't have the same opportunity to get involved in sports, clubs, or specialized classes as public-school kids? Let's take a look at your options.



In some states, homeschool kids can get involved in specific classes or activities at their local public school. Check into the laws and policies in your state to see what opportunities are available to your children.


# **The Fervent Mama shares a list of ways that you can help your child find the right extracurricular niche for their unique interests.**



***Did you know? "If your homeschooler is unsure about what they would be interested in, don't just sign them up yet! Call your local Home Depot, Lowes, Michaels, Joanns, etc. They offer one-time classes (and monthly classes) so that your child can try new things before they commit!"***



**Is your child a tech-wizard in the making? "Companies like [\[KiwiCo\]](#) offer STEM, Tech and Lab opportunities for kids right in the comforts of their own home! This is a great option for homeschool kids to have hands-on learning each month!"**



***Getting involved in sports:* "If your local schools don't allow homeschoolers to participate in sports or extra-curricular activities, see if there is a local co-op that allows homeschoolers to participate in sports; basketball, baseball, soccer, softball, volleyball, track, cross-country, swimming, weight-lifting, etc...Contact your local gym or fitness place to see if they offer classes for homeschoolers. Many children participate in these extracurricular activities after school hours, so it should be easy to find a place."**



# In Conclusion

**We know this isn't an exhaustive list of ways to make your homeschooling year more interesting. But we hope you've found some good ideas here that will help you and your kids enjoy going back to school!**



**Links and resources for you on the next page!**



# Links & Resources

Visit [our blog](#) to read more about homeschooling and other education issues!

Here are a few pieces we've written on homeschooling:

1. [Why You Don't Need a Teaching Degree to Homeschool](#)
2. [Why Homeschooling Works](#)
3. [How do I Find my State's Homeschool Requirements?](#)

Visit our website [nwef.org](http://nwef.org) to learn more about how you can create change in American education.

Here's a list of fun homeschooling blogs:

- [Nourishing My Scholar](#)
- [Weird, Unsocialized Homeschoolers](#)
- [Simple Homeschool](#)

