

## Home Planner

A Home Planner is a notebook that you use to keep all your “mom tools” in one place - from recipes to school calendars to Christmas lists. This is a great solution for busy moms who want to simplify and organize their day to day routines. All you need is a notebook (probably 1/2 inch), dividers (buy new or make your own from old file folders), sheet protectors and a healthy determination to be intentional about the way you spend your time each day. Here are some ideas for tools to put in your Planner:

1. **Daily Routines** - Your daily schedule is the most important part of your Home Planner. Don't freak out on me. A “daily schedule” doesn't have to be a minute by minute account of your day and it doesn't have to be set in stone. A good Routine can help you keep track of the things you find most important and help you stay focused on what you want to accomplish. Your Routine can include exercising, reading, home school, movie time...whatever it is you decide is important. Some house cleaning should be on there too, from time to time. Take a few minutes to write a list of all the things you want to accomplish every week - be sure to include things you'll do with your children, things you “wish you had time for”, things you must do such as cooking and cleaning. Once you have your list, make a daily routine that will allow for each of these things. Spread house cleaning out over several days so you only have to clean in short spurts each day. Build in down time. If you follow your Routine you'll find you have MORE time to do the things that are important to you because you aren't distracted by things that are less important. Don't be discouraged if your Routine doesn't work right at first, you'll probably need to revise it a couple times to find a comfortable, workable schedule. *Here's a [Daily Routines example](#) or [download a blank Template](#).*
2. **School Information** - If you are home schooling several children you probably have too much “school stuff” for your Home Planner and already have a working system in place to make sure school functions properly. But, if you're like me and have one preschooler, your Home Planner is a great place to keep track of any “schooling” you do with your child. Daily/weekly Lesson Plans as well as any Learning Goals for your child can be kept handy and referred to as needed. Also, if you have children in a traditional school - papers to review/sign, upcoming events, etc. can all be kept in your Home Planner so you know exactly where they are and remember to send them in on time.
3. **Family Calendar for the current and next months.** I am a HUGE fan of keeping an electronic calendar - either on a phone or computer. However, it's a good idea to have a print out to refer to quickly whenever you need to schedule something.
4. **To-Do/To-Buy List** - when something occurs to you that you don't have time to do right away, write it down. Don't expect that you'll remember - you're a mom after all and I know from first hand experience that motherhood messes with your memory. Just write it down and you'll have it for later. Or, ever get home from the grocery store only to discover you're completely out of \_\_\_\_\_? Now you have a place to jot your grocery list as you go about your day to day routines. When you see that you're almost out of something just jot it down. [Download a Template](#).
5. **Home Projects** - A Home Project is a big thing like “replace the oven”. If you have a Home Project list or Appliance Wish List or I Wish My Husband Would Fix This list, keep it in your Home Planner so you can refer to it from time to time (like when your hubby is on vacation). This is also a great place to keep track of larger cleaning projects that you only do every now and then. Clean the baseboards, wash the dog, sweep the garage, clean ceiling fans, wash windows...you get the idea. Keep a list of these seldom-do items in a sheet protector and use a dry erase marker to write the date of last completion next to it. When you see that it's been about 14 months since you washed your windows, erase the date and schedule some time to get it done. [Download a Template](#).
6. **Weekly Menus/Grocery Lists** - Keep menus and grocery lists handy to make planning your shopping trip a bit easier. Keep favorite recipes here so you don't have to dig through cookbooks to find them.
7. **Christmas List** - Keeping your Christmas list handy all year will help you purchase gifts when they are on sale or as you discover the “perfect present”. This is a great way to keep December stress free. *For more see [Gift Giving: The Easy Way](#).*
8. **Personal Goals** - I'm a goal-setter. I like New Year's Resolutions. If you do too, the Home Planner is a great place to keep a copy of your goals so you can refer back to them often. You could also include a weight loss journal or food journal or anything that would motivate you to reach your personal goals.
9. **Travel Plans** - Keep important vacation plans in one place: Confirmations, Itinerary, Packing Lists, Expense List, etc.
10. **Personal Projects/Hobbies** - anything that you enjoy but don't have time for “right now” can slip into your Home Planner for later. Craft ideas, blog post ideas, play time ideas, articles to read, recipes to try, books you want to read - really, anything.

Remember, your Home Planner is a tool to help you accomplish the things you determine are most important. It is a system to simplify your day to day life by organizing all your frequently used tools into one notebook. You should never feel stressed or imprisoned by your Planner. Make your tools work for you, adjust them as needed so that you are comfortable and feel like you are staying focused on the things that matter most.