

ADHD HOMEWORK PLANNER

Here is a **simple, easy-to-follow manual** for the **ADHD Homework Helper Planner**. Parents can use this at home to support their child (especially with an **IEP** and that includes accommodations for ADHD, like using planners, breaking tasks, extra time, or organizational tools).

This manual focuses on practical steps that build **executive function** skills (planning, organizing, starting tasks, and staying focused) without overwhelming anyone. It turns homework time from a battle into a predictable routine.

Why This Planner Helps Children with ADHD

Children with ADHD often struggle with:

- Forgetting/skipping assignments/ work
- Feeling restlessness by big tasks
- Starting work
- Staying focused for long periods
- Losing papers or materials or other belongings

A **Homework Helper Planner** provides **external structure** (visuals, timers, checklists) so the child's brain doesn't have to work as hard. It reduces arguments and builds confidence through small achievements.

Step 1: Gather Simple Materials (Keep It Cheap & Easy)

- A notebook or printable planner pages (daily/weekly)
- Coloured pens, highlighters, or stickers (for colour-coding)
- Timer (phone timer, kitchen timer, or visual sand timer)
- Folder or binder with colour-coded sections (e.g., red = Math, blue = English)
- Small rewards (stickers, extra play time, favourite snack)
- Optional: Whiteboard or large paper for visual schedule

You can create a basic planner yourself:

- One page per day with sections: **Subjects | Assignments | Steps | Time Estimate | Done?**

Step 2: Set Up a Consistent Homework Routine

Choose the **same time and place** every day (e.g., 4:30 PM at the kitchen table after a snack). Consistency helps the brain know "its homework time" automatically.

ADHD-Friendly Homework Space Tips:

- Quiet, low-distraction spot (away from TV, siblings playing, or phones if possible)

- All supplies ready in one box (pencils, eraser, ruler)
- Good lighting and a comfortable chair
- Allow movement: Let the child stand, use a fidget toy, or take short walks between tasks

Daily Flow (10–15 minutes to set up):

1. **Brain Dump** — Child (with your help) writes or says all homework for the day.
2. **Prioritize** — what is due tomorrow? What is hardest/easiest?
3. **Break It Down** — Turn big tasks into tiny steps.
4. **Time It** — Estimate time and use a timer.
5. **Start Small** — Begin with the easiest or most urgent task.

Step 3: How to Use the Homework Helper Planner (Daily Process)

Make this a 5–10 minute habit together at first. Gradually let your child do more independently.

A. Record Assignments (Right After School or When Home)

- Ask: “What do you have for homework today?”
- Write clearly:
 - Subject
 - What to do (e.g., “Math: Page 45, questions 1–10”)
 - Due date
- Use the school planner/app if available, and copy here.
- **IEP Tip:** Request teacher initials or a daily report if your child forgets to note assignments.

B. Break Tasks into Tiny Steps (This is the Magic Part)

Big tasks feel impossible with ADHD. Always break them.

Example:

- Instead of “Do Science Project”
 - Step 1: Read the instructions (5 min)
 - Step 2: Gather materials (10 min)
 - Step 3: Draw the first diagram (15 min)
 - Step 4: Write 3 sentences (10 min)

Write each step in the planner with a checkbox ✓.

C. Colour-Code for Quick Visuals

- Red = Must do today (urgent)
- Green = Easy/quick tasks
- Yellow = Needs help from parent

- Blue = Long-term project

Colour the folders and planner entries the same way.

D. Use Timers to Beat Overwhelm (Focus session-Style for Kids)

- Work for **15–25 minutes** → Short break (5 minutes: stretch, water, jump)
- For younger kids: Start with **10-minute focus** bursts
- Visual timer works better than phone (child can “see” time passing)
- Say: “Let’s just do one focus session on Math.”

After each timer, check off a step and give quick praise.

E. End-of-Session Check

- Review what’s done
- Pack the bag for tomorrow (put completed homework in folder)
- Note anything needed for next day (e.g., “Bring coloured pencils”)

Weekly Planner Overview (Do Once a Week, e.g., Sunday Evening)

- List all known assignments/projects for the week
- Mark big due dates
- Plan which days will be heavier/lighter
- Include after-school activities and free time

This prevents last-minute panic on big projects.

Step 4: Motivation & Positive Support (Very Important for ADHD)

- **Praise effort**, not just results: “Great job starting right away!” or “You finished one full step — awesome!”
- Use a simple reward system: 3 checkmarks = 10 extra minutes of play time or a sticker chart
- Keep sessions short at first. Better to finish 2 subjects well than fight for 2 hours
- If resistance is high: Start with “body doubling” (you sit nearby quietly working on your own thing)
- Never do the homework for them — guide and support instead

Common Challenges & Quick Fixes

- **Forgets assignments** → Ask teacher for homework sheet or online portal access. Keep extra planner copies at home.
- **Loses papers** → Use one “Homework Folder” — everything goes in/out here.
- **Gets stuck starting** → Use “2-minute rule”: Just open the book and read the first question for 2 minutes.

- **Homework takes too long** → Talk to teacher about shortened assignments (common IEP accommodation).
- **Emotional meltdowns** → Allow a 5-minute “reset” break. Teach simple calm-down (deep breaths, squeeze a stress ball).

How This Connects to IEP Plans

Many IEPs for ADHD include:

- Use of planner or assignment notebook (with teacher check)
- Breaking assignments into smaller parts
- Extended time or reduced homework load
- Organizational tools (folders, checklists)
- Frequent feedback or parent-teacher communication

Share this planner system with the school team. Ask to add “Parent-supported homework planner routine” as a strategy in the IEP.

Quick Starter Template (Copy This into a Notebook)

Date: _____

Today's Homework:

- Math: _____ ☐
- English: _____ ☐
- Science: _____ ☐
- Other: _____ ☐

Broken Steps:

1. _____ (___ min) ☐
2. _____ (___ min) ☐
3. _____ (___ min) ☐

Breaks Taken: ____ **What I Finished:** _____ **Need Help With:**

_____ **Bag Packed?** ☐ Yes

Start simple — even 3 days a week is progress. Review what works and adjust after 1–2 weeks.

You've got this! Consistency and kindness go a long way. Many parents see big improvements in independence and less stress within a few weeks.

If your child is in elementary, middle, or high school, or has specific subjects that are hardest, let me know for more tailored tweaks. You can also print or draw the template above and laminate it for reuse