

# THE 1, 2, 3's of GETTING STARTING

Hank Tate

072007

## HOW DO I START?

*"Education is not the filling of a bucket,  
but the lighting of a fire."*

W. B. Yeats

1. Pray as a family about the decision. There must be agreement.
2. Define why you are home schooling!
  - Positive Reasons: What are you reaching toward
  - Define WHY you are home schooling and write it down to share with others.
  - Discuss lifetime and academic goals for each child.

## How Do I Start?... 2

3. Get support from State, Regional, and Local home schooling organizations. Don't wait until you start.  
Request a beginner pack to get background information
4. Learn about the laws and legal ramifications of home schooling in your state.  
Know what the law says so you can explain it to others.  
Get copy of the law from: State, Regional, or Local organization.  
Join HSLDA and get a copy of the law.
5. Learn from other home schoolers.  
Make lots of friends. Ask lots of questions  
Observe in the home of someone else during a school session to see how they do home schooling

## How Do I Start?... 3

6. Study Home Schooling. Find out what it is, what it takes, advantages, and disadvantages.

Good Introduction: [www.youcanhomeschool.org](http://www.youcanhomeschool.org)

Read Books about Home Schooling

*The Right Choice: The Incredible Failure of Public Education*

*and the Rising Hope of Home Schooling*, Kris Klicka

*The Christian Home School*, Gregg Harris

*A Survivor's Guide to Home Schooling*, Shackelford & White

*Home Style Teaching*, Raymond & Dorothy Moore

Subscribe to Home Schooling newsletters

*The Teaching Home*, [www.teachinghome.com](http://www.teachinghome.com)

*Practical Home Schooling*, [www.home-school.com](http://www.home-school.com)

*Homeschooling Today*, [www.homeschooltoday.com](http://www.homeschooltoday.com)

*Eclectic Homeschool Online*, <http://eho.org/>

Others: <http://homeschooling.about.com/cs/magazines/>

Visit local homeschool bookstores or organizations

## How Do I Start?... 4

7. Determine whether you are going to go it alone or enroll in an umbrella school.

A Beka Video Home School, K-12: [abeka.com](http://abeka.com)

Accelerated Christian Education, K-12: [schooloftomorrow.com](http://schooloftomorrow.com)

Christian Liberty Academy, K-12: [christianlibertyacademy.com](http://christianlibertyacademy.com)

Calvert School, K-8: [calvertschool.org](http://calvertschool.org)

Keystone National High School: [keystonehighschool.com](http://keystonehighschool.com)

8. Research curriculum options. Find out the differences between curriculums and decide what is best for you.

CURRICULUM REFERENCES:

*100 Top Picks for Homeschool Curriculum*; Cathy Duffy

## How Do I Start?... 5

TYPES OF CURRICULUM:

### Traditional "Textbook" Curriculum

Familiar structure, easy to resell, easiest for beginners

A Beka: (877) 223-5226 (tests available)

Bob Jones: (800) 845-5731 (tests NOT available)

The Lamb Company: [lambco.com](http://lambco.com) (tests available)

### Unit Study Curriculum

"Topics" used to study subjects, more work for mom, more fun

KONOS: (972) 924-2712 [www.konos.com](http://www.konos.com)

### "Pacer" Curriculum

Booklets combine subject & workbooks, consumable

A.C.E.: (800) 925-7777 [www.schooloftomorrow.com](http://www.schooloftomorrow.com)

Alpha-Omega: (800) 622-3070 [www.aop.com](http://www.aop.com)

**Video Curriculum** (A Beka - see 7. Umbrella Schools)

## How Do I Start?... 6

**Online Curriculum** multiple sources - research online  
Keystone National High School: [www.keystonehighschool.com](http://www.keystonehighschool.com)

### Math Curriculum

SAXON - The favorite math curriculum for 4th grade & up!

Solution Keys for Algebra & up.

(800) 284-7019 - free diagnostic placement test online

[www.saxonpublishers.harcourtachieve.com](http://www.saxonpublishers.harcourtachieve.com)

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## How Do I Start?... 7

9. Evaluate the student's levels of competence

Good grades in school doesn't prove student mastered subject for that level. May need to back up in some subjects.  
Test the child to find out where they are. Standardized tests and borrowed curriculum tests.  
Wise to have a standardized test done independently before start. Comparison for future progress. Big encouragement.

Bob Jones Testing Service: (800) 845-5731  
[www.bjupress.com/services/testing/](http://www.bjupress.com/services/testing/)
10. Order curriculum....EARLY! Your first year's decision is not forever. Choose for simplicity, you will probably change after the first year.

Don't be afraid to mix curriculum selections, BUT it is easiest and less confusing to start by getting all of the curriculum from the same supplier.

## How Do I Start?... 8

11. Join HOME SCHOOL LEGAL DEFENSE ASSOC. !!!

H.S.L.D.A., P.O. Box 3000 - Purcellville, VA 20134-9000 .  
(540) 338-5600 - \$100/yr [www.hsllda.org](http://www.hsllda.org)

This is one of the most important investments a home school family can make. It's the "union" for home schoolers. Provides not only legal protection, but is one of the most effective political organizations in the U.S. Membership supports protection of legal rights for all families in the U.S., even non-home schoolers.  
If you don't use the "insurance" someone else somewhere will, and protecting their rights IS protecting your rights.

**HINT:** Check with your State, Regional, and Local organizations. Many have a discount program whereby you can join HSLDA for \$85 per year

## How Do I Start?... 9

12. Set up structure of school.

School Name helpful to give identity. Gives students an answer to "Where do you go to school". Name can change - may let graduate choose own school name.

PO Box not necessary. Using home address usually satisfactory. Not necessary to keep home schooling secret from most colleges. Many "want" home schoolers!

Perception of professionalism IS important. Communication with officials and colleges will be more effective if have quality appearing stationery, transcripts, etc.

Stationery may enable getting discounts on goods & services.

## How Do I Start?... 10

13. Set up home school files.
  - Reference Documents: Founding documents, legal papers, official correspondence related to your home school
    - Public School records (if any)
    - Health records
  - Study Records: Keep clear and up to date records of school work - *have available and organized to show truant officer if necessary*
    - Lesson Plans (intentions of what and when)
    - Work Reports (what really happened)
    - Grades (Subject by Subject - your own system)
    - Portfolio: (Reports, Key Tests, Art Work)
    - Reading Lists
    - Extra curricular activities reports
  - Attendance Records: Keep records even though at home. Some states require.

## How Do I Start?... 11

14. Inform your extended family and close friends. Have home schooling information, brochures, to hand out.

*Home Schooling Audio Primer*, \$7.00/ea. •  
*Home Schooling Achievement* (Research Reports) Free •  
*Home Schooling: Start Here* Free •  
[www.youcanhomeschool.org](http://www.youcanhomeschool.org)

  - H.S.L.D.A., P.O. Box 3000 - Purcellville, VA 20134-9000  
(540) 338-5600 [www.hsllda.org](http://www.hsllda.org)
15. Plan the first years progress. Set up record keeping to show progress.

Divide the curriculum into time periods.  
Only a tentative plan!  
Textbooks were not designed to be finished.

## How Do I Start?... 12

16. Equip school room – references, books, maps, desks, etc. Doesn't have to be fancy...or a separate room
  - Telephone Answering Machine!
  - Encyclopedia - 2nd grade and up. Used OK if recent!
    - WORLD BOOK - rated the best for Elem & HS
  - English Reference Handbook
  - Dictionaries (BIG and little)
  - Thesaurus
  - Flag, Maps & Globe
  - Nature Guides
  - Bible Study Tools
  - Computer

Use furniture available: Kitchen Table, Bookcase, etc.  
Have someplace to display work  
String hung across wall and use clothes pins

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## How Do I Start?... 13

### 17. Remove the kids

Best to do at a normal school break or in between sessions.  
But may be done at any time.

May get copies of the records and put in safe place.

According to the Open Records Act, you, as parents, have full rights to copies of ALL of your children's public school records.

### 18. **START** Don't be scared! It will be new and difficult at first but it **WILL** get better.

If time is critical go ahead and start...you can figure out how as you go along.

You don't have to have **THE BEST** curriculum to start.  
You don't even need commercial curriculum for young children.

## How Do I Start?... 14

### 19. Don't try to be secretive!

Be open, honest and bold in admitting that you are home schooling and answering other's questions. It's safer – not as likely for people to think your kids are truant.

Prepare yourself to explain home schooling to others! Only home schoolers can convince the public that we should continue to have the right to home school.

Let your kids play outside. Even the public schools have recess.

### 20. Fine tune your family schedule.

Expect the unexpected

You are going to have problems and questions

The family is more important than school!

Don't be afraid to be spontaneous.

## How Do I Start?... 15

### 21. Get out of the house. Expand your methods and explore new areas. The world is now your classroom.

Field trips for specific educational objectives or just fun learning.

Libraries, symphonies, ballet, art shows, cultural events, public school plays

Vacations can become a school away from home. School in the car, visit historic and geographic locations. Study history relating to the areas you visit while you are there.

### 22. Keep studying and improving as a teacher and parent

Home schooling; Parenting; Child development

### 23. Get politically involved to improve the laws and to protect the rights we enjoy.

Home schooling; Parenting; Child development

## How Do I Start?... 16

### 24. Get heavily involved with other home school families.

Encouragement for you

Friends for the kids

Help with problems

Care for kids when family emergencies come up.

### 25. Help someone else get started.

Become a "servant" leader in a support group

Help with conferences and workshops

Counsel and encourage someone else

### 26. **PATIENCE — the first year is for practice!**

Don't expect perfection the first year.

You'll be amazed at the test results no matter what!

Life happens now...not in the future. Enjoy it now!

## WARNINGS!

- ❖ Join Home School Legal Defense Association!  
You may be harassed even with good laws in place.
- ❖ You may face difficulties re-enrolling in a public school
- ❖ Be cautious of not presenting home schooling as God's ordained method of schooling  
Home schooling is something that God may lead individual families to do. The fact that another family does not do it does not make them less spiritual or you more spiritual. It is easy to wound friends through ignorance if you unwisely choose your words about the how and why of home schooling.
- ❖ Young children may want to go to public school because their friends do..ride on bus, etc.

## MAJOR CAUSES OF BURN OUT

### ❖ CIRCUMSTANCES

Not prepared for transition period

One parent not supportive

Pressure from outside sources

Trials and tribulations

### ❖ UNWISE OPERATIONS

Mom doing everything

Trying to cover too much

Inconsistent discipline

Never getting out of the "classroom"

No vacations for Mom

### ❖ WRONG FOCUS

Copying public schools

Unrealistic or misdirected goals

*The key for long term success....*

**PROPER FOCUS ON LIFETIME GOALS**

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## SCHOOL HOURS

### Younger children

Preschool – 1 hour per day

Small sections that are “fun” education.

Early elementary – 3+ hours per day

Extra homework time may be necessary occasionally depending on the student and the subject.

### Older children

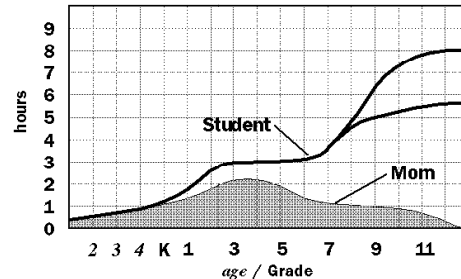
7-12 grade – 4–6 hours.

Hours should increase from 4 to 6 as child gets older. Expectations should increase as capabilities increase.

The teacher, however, should become more of a leader and resource person. Teacher time should decrease as the child gets older.

## SCHOOL HOURS GRAPH

### Student Time vs. Mom's Time



## SCHOOL CALENDAR

There is no “set” school calendar.

- Most follow public school calendar. Growing number of families schooling year round.
- Consider College style calendar. M-W-F, T-Th
- Six Weeks - two courses - Week off - Change

Textbooks (except math) were never designed to be finished in a normal school year.

Helpful to continue with some math through summer.

Use summer for unusual “fun” subjects.

Calligraphy, Computers, etc.

## HIGH SCHOOL

More intimidating than difficult. Growing number of families continuing through high school.

Take advantage of resources available.

- Co-op teaching
- Junior College
- Tutors
- Video Curriculum

There are disadvantages & costs.

Sports & Social Events ... public school focus is FUN

May have tough “transition” for socially active teenager who is first starting home schooling

## PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Testing:

- SAT Preparation Course is helpful
- Start with the PSAT - Determines National Merit Scholarships
- Take SAT more than once. Only highest score counts

Transcripts

- Keep careful records of courses & hours of study on the courses to determine credit hours
- Don't overlook non-traditional study as academics. Put it under “academic” headings.  
Cooking = Foods & Nutrition, Job = Cooperative Ed
- Produce a professional looking transcript. It determines the first impression of the quality of your school.

## THE FUTURE

Graduate!

Don't use GED. It creates image of “dropout”

Issue a Diploma - get one suitable to frame & display

Educational Support Foundation • personalized diplomas

Have Graduation Ceremony with other home schoolers

Many home schoolers go to college

HSLDA has a list of over 200 colleges taken homeschoolers

Consider using local Junior College for transition

Can start in high school

Proves capability of handling college courses

Good transition to “world” while still having parental support and encouragement

Apprenticeship receiving growing interest

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