

# TOP 10 TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR BUSY FAMILIES



WE ARE OFTEN ASKED “HOW CAN WE FIND MORE TIME WITH OUR KIDS?” HERE ARE MORE TIME MOMS TOP TEN TIME SAVING TIPS TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR BUSY FAMILY.

**1 Plan your Week.** Just as we do at work, we need a plan to be effective at home. Otherwise the stress of running from one thing to another leaves us exhausted at the end of the day, scratching off our To Do list, only to keep adding things to the bottom. The best way to plan for your family is to sit down at the beginning of each week with an extra large calendar. Spend a few minutes thinking about how you would like your week to be and schedule those things that will make it so. If you can see it, you can do it. The original extra large [Family Organizer](#) is the best tool for this job. Schedule family time first and create an **Important Things** list at the beginning of each month to prioritize your time and keep your life in balance.

**2 Schedule one Activity per week and don't forget Mom and Dad.** Start by filling the calendar with important things first. Begin by scheduling one activity per week per person that is important to them and then continue adding important items. The calendar will fill up quickly so make sure to schedule family time and personal time for Mom and Dad. Choose your activities with intention and limit your selections to the important or you will soon be running in several directions with no time to spare.

**3 Establish a Routine for the Family.** Routines can save you time, reduce stress and children thrive on routine. They love to know what comes next. Structure as many routines as possible. Block out your weekdays and establish times for daily rituals: before school, after school (snack and homework) and after dinner (clean up, lunches and get ready for tomorrow). When you don't have to worry about what comes next or running from one thing to another, you and the kids are free to focus on the day and do what needs to be done before sitting down in front of any screen. Use our [weekday planning sheets](#) to layout the routine and post it somewhere for easy reference.

**4 Grocery Shop Once a Week.** Planning a weekly menu and shopping once a week will save you lots of time and money. It will also help you eat more healthfully and reduce mealtime stress. Start by choosing a time each week to sit down and plan your week of healthy family menus. Let the family choose some of the meals, find healthy recipes for their choices, build your grocery list, go to the grocery store and shop for the week. Bonus! Delegate as much of the actual meal preparation and grocery shopping as you can to find even more time. You can find meal organizers, menu planning pads and family cookbooks [here](#) to help you every step of the way. You can also find plenty of free recipes for healthy, economical family meals at [www.moretimemoms.com](http://www.moretimemoms.com)

**5 Make Meal Time Family Time.** Get help, involve everyone in the process and eat together for family dinners as often as you can. Making meals is an important daily task that can become a nightmare, if you are trying to do it all alone, every time. It's also an opportunity for very valuable family time and can contribute to strengthening your family bond. Leave all cell phones at the door and concentrate on putting the family meal together where you can sit down together most nights. Start by putting out cut up vegetables and dip while you prepare the family meal together.



Dinners do not have to be complicated and it's even better when you know what you are making ahead. Delegate routine meal prep, table set up, enjoy dinner together and then clean up and prep lunches for the next day. Children should be able to make their own lunches by age 10. This is often the only time that many families have to share together so make it count as quality time. Many hands relieve the burden from one person and research shows that eating family meals together creates better, more well behaved children. Still unsure where to start? Take the [Family Meals Challenge](#) which includes, recipes, grocery lists and helpful dinner tips and games. Best of all, it's free.

**6 Chores: A Little Bit Every Day for Everyone.** Maintaining the family home can be very time consuming and overwhelming. Do these few simple things daily to keep the housework from becoming overwhelming and clutter taking over your space; put on a load of laundry, clean the kitchen sink and pick up at the end of every day. Make everyone accountable for their own self by picking up after themselves and delegate age-appropriate chores. Soon it will become a habit and this will make the weekly chores more manageable. You can download our list of age-appropriate chores and [chore charts here](#).

**7 Make Everyone Responsible for His or Her Own Laundry.** Laundry can be a painstaking, never-ending chore of separating, washing, folding and putting away. As soon as you can, get the kids involved in doing their own laundry. Put individual laundry hampers in each person's room and do their laundry with them, so eventually they can do it on their own. No need to separate colours and whites for kids, instead do loads for each child in cold water and have them present to fold and put away their own laundry. Here are more [laundry tips for kids](#).

**8 Designate a Command Control and a Launching Pad near the front door.** Every family can benefit from a hub where everyone can see what is on the calendar, school bags and brief cases are prepped for the next day and you don't have to search for keys and cell phones. This works best when each person has a spot for their own: A cubby, a basket and/or a hook for each family member.

If you want to take this a step further, you can also create a filing system for Home Management. All you need are a few file folders and a binder to create an efficient system, which will save you time and keep everything organized in one place. Create a file for house bills payable on the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. This way you will make all your bill payments on time and reduce the time you spend managing the bills, missing payment dates and paying late fees. Create a folder or binder for each child. You can manage each child's activities, permission slips and school forms easily. Put artwork that you want to keep in a separate file with each child's name for cherished memories.

**9 Keep Some Sacred Time for the Family and For You.** Identify your non-negotiables and set strong boundaries to protect your time. This should include family time and time for mom and dad. Yes, this includes putting the kids to bed at a reasonable time so that you and your partner have some well-deserved quiet time at the end of the day. It's difficult to keep up with work and family demands, if you don't take care of yourself. Even if it's only 15 to 20 minutes a day, "Me" time is very important for busy moms. Relax in a bubble bath, do yoga, read a book or just watch TV. Whatever you do, make it all about you. Be purposeful about the limited amount of time that you have.

**Learn to say "No".** These days most families are overscheduled. Moms try to be everything to everybody, and do it all but it's just not realistic. You don't need to join every group, volunteer for every committee, sign your kids up for every activity and attend every event. Decide the things that are truly important to you and your family and make them a priority. Once you have put together your family schedule with everyone's priorities, empower yourself by saying "no" without guilt and only take on what you feel you or your family really want to do.

**10 Take One Day Off A Week.** Encourage everyone to unplug once a week and to spend time with each other. Technology has taken over many households and screen time can eat up valuable family time. Use the day to do fun family things where no one is asking (nagging) to get things done. Spend the day doing things as a family or in small groupings: father/son, mother/daughter etc. Include family outings and playtime. Some one-on-one time with each child should become a priority and will go a long way to building a good family and great family memories.



For more time saving tips and tools for parents, visit [www.moretimemoms.com](http://www.moretimemoms.com)