THE HOMESCHOOL HOW TO

Your First 30 Days

A guided walkthrough

I did the homework. You get the plan.
200+ homeschool family interviews, turned into a guided walkthrough of your first month.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Week 1	Start with a strong foundation
Week 2	Deschool yourself
Week 3	Learn through life
Week 4	Find your people
Bonus	Resource guides for every week
Bonus	The curriculum quiz

Week 1

Start with a strong foundation

This week is about two things: getting honest about *why* you're doing this, and knowing exactly what your state requires. Nothing more, nothing less.

YOUR WEEK 1 CHECKLIST

- [ ] Watch Video 1: Welcome + Your Why
- [ ] Fill in My Why + My Fears (page 2)
- [ ] Watch Video 2: The Legal Part, Made Simple
- [ ] Circle what applies on the Requirements Menu (page 3)
- [ ] Look up your state and fill in your checklist (pages 4–5)
- [ ] Put your deadlines in your phone
- [ ] Week 1 check-in (page 6)

2 videos	*5 pages*	*1 week*
about 15 minutes	about 45 minutes	go at your own pace

My why + my fears

Watch: Video 1 — Welcome + Your Why

> **Do this:** Take 15 quiet minutes. Write what's true, not what sounds good. You'll read this page again at the end of Week 4.

Why am I considering homeschooling?

What moment or experience pushed me toward this?

If this goes well, what does "well" look like a year from now?

MY FEARS — check any that fit

- ☐ Am I capable of doing this?
- ☐ What if they fall behind?
- ☐ What if they don't make friends?
- ☐ What if my family doesn't support it?
- ☐ What if I mess up their education?
- ☐ What if we can't afford it?
- ☐ What if I can't keep up while working?
- ☐ Other: _____

My biggest fear — is it true, or a worst-case story?

FOR THE HARD DAYS

One sentence I want to remember when this gets hard:

The requirements menu

Watch: Video 2 — The Legal Part, Made Simple (Part 1)

> **Do this:** Every state picks its own mix from this menu. Some ask for one or two things; a few ask for most. Read each one, then check whether you think it applies to you. You'll confirm on the next page.

1 Notice of intent
A letter or form telling your district you're homeschooling. Some states require it notarized.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

2 Withdrawal letter
If your child is in school now, a letter officially taking them out.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

3 Required subjects
The subjects you must teach. Some states list a lot, even fire safety.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

4 Instruction time
A minimum number of days or hours per year (e.g., 180 days).

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

5 Attendance records
A simple log of the days you did school, kept at home.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

6 Parent qualifications
Some states require a high school diploma or equivalent.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

7 Instruction plan
A short outline of what you'll teach (NY: IHIP; PA: objectives).

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

8 Progress reports
Short updates during the year on what you've covered.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

9 Testing or evaluation
A standardized test and/or a review by a qualified evaluator, yearly or in certain grades.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

10 Portfolio
A log of what you did and read, plus work samples, kept at home.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

11 Health records + exams
Immunization records or a written exemption; some states also require checkups.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

12 Background statement
A few states ask you to certify no adults in the home have certain convictions.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

13 Graduation requirements
Some states set high school credits needed for a diploma.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

14 Your legal option
Homeschool law, private tutor, private school, or umbrella/church school.

☐ Applies to me ☐ Not sure

Also check: rules if you move to a new school district, and extra steps if your child has an IEP or special-education plan.

My state's requirements

Watch: Video 2 — The Legal Part, Made Simple (Part 2)

1. Go to **hslda.org/legal** and click your state.
2. Read the **"At a Glance"** box, and note which legal option fits your family.
3. Open the **"How to Comply"** article for deadlines, and fill in the table below.

My state: _____ Date I checked: _____

REQUIREMENT	REQUIRED?	DETAILS / DUE DATE
Notice of intent (notarized?)	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Withdrawal letter	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Instruction plan	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Progress reports	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Testing or evaluation	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Attendance records	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Hours or days per year	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Required subjects	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Parent qualifications	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Health records + exams	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Background statement	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Graduation requirements	☐ Yes ☐ No	
My legal option	Homeschool law / private school / umbrella school:	

This isn't legal advice, and laws change. Always confirm with your state's education department or HSLDA.

Who, when, and my calendar

WHO I SEND THINGS TO

Name: _____

Title / office: _____

Email: _____

Phone or address: _____

MY DEADLINES, IN ORDER

DUE DATE	WHAT'S DUE	REMINDER SET?
		☐
		☐
		☐
		☐
		☐

Do this now — grab your phone. For every deadline above:

1. Add an event on the due date and set it to **repeat every year**.
2. Add a second event **one week earlier**: "Start working on: ____."
3. Turn on alerts for both, then check the box in the table.

Example (New York): notice of intent due July 1 → "start working on it" reminder June 24.

Week 1 check-in

> **A quick pause**, not a test. Notice where you are before Week 2.

One thing I feel more confident about:

What's still confusing?

Did any of my fears from page 2 shrink, even a little?

ONE HONEST NOTE FROM ME

State reporting sounds scarier than it is. For most families it's a record, not a test. Voice-to-text a quick note at the end of each day ("we read for 30 minutes, took a nature walk, worked on fractions") and you'll have a log without ever sitting down to "write a report."

— *Cheryl*

Notes