

ORGANISATION & FILING

There are three main aspects to keeping yourself organised for school:

1. Set up your own organisation and filing system.

a. Decide whether you want to use exercise books or folders at school.

If you use exercise books:

- Cover your exercise books in coloured paper and/or plastic (each subject a different colour).
- Put a label in the top right corner with your name, the year, your year level, and the subject.

If you use folders:

- One of the best ways is to have one folder only that you take to school with dividers in it for each of your subjects, then either use loose leaf paper or a lecture pad for each subject.
- At home you have a separate folder for each subject. Every time you finish a topic, take that topic out of your school folder and put it in your subject folder at home.

b. Decide where you are going to keep past tests, assignments, finished books or topics.

- You might have a separate folder for each subject that you keep on a shelf or bookcase or in a cupboard with dividers in it for each topic.
- You might have a filing cabinet with a separate section for each subject.
- You might use plastic storage tubs with a separate tub for each subject.

c. Decide where you are going to keep your daily schoolbooks.

When you unpack your bag, where are you going to put your books? You need a space for the books that go back and forth to school each day as you may not need to take every book every day.

d. Decide where you are going to keep things like assignments or work that takes longer.

- Some students have an 'inbox', where anything they need to keep working on stays. Each night they check this and decide what to work on.
- Other students have an assignment folder where they keep any current projects.
- Some students buy stackable trays and keep a different major task in each tray.

e. Decide what and where you are going to keep your summary or study notes.

The most flexible approach is to buy a plastic display folder for each subject, the ones with plastic sleeves in it. The advantage of this is that you can slip in good sheets or handouts you have been given as well and if you need to re-write or re-do a section, then you can easily just pull out that page and replace it. If you type your study notes then this gives you somewhere to keep them.

2. Keep organised at home.

Each afternoon when you come home, spend 10 minutes before you start any work getting organised:

1. Take everything out of your bag and put it on your desk.
2. Look through all your books and see if any sheets need to be pasted in or if any returned assignments or tests need to be filed into your subject folders that you keep at home. Are there any notes or information you need to pass on to your parents? Do you have sheets in your diary that need to be filed away?
3. Once you have dealt with all the loose papers, work out which books you need to use that night and which books can be put away for tomorrow.
4. Some students stack all the work they need to do in a pile, while other students lay out each piece of work to be done on their bed.

5. Each time you are ready to start a piece of homework, take out everything you need and then once you have finished put it all away before taking out the things you need for the next piece of homework.

6. At the end of the night, work out what you need to take to school tomorrow and pack everything you'll need into your bag. Place the books you don't need to take into the space you have designated for this at home.

Note: If your exercise book starts to fall apart, don't wait until the cover has fallen off completely or you start to lose pages. Instead, you need to repair it straight away with sticky tape or a stapler, or if it is too bad replace it before you lose the work. If you are using loose leaf paper and the hole punched parts have torn, fix these straight away with the round sticky hole punch stickers or just with tape.

3. Keep organised at school.

- Always write the date at the start of your work for that lesson and also write the date on any sheets you have been given as well as returned tests and assignments. It is much easier to manage your papers if they are dated as often you will forget which sheet goes with which part of your notes.
- Have an index page at the front of your exercise book or folder. Each time you start a new topic add it to the index so you can easily see what you have covered.
- Make sure you have all the stationery you need to stay organised. You will need a stapler, plastic sleeves and a hole punch if you use folders, glue if you use exercise books. Start to take notice in the classroom, the organised people are the ones that people are always borrowing staplers or glue etc. from. You can be one of these organised people too!
- There are a number of approaches to dealing with handouts and assignments. Ideally you should paste in or hole punch any sheets you are given straight away so you don't lose them or let piles of unsorted sheets accumulate. Some students prefer to bring a document wallet and put all the sheets they are given during the day into this then sort them out when they get home each night (note: it is essential you sort out sheets first thing every afternoon when you get home as if you don't it won't take long till you have a huge wad of paper built up).
- You also need to decide what you are going to do during the day with the sheets that will need to be filed into the folders at home, for example returned assignments. Some students have a plastic sleeve or document wallet that they keep for these sorts of sheets. Again, if you are just shoving them into your textbook, first thing as soon as you get home is to go through and take out and deal with all the loose bits of paper.
- If you are absent from a class, the next day you ask the teacher for the sheets you missed and copy out from your friend's book any notes you missed.
- Use different colour pens for headings or underline them so it is clear when new sections start in your notes. Start a new page for a new topic.
- Use consistent pen colour to help make your notes neater and clearer.
- Check every now and then with your friend that you have everything in your book that should be in there.



*So what could you do to be
more organised
with your papers?*



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