

LOCK DOWN LEARNING

Everything you need to know to get you started with learning and keeping the children amused at home!

Online and Offline

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1. Tips and Advice for Home Learning

New to home education? Get some helpful tips and advice for home learning from one of our fantastic Teaching Packs members, Sarah Burns.

So, you've suddenly found yourself plunged into the world of home education? I'm guessing you're probably feeling a bit daunted at the moment and wondering how on earth you're going to manage!

For most of us, the decision to home educate is an active, long term choice., and my children have never been to school and would be in year 2, year 1 and nursery age.

However, for those that have found themselves suddenly plunged into home educating due to school closures, I wanted to share some tips that work for me in my own home education set up.

Know when your children are at their best

Like adults, children work better at certain times of the day. I know that my children are always at their best first thing, so for us as soon as breakfast is done we get the formal work done and dusted. If I attempted it after 1 pm I know I'm going to meet resistance and it's just not worth the argument. My children are particularly early risers, and it might be that your own children are better in the afternoon. Whichever it is, work with it.

It might be that you use the children's best time to focus on any work that the school have provided, and you'll probably want the children to keep on top of maths and English. There's plenty of resources online to help children, and it's often grouped by school year to help you locate age-appropriate things.

Focus on their interests

Long term home educators usually already have an eye on how they can work their children's interests into home education, so this is something a lot of us are adept at. However, running with your children's interests is the best way to hook them in.

For a time my oldest was really interested in a particular football player. We therefore did a project on him. We covered so much in this project including the geography of his home country, other countries he'd played in as well as his current club. We looked at his childhood and compared how my son's might be different as well as writing lots of facts about him and looking at data. We covered a wide range of curriculum areas doing this, and my son was engaged the whole time.

We have done similar with interests in flags, fairies, different animals and the such and it's been a great way to keep them focussed and occupied, while also learning.

It pays to be prepared

One of the best tips I think I can give is to have some things prepared. If you're doing a project on something, then it pays to have information and worksheets to hand. We are currently doing a Vikings project, and I'm using the information from Teaching Packs alongside a book I have, and I'm making sure that as we progress through the pack, I have things ready for the children to do. For instance, colouring pages for the front cover of their project books, maps to show where the Vikings invaded from, writing frames and lapbook cutouts. It doesn't take a huge amount of time to prepare, but it does make a difference, and it helps to keep a lesson flowing if you've not got to stop to print something off.

Remember, not every minute needs to be filled!

One of the biggest things is to remember that it's OK for children to be bored! They don't need every minute of the day scheduling for them, and I find that watching out for those natural lulls in energy and giving them a break to do something else works really well. They always come back to their work 20-30 minutes later, much more refreshed and better focussed.

It's OK as well to just be and enjoy something like making a cake, playing a game or sharing a story together. Not every minute needs to be covering a learning goal and objective. You'll be amazed at just how much children learn from reading and playing.

Try and maintain some contact

This is going to be a big thing for us in the Home Education community as well – so much of our week is built around meeting up with others and sharing work, and I regularly host sessions at home for the children on different topics.

We have had to postpone these, so we are now looking at other options such as Skype or Zoom. One of our groups is a monthly speaking and listening group where we choose a theme, and each child produces a project to present to their peers. This is such a wonderful group, and the wide range of projects we see is fantastic. Maybe look to collaborate with some friends and have a weekly Skype session to share what you've learnt. It's not the same as being in a room and face to face with someone, but it might help to maintain those contacts with other people during this time.

Most of all don't stress

Don't worry! Children are adaptable and they'll soon settle into a new routine. If school have provided work or subjects to study then make use of those. There's plenty of home educators who will be more than happy to share details of where to find resources or details of YouTube

Channels that have some great educational content available. Already content creators are pulling together details of organisations offering resources at this time.

2. 50 YouTube Channels for Home Learning

There are plenty of amazing educational videos on Youtube that can be used as part of learning at home (and also inside the classroom). Why not take advantage of these free resources to help your children discover more about a wide range of subjects and topics?

Before choosing to watch any online video, it's worth taking some to think about these questions:

- Is it suitable for your children? How can you tell? Was it created for children, or is it aimed at an older audience?
- Who created it? How can you be sure that the information in the video is accurate?
- What do your children hope to find out by watching the video? Do they have any questions about the topic before they start? Could you write these down and make a note of the answers as you watch the video?
- Some of the videos have adverts. Why is this?

Watching these videos can also make a fantastic starting point for further research and activities linked to each topic:

- While you are watching, your children may wish to make some notes. They could try to record the key vocabulary (and discuss what it means), or pause the video to draw some pictures or write a few sentences about what they have found out.
- Do your children have any additional questions after they have watched? Would they like to watch a part of it again to review their learning? Could they find out more about the topic from a different source (e.g. a book or website)?

- How could they record what they have discovered? They might want to draw some labelled diagrams or write a sentence / paragraph / page about the topic. If you have access to a mobile device, could they create an audio or a video report?

Let's explore the video channels...

English

- [The Alphablocks](#) are living letters who appear in wonderful videos to help your children learn about phonics and develop their reading skills.
- [KidsTV123](#) has a large playlist of phonics videos that children can watch.
- [Fairy Tales and Stories for Kids](#) has lots of animated stories to enjoy. Can your children retell the story to you after they have watched one of the videos?
- BBC Teach has [a playlist of English videos](#) to teach your children about punctuation and stories. It also includes ideas for writing, songs and more.
- CBeebies have [a playlist of their Bedtime Stories](#), in which people read popular children's books. Why not record your own version on a mobile device?
- [Watch this collection of book trailers](#) from Scholastic. Could you make a trailer for one of your favourite books?

Maths

- [The Numberblocks channel](#) has lots of great videos to help younger children learn about numbers, addition and subtraction.
- [The Numberjacks](#) are a group of superhero numbers who appear in educational videos that cover thinking skills, problem solving and maths.
- [The Singing Walrus](#) has lots of songs to teach children about numbers and counting.
- [Hopscotch](#) has songs to help your children with counting.
- Mr DeMaio creates fantastic educational videos, including [this playlist of songs](#) to help your children learn their multiplication tables.
- Laugh Along and Learn also have [a collection of Times Tables songs](#) that your children can sing!
- [This playlist from Happy Learning English](#) has some times tables songs, as well as videos about shapes and measurements.
- [Math & Learning Videos 4 Kids](#) have a wide range of videos about different maths topics.

- [This playlist from BBC Teach](#) explores how maths is used in different areas of life and work. It also includes videos about number, measure and shape concepts.

Science

- [Happy Learning English](#) has a large collection of videos about humans, animals and plants.
- [Learn about amazing animals](#) with this playlist from National Geographic Kids.
- Hopscotch produce many educational videos. [This playlist](#) has songs about habitats, the continents, oceans and planets.
- [Operation Ouch](#) produce educational videos about the human body.
- [Homeschool Pop](#) has put together a collection of videos that cover a wide range of Science topics.
- [SciShow Kids](#) has a wide range of Science videos that answer different questions about the world.
- [Science Max](#) carries out huge science experiments. Could your children try similar experiments, but on a smaller scale, at home?

Geography

- Learn about the continents around the world [with this playlist](#) from National Geographic Kids.
- [BBC Teach](#) has a playlist that can help your primary children to learn about different geographical concepts.
- [This playlist from Kids Learning Tube](#) is full of videos to teach your children about countries around the world.

History

- [The Horrible Histories channel](#) has some funny videos and entertaining songs that children can use to learn about different periods from history.
- [This playlist from Happy Learning English](#) has some animated history videos.
- [Clarendon Learning](#) has a large playlist of history videos for children.

Art

- [Art for Kids Hub](#) has an enormous range of 'How to Draw' videos and art / craft ideas.
- [5-Minute Crafts Play](#) shares craft ideas, experiments and tricks that you can try together.

- Disney Junior also has a playlist of videos [from their Art Attack series](#).
- [Easy Kids Craft](#) has lots of enjoyable craft activities that you can complete.
- [Free School](#) has a playlist of videos that can teach your children about famous artists from history.

Music

- [RelaxDaily](#) has an extensive collection of calming music that your children can play as part of mindfulness activities, or when they are working on other educational tasks.
- [Kidz Bop](#) produce child-friendly versions of popular songs. Can your children learn some of the lyrics or dance along with the moves shown in the videos?
- [Classical Kids Storytime](#) features children's stories that are accompanied by classical music.
- Free School has playlists to teach your children about [Beethoven](#) and [Mozart](#).

PE

- The Body Coach has [a great playlist of '5 Minute Move' videos](#). These provide short workouts to get your kids moving!
- [Little Sports](#) has videos featuring a variety of exercises to help your children stay active at home.
- [GoNoodle](#) has videos that teach your children different dance workouts.
- Try different yoga and mindfulness activities with [these videos from Cosmic Kids Yoga](#).
- [Footy Pups](#) shares videos to get younger children interested in exercise and to learn different football skills.

More

- National Geographic Kids have a playlist of videos that [teach children how different things work](#).
- TheLearningStation has [a playlist of songs to use as Brain Breaks](#), when your children need a refresh and recharge before they continue their learning.
- [Messy Hands](#) has a selection of easy recipes and cooking videos to try with your children.
- Discuss what is happening around the world by watching [this playlist of videos](#) from CBBC's Newsround programme.
- Homeschool Pop has [a playlist of timers](#) to use when you would like children to complete a task within a set amount of time!

- [Mike's Home ESL](#) has plenty of games, teaching tips, songs and warm-up activities that you can use with your children!
- [Teachers Hub](#) also has a variety of games and songs that you can try together.

3. Our Favourite Resources for Online Learning

There are so many wonderful sites to support learning and it is often difficult to know where to start. To help you find the best educational content, we have put together a list of our favourite online learning resources. We hope that it is useful!

Most of the resources below are free to access, but we have indicated if registration is required or where a premium option is available (please note that offers may be changed or withdrawn at any time). Thanks to our wonderful Teaching Packs members for suggesting many of these sites!

English

- [Oxford Owl](#) has a large collection of free eBooks that your children can read (free registration is required).
- [Phonics Play](#) has interactive phonics games to play, and they are completely free to access at the moment.
- [Teach Your Monster to Read](#) is an amazing game that helps children to learn phonics and reading skills. The app usually costs £4.99 but is currently free to support home learning during school closures.
- [Spelling Shed](#) have online games and apps to improve your children's spelling. They have a 14-day free trial which is being extended during periods of school closures.
- [Sumdog](#) provide activities to support spelling practice and times tables skills. They are free to access during times of school closure.
- [Pobble365](#) has amazing images that can be used as writing prompts and the starting point for different activities. Don't forget to explore [our own image gallery too!](#)
- [ABCYa](#) has an extensive collection of online games to support English and Maths skills. These are free to play on a desktop computer, but mobile access requires a premium plan.
- [Audible](#) are currently offering free access to a fantastic set of audiobooks for children.
- [Raz Kids](#) provide interactive eBooks with related quizzes to test your children's comprehension skills. A number of free samples are available, and there is also a free trial option.

Maths

- [Topmarks](#) is a fantastic resource, offering educational games and links to other great sites. Some of our favourite activities on their site include:
 - [Teddy Numbers](#) – This game is for younger learners and helps them to recognise numbers (in digits and words).
 - [Daily 10](#) – Answer 10 mental maths questions against the clock each day! This game covers addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, ordering, fractions and more!
 - [Hit the Button](#) – How many maths calculations can your children solve within the time limit?
- [Maths is Fun](#) is a fantastic source of information about different Maths topics. If you're unsure about the meaning of a particular maths word, this is the place to visit!
- [Prodigy](#) provide a range of Maths games and activities that children can explore. Parents can sign up for a free account that lets them set goals, reward their children and monitor their progress. A premium option is also available that 'unlocks extra in-game features, benefits, and rewards'.
- [White Rose Maths](#) is offering free Maths lessons for each Year 1 to 8. They have short videos to introduce the topics and activity resources to complete.

Science

- [Mystery Science](#) helps your children to understand different Science concepts with images, stories, discussion ideas and hands-on activities. [This link](#) shares free lessons that are available during times of school closures.

Art

- [Rob Biddulph](#) has set up a #DrawWithRob activity, in which he is posting draw-along videos that children can follow. You can then send your drawings to Rob on Twitter and Instagram!
- [Google Arts and Culture](#) has virtual tours of thousands of art galleries and museums.

PE

- [Joe Wicks](#) is providing free PE lessons for children, live on YouTube, during school closures.
- [Kidz Bop](#) has plenty of dance-along videos that can be used to get your children moving. Our daughter loves these!
- [Cosmic Yoga](#) has a range of yoga, mindfulness and relaxation videos to follow along with.

More

- [Purple Mash](#) is offering free access to their fantastic collection of online learning tools during the coronavirus outbreak.
- [Ollie Turner](#) is planning to run daily body percussion sessions on YouTube. Why not join in too?
- [Learn British Sign Language](#) with these free videos from the BB

4. 100 OFFLINE Challenge Ideas for Home Learners (That don't need a Computer!)

If you're looking for home learning ideas and activities, explore our enormous list of challenges! They cover a wide range of subjects and can all be tried without much preparation or equipment.

English

- Think of some questions that you could use in an interview with a family member. What would you like to ask them? Write down their answers or (with their permission) record them using a mobile device.
- Write a letter to a friend or family member. What would you like to tell them about?
- Read your favourite book to your toys. Make sure they're listening nicely!
- Write a postcard to your favourite author.
- Practise your phonics skills by playing 'I Spy'.
- Make up a story with other people. Each person is only allowed to say one sentence before moving on to the next person.
- Create a menu for today's meal.
- Choose a toy, a household object or something in your food cupboard and make an advert to encourage people to buy it!
- Write a set of instructions to teach people how to play a simple game.
- Write a news report about something that has happened to you recently.
- Write a book review of the book you are reading. What is it about? Who would you recommend it to?

- Make some “top ten” lists. What are your top ten book characters, or books made into films, for example?
- Make a stop motion animation that tells a story. We like [Stop Motion Studio](#) on the App Store, but others are available to download too.
- Create a comic strip that shows what you did yesterday, or what you would love to do tomorrow.
- Read the dictionary (or another book in your home) and make a note of some words that you have not seen before. What do they mean?
- Write a letter to your teacher. What would you like to tell them?
- Choose characters from different books and imagine that they came together in a new story. Imagine what they might do together.
- Think of an alternative ending to one of your favourite books.

Maths

- Look around your home for different shapes. Can you use tallies to count how many of each shape you can find?
- Go on a pattern hunt. Can you find any patterns on your floor / walls or on objects around your home?
- Choose some of your toys and measure them with a ruler or tape measure. Can you order them according to their size?
- Choose some household objects or toys and make a shop. Add prices and invite a customer (or a cuddly toy) to buy items. How much will they spend? How much change will they receive?
- Choose a multiplication table that you’re not sure about and learn it off by heart. Practise, practise, practise!
- Design a board game that uses a number track. You can make it as simple or as complex as you like!
- Play ‘noughts and crosses’ (or ‘tic tac toe’). Try adding more spaces to the board. How does that change the game?
- Look at the TV guide and make up some problems using the information on it, e.g. *What program is on channel 3 at 9.30 am? If Paw Patrol starts at 10.05 am and ends at 10.12 am, how long does it last for?*
- Start a number pattern (e.g. doubling, adding five) and continue it as long as possible. How far can you go?

- Make a Maths quiz to test a member of your family. Don't forget to work out the answers so that you can check their work!

Science

- Investigate which objects float in a bowl or sink filled with water. Check with an adult before you test the objects in the water!
- Draw pictures of a healthy meal and an unhealthy meal.
- Design an imaginary creature. Where does it live? What does it eat? How is it adapted to living in its environment? Could you make a food chain that includes your creature?
- Use yoghurt pots and string to make a telephone.
- Write a set of instructions to show people how to look after a plant.
- Place ice cubes in bowls in different places (for example by a window, in the fridge, in a cupboard). Which one will melt the fastest?
- Set up a simple Science experiment. [Science Bob](#) has some great suggestions.
- Blow some bubbles. Can you blow small bubbles? Could you make a giant bubble?
- Write [some secret messages](#) using invisible ink (you only need lemon juice for this activity).
- Choose your favourite animal and find out more about them using books or information online. Can you present the information in different ways (e.g. a poster, a written report or a video)?

Geography

- Make a poster to teach people about different things that they can do to protect the environment.
- Draw a map showing a route from your home to a favourite place.
- Draw a picture to show the weather outside. Repeat this activity each day to show how the weather changes.
- Draw a bird's eye view of a building you know well. Make sure you include all the doors and windows!
- Have a look at some of the items of food in your cupboard or clothes in your wardrobe. Check the labels and find out which countries they have come from. Which has travelled the furthest to get to you?
- Make a map of your bedroom, showing where everything is.

- Make a simple rain gauge by cutting the top off a plastic bottle, and marking the side in centimetres. Stand it outside and record how much rain it collects.
- Hide a small toy in a secret place and create a 'treasure map' to help somebody else find it.
- Travel around the world by going on a virtual field trip. [This page](#) has some great links to explore!

History

- Create a timeline showing the main events in your life, from the day you were born to today.
- Choose a famous person from the past and write a diary from their point of view.
- Find some fascinating facts about your favourite period from history and make a poster to share them.
- Think of some questions that you could ask a member of your family about their own life. What memories do they have? What are the key events in their life?

Art

- Look in the mirror and draw a self-portrait.
- Create a portrait of a different person or a pet. You can use a picture of them if they won't sit still for long enough.
- Draw or paint a landscape picture (showing the view out of your window).
- Produce a 'still life' picture that shows a bowl of fruit, a collection of your favourite toys or some other objects.
- Think about your favourite book and design a new cover for it.
- Design a superhero. What special powers will they have and how might they help people?
- Create some pictures of animals using fingerprint painting!
- Use objects from nature to create a picture. Could you take a photo of your work?
- Find some rocks and paint them!
- Play 'Pictionary'. Draw a picture that represents your favourite book or movie (without using any words) and ask somebody else to guess what you are drawing.
- Draw a picture without taking your pencil off the page.

- Draw a new illustration for a book. Will you keep it in the same style, or try something else?
- Make a doodle drawing. Doodle a random shape onto a page, then turn it into an animal or object.
- Make your own card game. This could be a simple game of 'Snap', 'Matching Pairs' or a 'Top Trumps' style game.

DT

- Use construction materials to make a model of a famous building (e.g. the Eiffel Tower, the Colosseum or an Egyptian pyramid.).
- Use folded paper or card to make a bridge that spans a gap. How much weight will it be able to hold?
- Use junk materials to build a car that could transport a small toy from one place to another.
- Make some shadow puppets and use them to tell a story.
- Use craft items or construction toys to make a vehicle that can travel along the floor or down a slope. Challenge a friend to a race!
- Build a den and have a picnic or read a story inside it!
- Design some clothes for your favourite toy. Could you sew together a costume for them?
- Design a home for your favourite movie or book character.
- Invent a machine that would improve your life in some way.

Music

- Practise singing some nursery rhymes.
- Learn the lyrics to your favourite song. Could you perform it to your family when you have learned them all?
- Use household objects to make some musical instruments. Could you make a song using them?
- Listen to a piece of classical music and draw whatever it makes you think of. What do you imagine while you listen to it?
- Choose one of your favourite books and make up a simple melody that could be used as part of an animated version of the book.

PE

- Create a simple exercise routine for younger children. Write, draw or perform the sequences of movements.
- Learn the dance moves for different songs and then perform them. Some of our favourites are *Superman* (by Black Lace), *Macarena* (by Los del Río) and *Baby Shark*.
- Try some yoga exercises using [Cosmic Kids Yoga videos](#).
- Make a training circuit around the house or garden. At each station, complete a different exercise for 30 seconds, for example; bunny hops, star jumps, lunges, stepping on and off a step. Then move on to the next.
- Practise jumping from a standing start in a hallway or in the garden. Put something down to mark where you land. Can you jump past it next time?

OTHER LOVELY IDEAS!

- Write thank you notes to people who help you. Surprise them by leaving the notes where they might be discovered.
- Offer to help with some household chores.
- Tell somebody why you love them.
- Try learning a language. There are lots of free apps, Youtube videos and online resources (e.g. [French-Games.net](#))
- Make a poster that shows all of the people and things that make you smile.
- Think of some jokes and perform a comedy routine to your family.
- Help to make a meal. Remember to wash your hands first!
- Play 'Charades'. Act like an animal, a book or a movie and ask people to guess what you are pretending to be.
- Close your eyes and listen carefully. Think about the different sounds that you can hear.
- Create a quiz about your favourite topic and test other people's knowledge of it!
- Record a video that teaches people how to wash their hands properly.
- Play the alphabet game. Choose a few categories (for example, an animal, a country, a fruit) and go through the alphabet, thinking of an example that begins with every letter. Some of the letters are quite tricky!

- Play the yes/no game with someone else. Take it in turns to ask each other questions. The person being asked is out if they answer “yes” or “no”. How creative can you make your answers?
- Play “Would you rather?” Give each player a choice of two options (for example, “Would you rather go for a walk in the snow, or on the beach? “. They have to choose one and say why. The ideas can be as silly as you like!
- What hopes and dreams do you have for the future? Draw a picture to show what you hope life will be like in 10, 20 or even 50 years!
- Be bored! Sometimes, our best ideas come to us when we are feeling bored!

