



Get organized for school - setting up a locker

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Teach your child to organize his school locker well to avoid another bottomless pit.
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If your child is assigned a locker at school, it is potentially one more bottomless pit where clothing, gear, and homework can get lost - forever.

However, if you teach your child early how to organize it well, his locker becomes one of three valuable "zones" that will serve him throughout the school year: [homework/study area at home](#), [backpack between home and school](#), and school locker.

1. If you can visit school and **see your child's locker before going gear shopping**, you can take away valuable information to help him set it up later: Is the locker made of metal, wood or something else? What are the locker's inside dimensions? Does it have any hooks or shelves? Are there vents or other holes, and where are they located? What are the school's rules related to lockers?
2. With your child, **find a backpack that will fit into the locker**, which will assure that he can leave it in a secure spot when he's occupied in sports team practice or other activities.
3. If the locker does not already have them, it's likely you can **find some shelves that fit**. See [Organize It](#) and [Stacks and Stacks](#) for products.
4. **Use locker shelves to organize school books and materials**. Keep textbooks upright, spines out, to find and grab easily. Consider using color to coordinate materials by class. For example, Science = green book cover, green spiral notebook, green binder, green pocket folder. Group materials in the locker by color so it's easy to find a subject fast.
5. Prevent clutter on shelves or at the bottom of the locker. **Use magnetic or self-stick cups and other organizers on the door**. Find these products at [School Pak](#).
6. Remind your child that if he wants to take **personal electronics** to school - cell phone, MP3 player, and the like - they **are best carried with him or left at home**. School lockers are considered school property, and school officials have the right to access them most any time.
7. Help your child **make a daily habit of reviewing his schedule** and moving needed books and supplies from his locker to his backpack for class, and at the end of the day, to carry home for assignments. To increase the chances that this will happen, have him keep a copy of his schedule inside the locker door in addition to the one he carries in his backpack.
8. Help your child **make it a monthly habit to "keep-act-toss" with his locker contents** (abbreviated K-A-T to help you both remember). If he's not sure what to do with the "keep" and "act" items, have him bring them home where you help him sort through what should stay at home and what should stay in the locker. This monthly process will minimize the chances that school officials will have to condemn the locker for foul smells or bursting hinges!

Share your own school locker organization tips here, and click on "subscribe" to be informed of future Get Organized articles.