

The Homework Toolbox Guide

A sorted library, and how to run it.

The sheets do the work. This explains which one to reach for, when, and why the week falls apart on Wednesday without them.

What this is, exactly

This is organisation. It does not teach the subject, it does not replace a teacher, and it makes no claim about how any child will do.

That is not modesty, it is the scope. A printed structure for the week is a real and useful thing, and it is a different thing from tuition. Being clear about which one you have bought is the point of this page.

What is in here

Chapter	What it covers
1. The Wednesday problem	Why the week collapses, and why it is not effort.
2. The twenty-minute setup	What to do the first time you open this.
3. How the library is sorted	The eight sections and what is in each.
4. The weekly loop	Sunday, daily, Friday. The whole routine.
5. Printing and storing	Black and white, one folder, the fridge.
6. Maths sheets	Practice grids, times-table trackers, working-out sheets.
7. Reading sheets	Logs, comprehension prompts, vocabulary cards.
8. Writing sheets	Planning frames, draft checklists, edit passes.
9. Science sheets	Method sheets, observation tables, project planners.
10. Weekly sheets	Timetables, assignment boards, due-date walls.
11. Routine sheets	Start-of-session and pack-away checklists.
12. Tracking sheets	Term overviews, habit sheets, review pages.
13. The blank pack	Editable versions, and when to use them.
14. More than one child	Running this for two or three without doubling work.
15. When it stops working	The four ways this fails and what to change.
16. What this will not do	Said once more, plainly, at the end.
17. A worked week	Sunday to Friday, sheets named, including the bad bit.
18. Talking to the school	What a term of sheets is useful for, and what it is not.
19. Long and short sessions	The decision to make in advance.
20. Older children	What changes, and what does not.
21. A term, start to finish	The four moments that are not weekly.

Chapter	What it covers
22. Which sheet do I need?	One-page index by situation. Print it.

1. The Wednesday problem

A week, as it usually goes.

Day	What happens
Monday	Everyone is organised. There is a plan, possibly even on paper.
Tuesday	The plan is somewhere. Nobody is sure where.
Wednesday	A worksheet is due tomorrow and this is the first anyone has heard of it.
Thursday	Everything happens at once, badly, late.
Friday	Relief. No record of what actually worked.
Next Monday	Start again from nothing.

Nothing in that week is a discipline failure

It is what happens when the system lives in someone's head. Heads are bad at this specific job: they hold a plan perfectly on Monday and imperfectly by Tuesday evening, and the gap is invisible until something is due.

A printed sheet on the fridge is a system that survives Wednesday. That is the entire mechanism behind everything in this library, and it is why the sheets are paper rather than an app — paper cannot be closed, forgotten, or left on a device somebody else is using.

Who is running it

These sheets are built for the adult, not for a child to self-manage. A nine-year-old is not going to maintain a due-date wall, and designing as though they might is how resource packs end up unused. Where a child fills something in, it is one box, with you there.

2. The twenty-minute setup

Do this once. The first twenty minutes are decided for you so that opening the library does not become its own project.

	Do this	Why
1	Print the Weekly Timetable and one Due-Date Wall.	These two carry most of the value. Everything else is optional at the start.
2	Put the Timetable somewhere shared and permanent — a fridge, a kitchen door. Not a bedroom.	A plan nobody walks past is a plan nobody reads.
3	Write on the Due-Date Wall everything you currently know is coming.	Usually a short and slightly alarming list. That is the point.
4	Print the Start-of-Session checklist and keep it with the stationery.	It removes the five minutes of hunting that precedes every session.
5	Stop. Do not print the rest yet.	Printing the whole library on day one produces a pile, and a pile is what you were trying to escape.

The one habit that makes this work

When a due date is mentioned — a letter, an app notification, a conversation at the gate — it goes on the Due-Date Wall before you put your coat down. Not later. Later is Wednesday.

3. How the library is sorted

Eight sections. The sort order exists so you can find the right sheet in under a minute while somebody is asking you for it, which is the only condition that matters.

Section	What is in it	Reach for it when
Maths	Practice grids, times-table trackers, working-out sheets	Practice needs structure, or working needs showing
Reading	Logs, comprehension prompts, vocabulary cards	Reading is happening but nothing is being recorded
Writing	Planning frames, draft checklists, edit passes	A blank page has been stared at for ten minutes
Science	Method sheets, observation tables, project planners	There is a project with no shape yet
Weekly	Timetables, assignment boards, due-date walls	Always. This is the section that runs the week
Routines	Start-of-session and pack-away checklists	Sessions start slowly or end in lost equipment
Tracking	Term overviews, habit sheets, review pages	The end of a week or a term
Blank	Editable versions of every sheet above	A sheet is nearly right but not quite

If you only ever use one section, use Weekly. It is the one that prevents the Wednesday in chapter 1; the rest make individual sessions better once the week itself holds together.

4. The weekly loop

Three moments. Ten minutes on Sunday, two minutes a day, five minutes on Friday.

Sunday: set the week

- Copy everything from the Due-Date Wall that lands this week onto the Weekly Timetable, on the day you intend to do it — not the day it is due.
- Put the biggest item earliest. It is the one most likely to need a second session, and Thursday has no room for one.
- Print whatever subject sheets those items need. Now, while it is calm.

Daily: two minutes

- Run the Start-of-Session checklist. It exists so the session starts rather than gradually assembles.
- Tick what was finished on the Timetable. Ticking is the whole record.
- Run the Pack-Away checklist. This is where lost equipment stops being a weekly event.

Friday: five minutes

- Fill in the Weekly Review page. Two questions: what got done, and what moved to next week.
- Move anything unfinished onto next week's Timetable now, while you still know what it was.
- Add any new due dates to the Wall.

Why Friday matters more than Sunday

Sunday planning without Friday reviewing means every week starts from memory, which is the state chapter 1 describes. The review is five minutes and it is the difference between a system and a stack of printouts.

5. Printing and storing

Practical, and duller than the rest, and the reason people either keep using this or quietly stop.

- **No colour printer needed.** Every sheet is designed to be readable in black and white. Nothing depends on a colour to be understood.
- **Print the Weekly section in multiples.** Ten timetables at once. Printing one per week is a weekly decision, and weekly decisions lapse.
- **One folder, one place.** Not a drawer per subject. The sort order in chapter 3 is the filing system; adding a second one defeats it.
- **Laminate nothing except the Due-Date Wall.** That one is worth it — a wipeable wall gets updated. The rest are meant to be written on and kept.
- **Keep the finished ones.** A term of completed sheets is the record chapter 12 is built on, and it costs nothing but the folder.

6. Maths sheets

Practice grids

Blank grids for repeated practice of one thing at a time. The value is the constraint: one operation per sheet, so you can see where it breaks rather than guessing from a mixed page.

Times-table trackers

One row per table, a column per attempt. Filled in over weeks, it shows which tables are solid and which are being avoided — and avoidance is usually the useful finding.

Working-out sheets

Space laid out for method rather than answers. Most maths marked wrong is right with one slip in the middle, and you cannot find the slip on a page with only answers on it.

Maths sheets — in practice

Using it

In the week: practice grids belong in the middle of the week, not the night before something is due — practice and deadline work compete badly for the same session. Keep one tracker running per term rather than starting a fresh one each month; the value is entirely in the comparison across weeks.

The way this section goes wrong

What goes wrong: mixed practice. A sheet with four operations on it produces a page you cannot read, because a wrong answer could be the method, the arithmetic or simple fatigue. One operation per sheet is restrictive on purpose.

7. Reading sheets

Reading logs

Date, what was read, how long, and one line about it. The one line is the part that matters; minutes read is easy to record and tells you very little on its own.

Comprehension prompts

A short set of questions that work on any book, so you are not inventing them at bedtime. Deliberately generic — a prompt sheet tied to one text gets used once.

Vocabulary cards

A cut-out grid for words met while reading. Words collected from real reading stick; words from a list generally do not.

Reading sheets — in practice

Using it

In the week: the log gets filled in immediately after reading, by whoever was there, in one line. Comprehension prompts are for perhaps one session in three — every day turns reading into an exercise, which is a good way to end the reading.

The way this section goes wrong

What goes wrong: logging minutes and nothing else. It is the easiest column and the least informative, and a log of nothing but durations tells you somebody sat down, not what happened.

8. Writing sheets

Planning frames

Boxes for beginning, middle, end, and who it is for, filled in before any sentences. The blank page in chapter 3 is almost always a planning problem wearing a writing problem's face.

Draft checklists

What has to be present before a piece counts as a first draft. It makes "finished" a definition rather than an argument.

Edit passes

Three separate passes — meaning, then sentences, then spelling and punctuation — with a sheet for each. Editing all three at once is how none of them get done.

Writing sheets — in practice

Using it

In the week: planning frame and first draft in one session, then leave it. The three edit passes belong on a different day — editing something written twenty minutes ago mostly finds spelling, because the meaning is still fresh enough to seem obvious.

The way this section goes wrong

What goes wrong: skipping the frame because the piece is short. Short pieces are where a plan costs two minutes and saves the blank-page twenty, so it is exactly the wrong place to economise.

9. Science sheets

Method sheets

Question, what you changed, what you measured, what happened. The frame is the lesson as much as the experiment.

Observation tables

Ruled tables with room for units and for the reading that looks wrong. Space for the odd result is what stops it being quietly dropped.

Project planners

A longer piece broken into sessions with a date against each. Projects are where the Wednesday problem does its worst work, because the deadline is far away until it is not.

Science sheets — in practice

Using it

In the week: the method sheet gets filled in before anything is done, not written up afterwards. Written up afterwards it becomes a record; filled in first it becomes the plan, which is the part that was missing.

The way this section goes wrong

What goes wrong: the project planner written once and never looked at. It is a weekly sheet, not a one-off — it belongs in the Sunday ten minutes with the Timetable, or it is just a list of dates that have quietly passed.

10. Weekly sheets

Weekly timetable

The spine of the whole library. Days across, sessions down, written on Sunday and ticked daily.

Assignment board

Everything currently in progress, on one sheet, with what is next for each. Stops the smaller item being forgotten behind the big one.

Due-date wall

Everything known to be coming, by date. The single sheet most likely to prevent a Wednesday. Laminate this one.

Weekly sheets — in practice

Using it

In the week: the Timetable is written on Sunday and ticked daily. The Due-Date Wall is written on the instant a date is mentioned. Those are different habits with different triggers, which is why they are two sheets and not one.

The way this section goes wrong

What goes wrong: scheduling on the due date. It is the single most common error and it recreates the Thursday in chapter 1 exactly, with a printed sheet now confirming it was always going to happen.

11. Routine sheets

Start-of-session checklist

Equipment, the sheet for today, water, a clear surface. Four lines, and it removes the slow start that eats the first ten minutes.

Pack-away checklist

Where each thing goes. Written down once, so it stops being asked every day and stops being answered differently.

Session timer card

Agreed length, agreed break. Written before you start, which is the only time it can be agreed rather than negotiated.

Routine sheets — in practice

Using it

In the week: both checklists run every session, and they are short enough that this is realistic. The timer card is only worth using while a session length is still being argued about; once it is settled, retire it.

The way this section goes wrong

What goes wrong: the checklists get longer. Somebody adds a line, then another, and a four-line list becomes eleven and stops being run at all. If it does not fit in a glance it is not a checklist.

12. Tracking sheets

Term overview

Twelve weeks on one sheet, so a term has a shape you can see. Filled in as it goes, not planned in advance.

Habit sheets

One row per week for the handful of things you actually want to be routine. Keep it to three; a habit sheet with eleven rows is a wish list.

Review pages

The Friday five minutes. What got done, what moved, what to change. This is the sheet that makes next term start from something rather than from nothing.

Tracking sheets — in practice

Using it

In the week: only the Weekly Review is weekly. The term overview is filled in as the term goes, a line at a time, and the habit sheet gets one tick per row per week. None of it should take more than the Friday five minutes.

The way this section goes wrong

What goes wrong: filling in the term overview in advance, as a plan. It is a record of what happened. Planned ahead it is fiction by week three, and fiction nobody wants to correct.

13. The blank pack

Editable versions of every sheet in the library, with the headings left open.

They exist because no printable fits every household, and the alternative — using a sheet that is nearly right — is how a system quietly stops being used. If the Weekly Timetable has the wrong days on it for you, the blank version has none.

When to reach for a blank

- The sections do not match the subjects being studied.
- The week does not run Monday to Friday.
- A sheet is right but has one column too many, which is more off-putting than it sounds.
- You are running this for more than one child and want the same sheet with different headings.

Chapter 14.

When not to

In the first fortnight. Customising before using is the most reliable way to spend an evening on stationery and never start. Use the printed versions as they are, find the specific thing that irritates you, then change that one thing.

14. More than one child

Print as many copies as you need for your own household or classroom. What follows is how to do that without doubling the work.

- **One Due-Date Wall for the household, not one each.** The whole value is being able to see the week in one look. Two walls is two things to check, and one of them will not get checked.
- **A Weekly Timetable each.** This is the one to duplicate — the days and sessions genuinely differ.
- **One Start-of-Session checklist, shared.** If the routine differs by child you have two routines to remember rather than one.
- **Subject sheets as needed, not as a set.** Print for the work that actually exists this week.
- **Colour-code by pen, not by paper.** One colour per child on the shared sheets. Chapter 5 is the reason: nothing should depend on a colour printer, and a biro is free.

15. When it stops working

It will, at some point. There are four common ways and each has a specific fix, none of which is trying harder.

What you notice	What is actually happening	Change this
The Timetable stopped being filled in	Sunday got skipped once and the week ran on memory, which worked well enough to skip it again.	Print ten at once and attach Sunday to something you already do.
Sheets are printed but not used	Too many were printed at once, so choosing one became a decision.	Print only what this week needs. Chapter 2, step five.
Everything still lands on Thursday	Items are being scheduled on the day they are due rather than the day they will be done.	On Sunday, write each item on an earlier day. Biggest first.
It has become a source of friction	The sheets have turned into a performance measure rather than organisation — which is not what they are for.	Drop to two sheets: the Timetable and the Due-Date Wall. Nothing else, for a fortnight.

The last one is the important one

If a folder of sheets has become something a child feels measured by, the honest response is to use fewer of them, not better ones. This is an organising tool. The moment it is doing something else, it is worth stopping and going back to the two sheets that only describe the week.

17. A worked week

One week, Sunday to Friday, with the sheets named. Not an example of a perfect week — an example of an ordinary one, including the bit that goes wrong on Wednesday and gets absorbed instead of escalating.

When	What happens	Sheet
Sunday, 10 min	Three things on the Due-Date Wall land this week. They go on the Timetable — the big one on Monday and Tuesday, the small ones Wednesday and Thursday. Print a planning frame and two practice grids.	Timetable, Wall
Monday	Start-of-session checklist. Planning frame and first draft of the big one. Tick it. Pack away.	Routines, Writing
Tuesday	Edit passes one and two on yesterday's draft. Not three — that is Thursday.	Writing
Wednesday	A letter comes home with a new date on it. It goes on the Wall before the coat comes off. Practice grid as planned.	Wall, Maths
Thursday	Edit pass three. Second practice grid. One item does not get finished, which is normal.	Writing, Maths
Friday, 5 min	Review page. Two things done, one moved to next week — copied across now, not remembered. The new date is already on the Wall.	Review, Timetable

What made that an ordinary week rather than a bad one

Two things, both small. The new date went on the Wall the moment it appeared rather than at the weekend. And the unfinished item was written onto next week on Friday, while it was still obvious what it was.

Neither is effort. Both are the difference between a week that absorbs a surprise and one that is derailed by it.

18. Talking to the school

These sheets give you something specific to bring to a conversation, which is worth more than an impression.

A term of completed sheets tells you what was set, when, how long it took, and where a session repeatedly stalled. That is concrete and useful in a way that "they seem to find it hard" is not, and it is the kind of detail a teacher can actually act on.

What is worth mentioning

- A task type that consistently takes far longer than the time set for it.
- Work arriving with too little notice to plan — the Due-Date Wall makes this visible rather than anecdotal.
- A session that stalls at the same point every time, which is usually a specific missing step rather than a general difficulty.
- Anything you are worried about. Early, rather than after a term of organising around it.

What these sheets are not

They are not evidence about a child, and taking a folder to a meeting as proof of anything is not what they are for. They are a record of what the household did, which is a genuinely useful thing to have and a different thing from an assessment.

19. When a session runs long, or stops early

Both happen weekly. Neither needs a plan changed — they need a decision made in advance so it is not being made while everyone is tired.

Running long

Stop at the agreed time on the timer card and write on the Timetable where you got to. An unfinished item carried to tomorrow with a written note costs almost nothing; an hour more of a session that stopped being productive twenty minutes ago costs the next three days.

Stopping early

If the work is done, it is done — the timetable is not a quota. If it stopped because it became impossible, write the exact point it stopped at on the sheet. That sentence is the most useful thing on the page: it is what you look at on Sunday, and what chapter 18 is built from.

The sentence to write

"Got as far as X, stopped because Y." Ten words. It is the difference between a week you can pick up and a week you have to reconstruct.

20. Older children

The sheets are written for primary and lower-secondary work, and they adapt upward — but what changes is who holds the pen, not the structure.

Sheet	What changes with an older child
Due-Date Wall	They write on it. You still read it — shared, not handed over.
Weekly Timetable	They fill it in on Sunday, with you there the first few weeks.
Project Planner	The most useful sheet in the library at this age, because deadlines get longer and the Wednesday problem gets worse.
Routine checklists	Usually retire naturally. Let them.
Review page	Keep this one. It is the habit worth transferring.
Blank pack	Comes into its own — subjects stop matching the printed sections.

Chapter 1 says these sheets are built for the adult running it, not for a child to self-manage. That stays true; what shifts is that with an older child the handover is the goal rather than a shortcut, and it happens one sheet at a time rather than all at once.

21. A term, start to finish

Twelve weeks, and the four moments that are not weekly.

When	What to do
Week 1	Twenty-minute setup from chapter 2 if this is new. Otherwise: fresh Term Overview, fresh habit sheet, wipe the Wall.
Week 3	First honest check. Is the Timetable being filled in? If not, chapter 15 — and do that now rather than at half term.
Mid term	Read back over the Review pages in one sitting. Patterns are visible across six weeks that are invisible across one.
Final week	Fill in the last line of the Term Overview and keep the folder. Next term starting from something is the entire payoff of having kept it.

Between those four, it is the weekly loop from chapter 4 and nothing else. The loop is meant to be boring; a system you have to think about is one you stop running in week five.

22. Which sheet do I need?

One page. Print it and keep it at the front of the folder.

The situation	The sheet	Pack
I do not know what is coming up	Due-Date Wall	Weekly
I know what is coming but not when we will do it	Weekly Timetable	Weekly
Several things on the go and one keeps being forgotten	Assignment Board	Weekly
Sessions take ten minutes to start	Start-of-Session Checklist	Routines
Equipment keeps going missing	Pack-Away Checklist	Routines
Arguing about how long a session is	Session Timer Card	Routines
Staring at a blank page	Planning Frame	Writing
Written but a mess	Edit Passes 1 to 3, on separate days	Writing
Maths wrong and we cannot see why	Working-Out Sheet	Maths
Needs repetition on one thing	Practice Grid	Maths
Reading happens but nothing is recorded	Reading Log	Reading
Nothing to say about the book	Comprehension Prompts	Reading
A project with no shape and a far-off deadline	Project Planner	Science
An experiment to write up	Method Sheet, Observation Table	Science
The week ended and nothing was captured	Weekly Review	Tracking
The term feels shapeless	Term Overview	Tracking
A sheet is nearly right	Blank equivalent	Blank

16. What this will not do

Said once more at the end, because it is the most important page here.

It will

Give you a printed structure for the week, the same sheets every time, and a record of what you did so that next term starts from something.

It will not

Teach the subject. Replace a teacher. Or make any claim about how a child is doing. It is organisation — that is the whole honest scope, and it was the scope on the page you bought it from.

If you are worried about something specific

A folder of printables is the wrong tool for a worry about how a child is getting on. That is a conversation with their teacher, who can see things this cannot, and having it early is better than having it after a term of organising around the problem.

This library will make the week calmer and more repeatable, which is genuinely worth having. It is a different thing, and anyone selling you the first as the second is not being straight with you.

Nothing is stored about anybody

There are no accounts, no logins, and no data collection anywhere in this product. You download files and print them. None of the sheets asks for a full name, a school or a date of birth — a printable that collects none of that is both simpler and safer than one that does, and it means nothing here needs looking after.