

Surviving Middle School: Five Tips for Academic Success



Organization

Can you find your supplies, your books, your homework? Can you keep your locker and binders organized? If this is a tough area for you, be sure to organize papers in a binder, and use dividers to separate different subjects and sections. Go through your stuff on a regular basis to put loose papers where they need to be. Having several different teachers usually means several different sets of expectations; therefore, using an assignment book is critical. Also, clean out your locker on a regular basis, and take home things you don't need to store at school.

Time Management

In middle school, you will start getting more long term assignments than you are used to. It may help to break these bigger projects down into smaller chunks and use a time map to plan how you are going to tackle them. Your school counselor can help you with this. It's common to underestimate the size of a project and procrastinate until there's not enough time left to do a good job. Make the most of your time by completing some work each day instead of leaving it all until the end.

Setting Goals

Do you want to make the honor roll? Are you striving for an A in Math? Identify what you want to achieve (long term goal) and make a game plan for getting there. Write down the steps you will need to get to your goal (these are your short term goals). Plan some fun rewards for yourself for each step you accomplish along the way. Keeping your goal in mind will help keep you motivated as you continue to make strides towards reaching it.

Problem Solving

Lots of kids hit obstacles and then get stuck because they don't have good problem solving skills. Practice brainstorming solutions to roadblocks that get in your way. Do you keep forgetting to write down your homework assignments? Maybe you can copy down the numbers of several classmates you can call in a pinch. Do you keep losing pencils? Maybe a solution would be to keep an extra package of pencils in your locker. For each problem, come up with a few possible ideas, then pick the best one and try it. If after a while you don't see any improvement, try something else.

Asking for Help

Often kids don't ask for help because they're afraid of looking dumb. In reality, it's the smartest people that ask the best questions! Try to ask for help *before* you get too far behind. You may be able to meet with a teacher during a study or resource period, or at another mutually convenient time, to get caught up with what you don't understand.

Source:

<https://www.umtsd.org/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&ModuleInstanceId=940&ViewID=7b97f7ed-8e5e-4120-848f-a8b4987d588f&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=1303&PageID=1758>