

These are general guidelines that we hope you will find helpful. Keep in mind that not all children will be able to do the same chores at the same age. Let the children follow their skills and interests as much as possible. Give them feedback along the way to help their learning. Note what aspects they did well, share helpful hints, make it fun (turn on music or sing together when doing chores).

For young children their “helping out” may be more time consuming and more work for you. However remember you are laying the groundwork for children to experience “feeling good by helping” and an understanding that family members work together to help their household run smoothly.

### 9 – 24 months

- Clean table and counter surfaces with adult (give child a small towel & water spray bottle).
- Clean yard (collect trash and toys, sweep with child size broom etc.).
- Do simple errands (“Bring the diaper, please”, “Throw this in the trash, please,” etc.).
- Help make beds - (begins with handing the pillows to adult).
- Help with grocery shopping (putting items in basket and on check-out counter, handing things to be put away at home).
- Put dirty clothes in hamper.
- Water plants (with pre-measured amounts).

### 2 years and up

- Carry groceries in from car (give child one light item or a small bag).
- Clean up what they drop after eating.
- Clear own dishes from table.
- Do simple errands (“Take this towel and put it in the hamper”, etc.).
- Dust with socks on their hands.
- Fill pet’s food dish.
- Hang clothes on hooks.
- Help make the bed (pull covers up).
- Help pick up the living room.
- Mop a small area.
- Pour from a small pitcher.

### 2 years and up (continued)

- Put books and magazines in a rack/shelf.
- Put clothes in hamper.
- Put toys away.
- Sort laundry (hand child clothes to put in appropriate piles).
- Water plants.
- Wipe spills.

### 3 years and up

- Bring in the newspaper.
- Carry boxed or canned goods from the grocery sacks to the proper shelf.
- Empty bathroom trash cans.
- Fix bowl of cereal.
- Get the mail.
- Help clean out the car.
- Help set the table (put utensils and napkins on the table).
- Help wash the car.
- Help with meal preparations (learn to measure, stir and use small appliances).
- Make thank you and birthday cards.
- Pick up bedroom.
- Put away clean utensils.
- Put dirty clothes in hamper.
- Put shoes away.
- Sort socks and fold socks.
- Undress and dress self with some help.
- Wash and dry hands and face.



### 4 years and up

- Brush hair.
- Clean table after meals.
- Dust the furniture.
- Feed the pets at scheduled times.
- Fold laundry and put it away.
- Help do the dishes (rinse items or put dishes in the dishwasher).
- Help with grocery shopping and compiling a grocery list.
- Make own bed.
- Place napkins, plates, and silverware on the table.
- Polish car.
- Polish shoes and clean up afterwards.
- Polish silver.
- Sharpen pencils.
- Sort laundry with supervision.
- Take laundry to laundry room on laundry day.
- Vacuum/sweep.

### 5 years and up

- Choose clothes and get dressed/undressed.
- Help set the table (put utensils, napkins, plates, glasses, and condiments from the fridge on the table).
- Help sweep or rake outside
- Help with more difficult meal preparations (make frozen juice, crack and scramble eggs, cut with blunt knife).
- Help with younger siblings (bottle feeding, entertain while mom is out of the room, feed/dress toddler siblings).
- Learn to tie shoes.
- Make bed and clean room.

**5 years and up (continued)**

- Make own sandwich or simple breakfast and clean up.
- Pour own drink.
- Set the table (put utensils, napkins, plates and glasses on the table).
- Take out the garbage.
- Water the garden and lawn.

**Age 6 and Up**

- Carry in the grocery sacks.
- Clean bathrooms (bathtub, sink and counters).
- Clean out inside of car.
- Hang and fold laundry.
- Hang up own clothes in the closet.
- Help make breakfast and lunch
- Leave the bathroom in order.
- Oil and care for bike.
- Pour own drinks.
- Prepare simple foods (sandwiches, salad, peel vegetables).
- Pull weeds.
- Rake leaves.
- Shovel snow.
- Straighten or clean out silverware drawer.
- Sweep patio/deck area.
- Take care of pets.
- Tie own shoes.
- Train pets.
- Use the washer and dryer (sort, measure detergent, fold clean clothes and put away.)
- Vacuum, sweep and mop.
- Wash dog or cat.



### 8 - 10 years

At this pre-teen age children are capable of taking on more of the home operational tasks and are looking for independence. Give them tasks they can do on their own. You should also address any rewards and consequences of completing and not completing the tasks.

- Answer telephone and take messages.
- Carry own lunch money and notes back to school.
- Change sheets and put dirty sheets in hamper.
- Clean patio furniture.
- Clean up animal "messes" in the yard and house.
- Complete responsibility for their rooms on a daily basis (make bed, put clothes, toys and projects away and straighten dresser drawers and closet)
- Cut flowers and make a centerpiece.
- Do chores without a reminder.
- Do more difficult cleaning projects (scrubbing kitchen floor, windows)
- Do neighborhood chores.
- Do simple ironing.
- Empty garbage pails in house.
- Feed baby.
- Fold blankets.
- Gather wood for the fireplace.
- Get items ready for BBQ (charcoal, hamburgers).
- Get own snacks
- Handle sums of money up to \$5.00.
- Help others with their work when asked.
- Help rearrange furniture. Help plan the layout.
- Help with car maintenance (help with minor repairs, learn tool usage, wash/wax).
- Help with defrosting and cleaning the refrigerator.
- Help write simple letters.

**8 - 10 years (continued)**

- Learn financial planning (computing percentages for saving, gift-giving and spending)
- Learn the purpose and usage of tools (lawn mower, hand tools, etc.)
- Make more complex meals/snacks (pour and make tea, coffee, and instant drinks, beginning meal planning).
- Pack own suitcase.
- Paint fence or shelves.
- Participate in hobbies (organize supplies, time and clean up).
- Pick fruit off trees.
- Plan own birthday.
- Polish silverware, copper, or brass items.
- Prepare own school lunch.
- Put away groceries
- Receive and answer own mail.
- Run own bathwater.
- Sew buttons and sew rips in seams.
- Simple first aid.
- Summer jobs (lawn mowing, dog sitting, babysitting, odd jobs for vacationers).
- Take care of younger siblings with parent in house.
- Take pet(s) for walks.
- Wait on guests.
- Wash and dry dishes or load/unload dishwasher.
- Write thank-you notes.



### 11 - 12 years

- Build a campfire.
- Check and add oil to car under supervision.
- Clean pool and hot tub.
- Help build things.
- Join outside organizations, do assignments, and attend.
- Mow lawn with supervision.
- Put siblings to bed and dress them.
- Schedule own time (studies, hobbies, sports).
- Sew, knit, or weave (even using a sewing machine).

### Ages 13 and Up

- Anticipate needs of others and initiate the appropriate action.
- Baby-sit neighborhood kids
- Bake cookies and cakes.
- Buy groceries using a list and learn comparative shopping.
- Change light bulbs.
- Clean out refrigerator.
- Clean stove and oven.
- Do unsupervised yard work (i.e., lawn mowing, edging, clean-up, gardening).
- Do volunteer work.
- Earn income doing chores for neighbors.
- Iron clothes.
- Make grocery lists.
- Mow the lawn.
- Prepare a meal.
- Replace vacuum cleaner bags.
- Wash inside and outside of windows