

Working Parents Share Household Chores

Times have changed. Many moms return to work weeks to months after the birth of their baby. Some work outside the home by choice. Others need the financial security that their job provides.

When both parents work outside the home, it is only fair that they both share the household chores. It is not always easy to divide the chores equally. Your goal is to divide the workload so that it works best for each parent. It must also work for the family unit as well.

Meet when you both have free time and are well rested.

1. Make a list of all the jobs that need to be done.
2. Take turns choosing a job for your job list.
3. Divide the jobs that neither of you want to do.

As you discuss how to assign the remaining tasks:

- Consider each other's natural habits and strengths. A morning person could make coffee, breakfast and unload the dishwasher. Ironing is faster for the one who has ironing skills. It takes time to learn new skills.
- Make the job list fair. Negotiate. Each of you will have jobs you do not like.
- Assign children who are old enough a few chores — picking up toys, setting the table or taking out the garbage.

As you each carry out your job list:

- Be flexible. When something unexpected happens, chore schedules may change.
- Praise each other for “jobs well done”. Refrain from being critical.
- Do not nag. Respect each other's job schedule.

When problems arise, look for solutions. As your family grows, schedules change. Together, alter the chore list.

De-Clutter

With every season, take one day to de-clutter your home.

- Throw away or give away unwanted, broken or unused items and clothing.
- Clean at least 2 closets. Organize what you use. Get rid of what you do not use.
- Straighten and clean your garage.
- Get rid of old mail, papers, magazines and newspapers.
- File what you need to save.

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