



**Oak
Meadow**

YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER IN
JOYFUL LEARNING

Adjusting to Homeschooling or a New Curriculum

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Making the decision to switch gears and begin homeschooling—or if you're already homeschooling, to try a new curriculum—takes courage and faith, and it may be a while until you find your rhythm and a routine. Here are 10 ideas to help ease the way.

1. Different philosophy; different approach. Students who have been in school likely experienced the institutional approach of one-assignment-fits-all, with the teacher's attention divided among many students. In contrast, Oak Meadow's approach is flexible, allowing for adjustments to the lessons, with one-on-one support from the home teacher. It's helpful to keep in mind that this big switch might bring stress or frustration.

2. Commit to riding out the transition. Don't expect to see results right away. Trust the process and really commit to seeing it through for six weeks or more before you assess whether it is working for your child. Learning really does take place, even if it might not feel that way in the moment, and a few weeks' perspective can make all the difference.

3. Go easy on yourself and your child. During this adjustment phase, don't get too caught up in whether every single lesson is done properly. What's the main concept or the key skills being addressed? What is most important for your child to grasp before moving on to the next lesson? Make that your focus, and give everyone points for effort as you navigate this new way of learning.

4. Consider downshifting or deschooling. Your child might need to ease into the new model slowly, and some children, particularly those who experienced trauma in their previous school, will benefit from a period of "deschooling." This can be like an extended vacation from school, with plenty of nourishing rest, time to daydream, healthy activities, and supported emotional processing.

5. Keep good boundaries. Even well-meaning loved ones can undermine your confidence by demanding evidence that your new educational plan is "working." It is fine to say things are going well without elaborating. This lets your child focus on learning without worrying about what the relatives or neighbors might be thinking.

6. Structure and support are key. Set up a solid daily and weekly routine as a starting point. It's easy to get sidetracked, so do your best to set up a strong plan and stick to it. Include focused study time in your schedule, and find a comfortable place to work. If you are feeling overwhelmed, consider a consultation session with an experienced teacher, using a tutor, or asking an experienced friend for help.

7. Be resourceful and independent. Make friends with your local librarian; it's a great way to find out what resources are available and to connect with other homeschoolers in your area. Explore online resources, starting with Oak Meadow's social media sites. There are many Facebook groups for homeschooling parents, where you can ask questions and find support and validation for this journey.

8. Go outside! Oak Meadow's nature-based approach encourages families to learn out in the world. The fresh air and soothing sights and sounds are a good antidote for stress of any kind, including the positive stress of this important transition. Remember to be mindful of how your child's needs for social interaction are met, especially if she or he has just left a school setting.

9. Be patient. It takes time to settle in. It will be a little while before you get your bearings and find a good rhythm for your homeschooling days and weeks. Don't panic! It's okay if things aren't perfect. There is a lot to be learned from trial and error. Have fun with the process!

10. Trust yourself. Remember that you are the expert on your own child. The decision to begin homeschooling was made in response to something your child or family needed enough to warrant such a significant change. Remind yourself often of why you chose homeschooling and take good care of yourself and your child as you adjust.

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