

Ten Neat Tips to Avoiding Morning Madness

Whether you are married or single, have children or not, getting ready in the morning can be challenging and a sometimes even a little crazy. Below are our top ten tips for eliminating the madness in the mornings;

1. Prepare lunches the night before. Packing lunches after dinner can save you up to 15 minutes of valuable time in the morning leaving you free to sit down and eat a good breakfast. Make sandwiches and cut vegetables and fruit into small plastic bags that can be grabbed easily in the morning.
2. Pack your bags the night before. Put your keys, laptop or briefcase and all the other things you will need for the next day in the same spot every evening so you can just grab everything and go in the morning. If the kids need certain things for sports or other activities, make sure they have them ready and all in the same spot the night before. This way valuable time in the morning will not be spent searching for missing things.
3. Plan your clothes in the evening. Lay out everything you and your children will wear the next day. Ask your older children to pick out the clothes they plan to wear and have them out waiting for them to put on in the morning.
4. Coordinate bathroom schedules. Fighting for the bathroom causes frustration and does not bode well for the start of anyone's day. Discuss and designate times for everyone to use the bathroom in the morning and where possible get the family to shower or bath the evening before.
5. Invest in a coffee maker with an automatic timer and set up your coffee maker the evening before. Then when you wake up in the morning your coffee will be waiting for you.
6. Check breakfast ingredients. Make sure you have the food you want for breakfast ready the night before. Sending someone down to the shop to buy bread in the mornings wastes valuable time.
7. Plan ahead. As soon as you find out about an event at school that you need to prepare something for, make note of the dates. After making a list of the things you will need, make a note of the date you will be purchasing the supplies. Lastly, make a note to put where you can see it every day (for example on the fridge) with the date of the event and a list of everything you need for that project. This way you won't be scrambling to make a cake or organize a costume or a science project the morning the child needs to take it to school.

8. If you have young children, use the morning television programs strategically. Save a favorite program as a reward for when clothes are on, breakfast has been eaten and all of their things are ready to go.
9. If you tend to be slow and forgetful in the morning, make a list the night before and tape it to your refrigerator or in another place where you will see it. A white board attached to your refrigerator is a great option. There is nothing worse than being on your way to work only to realize you left something important at home. Avoid this by keeping a to-do list handy and checking it regularly.
10. Wake up earlier. This may not be something you want to do, but it doesn't have to be much earlier, say 15 minutes. If your mornings are just too packed, you may need a little more time. To make up the difference, consider going to bed a little earlier as well. Remember, nothing helps you get a good start to the day more than a good night's sleep.

By adding some small routines to your day your mornings can manifest into calm and timely starts to the day for your entire family.