



BACK TO SCHOOL: HOW TO MAKE INFORMED CHOICES

1. Look at the list of school supplies needed for the new year with your child
Decide what school supplies and clothing are needed
(e.g., binders, pencils, boots, coats).

2. Sort out what you already have, what can be reused, and what absolutely needs replacing
Make three piles: “Throw out,” “Keep” and “Depends on the budget.”

3. Make a list of items to buy
Again, decide which items are absolutely necessary and which ones would be nice to buy but are not necessities.

4. Have your child estimate how much it will cost
Review the list of requirements, and assign an approximate cost to each item
(e.g., how much do you think a binder costs?).
Check the estimated prices on the Internet to make sure you are being realistic.

5. Set a total budget
With your child, determine what the total budget will be based on your price estimates in Step 4. Split the budget in two: part for school materials and part for clothing.

6. Go shopping with your child (or let your teen go alone!)
Tip: Bring along a calculator so your child can keep a running total while shopping.
Encourage your child to compare the different price options.

7. Have your child make choices to stay on budget
Again, you can help by separating needs and wants.

8. Do this on a day when you and your child are feeling well, are in a good mood and have plenty of time
Shop in advance to avoid last-minute stress.