



The Quick Start Guide to Homeschooling in Iowa

Almost everyone beginning the homeschool adventure has felt a bit overwhelmed, facing an unfamiliar path. The good news is that you are not on this journey alone! **Homeschool Iowa is here to help!**

How to get started:

1) Define WHY you want to homeschool:

- Begin with a simple foundational statement about why you feel that homeschooling is best for your family.
- Need some help or clarity? Check out the reasons why others have chosen to home educate their children in our online *Start Homeschooling* guide (www.homeschooliowa.org/start-homeschooling).

2) Learn about Iowa's homeschooling laws:

- In Iowa, the compulsory school attendance age span is 6-16, determined on September 15th of each school year
- In this state, we have a wide variety of educational options for our children including options that have no public school involvement and options that allow you to homeschool while also having access to public school classes, activities, and/or programs through dual enrollment.
 - If you DO want public school access, you'll file a Form A and either
 - arrange for licensed teacher supervision from a privately-hired or public-school-provided teacher OR
 - turn in annual assessment results at the end of the school year.
 - If you DO NOT want public school access, you can use one of the options that does not require reporting or have supervision and testing requirements.
- Visit our website for a comparison chart that clearly defines the differences between each of the five legal homeschool options in Iowa and for a helpful comparison chart.

3) Choose WHAT homeschool approach you will use:

- Decide upon the homeschooling method that will work best for you and your student. You'll find a list of the most common approaches in our online *Start Homeschooling* guide.
 - Consider your child's learning style when making this choice
 - Consider your family dynamics
 - Select educational materials based upon your choice
 - Remember that if what you start with doesn't work well, it's ok to change and try something different.

4) Relax and Research:

- Relax! Homeschooling is a journey with a lot of twists and turns. You do not need to have your child's complete education plan from NOW until they graduate figured out before you start.
- Be reassured in knowing that there is no single "perfect" way to home educate, and you can continually make adjustments.
- Spend some time talking to experienced homeschoolers, reading about home education, visiting curriculum websites, and deciding what you want your homeschool to look like.
- Use our listed resources to help your adventure start out well!

Resources we offer:

Homeschool Iowa Website: homeschooliowa.org

- Iowa Homeschooling Options Comparison Chart
- Start Homeschooling, a 10-page step-by-step guide
- Homeschool Iowa Regional Reps: Experienced moms who can answer your questions
- Explanations of various homeschooling styles and tools
- Information about homeschooling special needs students and access to our Special Needs Advisors
- Guidance for homeschooling high school, accessing college courses, and preparing transcripts
- Referrals to homeschool co-ops & groups across the state
- Referrals to homeschool supervising teachers in Iowa
- Legislative Watch Team and Legislative liaison
- Homeschool Iowa Blog
- and more!

Homeschool Iowa Publications & Events:

- FREE print magazine delivered to your mailbox 3x's a year
- Email newsletters, discounts, and more for our members
- Yearly graduation service for homeschooled students
- Annual conference providing resources and information
- Annual Capitol Day event

Homeschool Iowa Social Media Pages:

Facebook & Instagram @homeschooliowa

- Statewide Discussion Group on Facebook
- Homeschool Marketplace Group on Facebook
- 18 Regional Discussion Groups on Facebook for connecting with local homeschoolers and groups