

Homeschooling in TN

Information Brochure

<https://www.tn.gov/education/school-options/home-schooling-in-tn.html>

Definition of homeschooling

The Tennessee Home School law (Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-6-3050) states:

“A home school is a school conducted or directed by a parent or parents or a legal guardian or guardians for their own children.”

Requirements to homeschool

- Parents must have a high school diploma or GED.
- report intent to homeschool with local school director (or use CRS or Online school)
- maintain attendance records
- instruct for 4 hours a day
- take part in standardized tests in grades 5, 7 & 9
- consult with local school if student falls behind grade level

Different homeschooling options

- Independent Home School
- Church-related Umbrella School
- Accredited Online School

Independent Home School

This form of homeschooling is when a parent schools a child on his/her own. To meet the qualifications, parents must:

- Contact their local school director (list of school directors can be found on TN Department of education website)
- Fill out the intent to home school form
- Submit proof of vaccination
- Report the child’s record attendance

Church-related Umbrella Schools

These are schools that are operated by a church organization.

- The state board of education does not control the curriculum at these schools.
- They run the same length of operation as a public school.
- Must comply with state vaccination
- Will supply your child’s name and age to the school superintendent where the child resides.
- Will keep attendance records for your child.

Parents do not have to fill out an intent to home school form if their child is enrolled in an umbrella school. The school will determine testing requirements for students.

When determining an umbrella school, parents should ask:

- The tuition cost to enroll in the school
- If they require you to attend a specific church or be of a religious faith
- What curriculum they use
- If they offer official transcripts

- What support they offer homeschoolers
- What activities they offer students (sports, clubs, etc.)

There are many church related umbrella schools. Below are a few options.

- **Aaron Academy (Gallatin, TN)**
- **Family Christian Academy (Old Hickory, TN)**
- **Gateway Christian Schools**

Accredited Online Schools

Parents may decide to enroll in an online school. However, parents need to ensure that the school has a legitimate accreditation, as they must provide evidence to the local school district that their child is enrolled in an accredited online school. The following are acceptable accrediting agencies:

- Cognia (formerly AdvancED)
- NWAC - Northwest Accreditation Commission
- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA)
- MSCES – Middle States Commission on Elementary Schools
- MSCSS – Middle States Commission on Secondary Schools
- NCA CASI - North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement
- National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and affiliates (e.g., SAIS)
- National Council of Private School Accreditation (NCPSA)
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)

- Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

Types of Homeschooling styles

School-at-home (traditional) style is most similar to a public school and is good for those new to homeschooling. It’s approach includes:

- A curriculum design and resources that mirror a traditional classroom
- A curriculum package that include guides for parents
- Online options include K12, local virtual academies, Switched on Schoolhouse, and Calvert
- Good for families who want structure, schedule, and ready-to-go resources
- Abeka, LifePac, Horizons, Saxon Math, Math-U-See, Singapore Math are some curriculum options that fit this style of homeschooling.

Unit Studies are time-specific overviews of a defined topic/theme that incorporate multiple subject areas into the study plan. It allows a subject to be explored from multiple angles. This method works well for:

- Families homeschooling across multiple age groups
- Homeschoolers on the autism spectrum who have intense interests in specific subjects
- Parents who want to create their own curriculum
- Families who need low-cost curriculum options
- Homeschoolers who want to break up a traditional homeschooling approach with short-term unit studies for variety

- Parents who can plan out the studies in advance

Unschooling style is when:

- The student's interests and curiosities drive the path of learning.

Montessori style supports:

- Letting children learn at their own pace while still using a daily routine
- Children learn best through play, hands-on experiences, and curiosity

Waldorf teaching style has three stages:

- Early childhood education focuses on creative play and hands-on learning
- Elementary education introduces academic instruction
- Secondary education focuses on critical thinking, empathy, and community service

Classical homeschooling goal is to teach children to think for themselves using three different stages:

- The Grammar Stage: students learn the core of math, language arts, science, and social studies through repetition and memorization.
- The Logic Stage: Students are encouraged to ask questions and compare and contrast to help them arrive at valid conclusions
- The Rhetoric Stage: Students will use their knowledge from the first two stages to articulate their reasoned opinions and conclusions via debates and persuasive writing. This stage will focus more on communication, public speaking, politics, and economics.

Charlotte Mason focuses on short lessons on the following topics:

- Exploring outdoors and natural sciences
- A greater focus on art, music, and nature
- Using books that engage students instead of text books
- Having students tell you about the books they read until they are old enough to write reports

Eclectic style is when you:

- mix and match a variety of homeschooling resources/teaching style
- This allows you to create a teaching style/lesson plan that is unique to your child

Resources

General Resources

Online

- Homeschooling.com
- Specialneedshomeschooling.com
- K12.com
- Howtosmile.org
- Xtramath.org
- Tennessee Electronic Library
 - Language Learning
 - World Book
 - Gale Databases
 - Proquest Genealogy
- Homeschoolers of White House Facebook page

Books

- *Minimalist Homeschooling* by Zara Fagen, PhD
- *For The Children's Sake: Foundations of Education for Home and School* by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay
- *The Ultimate Book of Homeschooling Ideas: 500+ Fun and Creative Learning*

Activities For Kids Ages 3–12 by Linda Dobson

- *The Brave Learner: Finding Everyday Magic in Homeschool, Learning, and Life* by Julie Bogart

School at Home

- *Home Learning Year by Year: How to Design a Creative and Comprehensive Homeschool Curriculum* by Rebecca Rupp

Unit Studies

- <https://unitstudy.com/>
- <https://diyhomeschooler.com/step-by-step-guide/step-4-develop-your-approach/the-unit-study-approach/>

Unschooling Resources

- *Unschooling: Raising Curious, Well-Educated Children Outside the Conventional Classroom* by Kerry McDonald
- <https://www.johnholtgws.com/>
- *How Children Fail* by John Holt
- *How Children Learn* by John Holt

Montessori

- <https://livingmontessorinow.com/>
- <https://www.tackleboxmontessori.com/>

Waldorf

- <https://www.christopherushomeschool.com/>
- <https://www.oakmeadow.com/>
- *The Waldorf Homeschool Handbook: A simple step-by-step guide to creating and understanding a Waldorf inspired homeschool plan* by Donna Ashton

- *Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching from the Inside Out* by Jack Petrash

Classical

- *The Well-Trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education at Home (4th edition)* by Susan Wise Bauer and Jessie Wise
- <https://www.classicalconversations.com/community-search/>

Charlotte Mason

- <https://www.amblesideonline.org/>
- *A Charlotte Mason Education: A Home Schooling How-To Manual* by Catherine Levison

Electric

- *The Unhurried Homeschooler: A Simple, Mercifully Short Book on Homeschooling* by Durenda Wilson
- <https://www.thehomeschoolmom.com/homeschooling-styles/eclectic-homeschooling/>
- <https://www.thehomeschoolmom.com/instead-of-curriculum/>