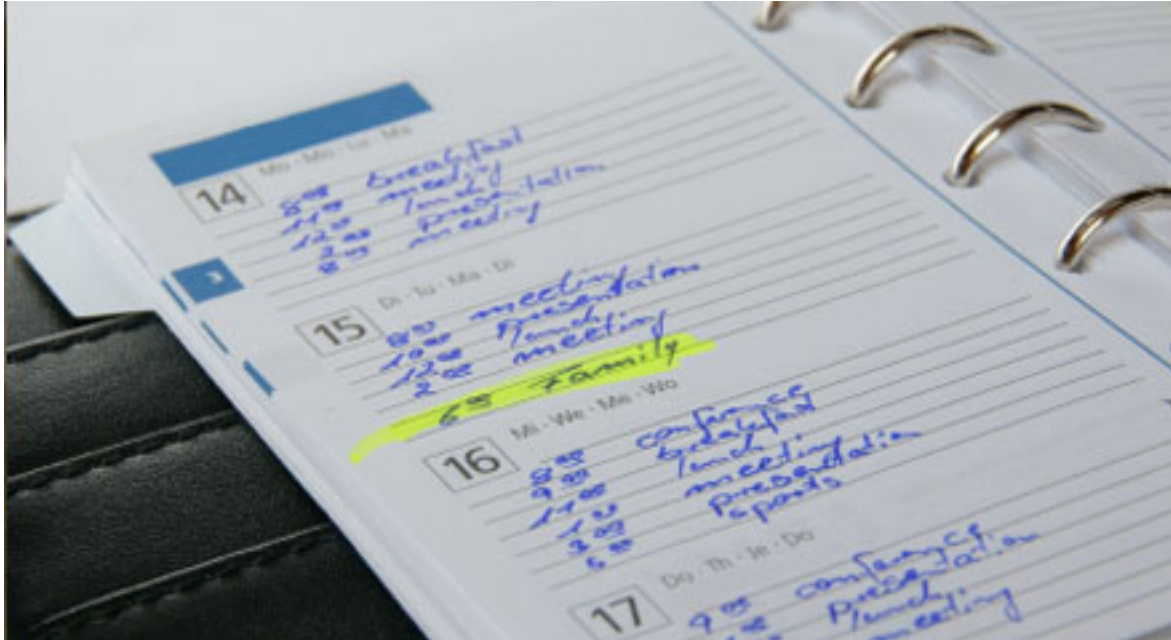


Organizing the Family Calendar



A family calendar is the perfect way to keep track of family members' activities and schedules. Keeping a family schedule can be as challenging as finding Waldo in the infamous Where's Waldo books, but with a family calendar you have an established place to find the scheduling information you need. Finding a family calendar system that works for you is just as important as keeping the calendar updated and referencing it frequently.

Family Calendar Options

1. Over-sized paper calendar – you can hang it on a wall near the kitchen or by the back door and designate it as “the family calendar”. Make sure the grid is large enough so you can write detailed information for events and appointments on the calendar.
2. Dry-erase board – get as large of one as space permits. With a permanent marker, draw grid lines for five weeks. Now you've got the infrastructure to support the information you'll be putting on your family calendar.
3. MS Outlook or other online calendars – These work well if you want to integrate work-related items from your office to your home computer (such as travel schedules) on your family calendar. These also synch with Blackberries, Palms and other hand-held devices.

Family Calendar Color-Coding

1. Assign each member of your family a specific color pen or marker for the family calendar. Reserve red for appointments on the calendar involving the entire family.



2. If using an MS Outlook family calendar, use the “Label” option to choose a color for an appointment on your calendar.
3. Use a highlighter to note items requiring an early arrival or parental involvement such as school conferences or driving a car pool.

Family Calendar Review

1. Review your family calendar daily. As your kids enter their later elementary years, involve them in a weekly review. This will remind them of important things such as game days or when you’ll be traveling with your job.
2. Once a child enters the high school years, encourage them to begin keeping a calendar of their own. They’ll have part-time jobs, sports schedules and other school activities they’ll need to manage. Make sure that their calendars match the family calendar so that you can plan around increasingly busy schedules.

By: Audrey Thomas, Certified Professional Organizer®

