

Using a visual schedule

What is a visual schedule?

Visual schedules (also known as daily schedules) are a type of visual prompt used to help children to predict or understand upcoming events. Visual schedules use pictures to show which activities will occur and in what sequence.

Calendars or weekly schedules can be used for activities outside of the usual routine, e.g. Christmas or to prepare children for changes to their usual routine.

The idea is that you put a symbol on each day of the week to show your child what is happening on each day, to help prepare them in advance for what is coming next.

How to set up a schedule:

You will need:

- A **weekly schedule** which is simply a page with boxes labelled 'for each day of the week– laminated if possible.

Su 	M 	Tu 	W 	Th 	Fri 	Sa 
						

Symbol resources made with "PCS® by Tobii Dynavox.

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- Symbols that reflect your child's week e.g. school, special events and holidays.

You need to cut these out and again laminate them if possible.

You can use Software such as Boardmaker to make these symbols or a simple google search works too (you could even draw/colour your own).

Ideally you would use Velcro to attach the symbols to the schedule and store the other symbols in a plastic wallet (but blue tac and a sandwich bag work fine too.)

How is a visual schedule used?

Show the board to your child and point to each symbol individually. It is important to use very simple language e.g. "Look, this week Monday is a school day, Tuesday is a school day....."

At the beginning of the day use the schedule to remind your child what is happening today e.g. point to the symbols and say 'today is a school day'.

At the end of each day take the symbol off and use simple language to talk about what is coming up on the next day e.g. "today school has finished (take the symbol off the board), tomorrow it's a home day" (point to the home symbol).

At the end of each week replace the symbols and talk through what is going to happen.

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Hint and tips

- If you are using a schedule for the first time initially focus on the week coming up. Once you and your child have the idea you can introduce more weeks or try using a simple month by month calendar.

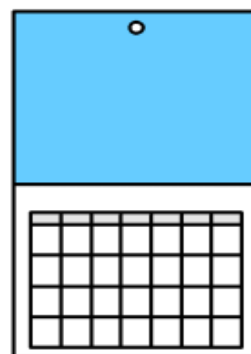
 **This week I have:**

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sa
						

 **Next week I have:**

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sa
						

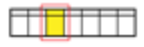
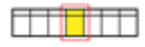
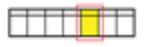
- If you don't have a symbol for what you need you can simply draw or write on a blank card.
- Try using the schedule alongside a social story if there is something new or a change coming up that you are preparing your child for.
- You could also try a simple month to view calendar. Place the event you are preparing for on the calendar and cross off the days with your child



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This week I have:

Su 	M 	Tu 	W 	Th 	Fri 	Sa 
						





Next week I have:

Su 	M 	Tu 	W 	Th 	Fri 	Sa 
						