

Homeschooling Styles

This is just a little bit about the common styles of homeschooling and where to get more information about them. This can be helpful if you're new to homeschooling, or if you are looking to change up your routine a little bit. There is no one "right" way to homeschool- as long as your child is learning and the style works for your family, you are on the right track!

At DAH, we have members running the full gamut of educational styles, and you know what? Rarely can you tell which style a child learns through when they're all together socializing! If you pick and choose a little from this philosophy and a little from that philosophy, you are NOT doing it "wrong"- that style is called "eclectic", and many DAH homeschoolers follow an eclectic approach!

If you have more questions about a particular approach, feel free to contact the group leaders or (better yet) post to the forums for answers from people who know!

Boxed Set

This one is pretty self explanatory. You order your curriculum online and it comes to your house. You get most or all of your curriculum from one place (how much you mix and match depends on your family, your needs, and your curriculum preferences). Common boxed set curricula include Five In A Row (fiveinarow.com), Timberdoodle (timberdoodle.com), and My Father's World (<https://www.mfwbooks.com>). These may or may not include textbooks, worksheets, grading, and teacher's manuals for the parents to follow.

Online Curriculum

This one also takes little explanation. You do all or most of your schooling online, sometimes through a single website, sometimes through many. Some of the most popular examples include: Starfall (www.starfall.com), Easy Peasy (www.allinonehomeschool.com), and Khan Academy (<https://www.khanacademy.org>).

Charlotte Mason

The Charlotte Mason style uses "living books"- books that speak to and inspire the reader to teach all of the traditional subjects as well as nature studies, art, music, and handicrafts. The child is presented with an array to choose from and absorb at his or her own time. This method aims to instill a lifelong love of learning and good habits in the children. Literature and recitation are heavily emphasized in this approach.

More information can be found here: <https://simplycharlottemason.com/what-is-the-charlotte-mason-method/> .

Classical

Groups like Classical Conversations are set up specifically to aid the Classically Homeschooling family. By using the five tools of Reason, Record, Rhetoric, Relate, and Research through the three stages of development (or Trivium), the parent aims to set their child up for success and self sufficiency through rational thought. This Trivium includes the

Grammar stage, the Dialectic stage, and the Rhetoric stage. There is strong emphasis on reading, copy work, grammar, memory work, composition, and rhetoric. If you're thinking of the Socratic method, you are correct- this method has a long history of fantastic results.

For more information on this approach, see [The Well-Trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education at Home](#) by Jessie Wise and Susan Wise Bauer and see <https://www.classicalconversations.com> .

Waldorf

Waldorf education aims to focus on the entire child's well-being: mind, body, and spirit. Arts, crafts, nature, music, and movement play a large role in the educational process, which is run according to the family's natural rhythms for consistency. Rather than learning from textbooks, in a Waldorf homeschool situation you are more likely to see the children creating the books themselves through their learning process. Technology such as television and computers may be pushed aside in favor of nature crafts, as Waldorf educators often believe such technology is not good for children. This method was derived from the work of Rudolf Steiner in the early 1900s.

For more information, see <http://www.waldorfhomeschoolers.com> and <http://www.waldorfanswers.org/Waldorf.htm> .

Montessori

The Montessori method, derived from the studies of Maria Montessori on how poor children learned in the early 1900s, is another child led philosophy, summed up in the Montessori phrase "Help me (the child) do it myself." Children learn at their own rate according to their own interests, using materials that control for error, making it clear to the child when they have made a mistake and how to correct it. The parent's job is to anticipate the child's next need as much as possible so the materials for the next activity are ready for the child when the child is ready for them. Among the focuses of a Montessori education (beyond traditional school subjects) is respect (of the environment and of others), practical life (cleaning up after themselves and caring for themselves and others), and sensorial education (training the child to use their senses).

For more information, see <http://www.montessoriteacherscollective.com/index.shtml> and Maria's book [The Montessori Method](http://ariwatch.com/Vs/Montessori/TheMontessoriMethod.htm) at <http://ariwatch.com/Vs/Montessori/TheMontessoriMethod.htm> and Dr. Montessori's Handbook at: <http://www.montessoriteacherscollective.com/handbook/handbook.html> .

Unit Studies

Families following a unit studies approach are likely to combine all typical school subjects in the quest for knowledge of a certain area. For instance, a family might spend a month learning about Medieval Europe. During this time, the children might read books on knights and castles, or write reports on feudalism, and use medieval period inspired math problems for math. They might study the technology level of the period for science and learn about important discoveries, and all the while they are learning the history and geography of the unit. Often, arts and crafts and music are also involved in the learning process, and the

schedule of unit studies may have more or less input from the child according to the needs and style of the family. For more information, try the resources on this site: <http://homehearts.com/step-by-step-guide/step-4-develop-your-approach/the-unit-study-approach/> .

Unschooling

Unschooling is as different from “normal” schooling as the name implies. Rather than regular lessons and schedules and testing, lessons are sprinkled in throughout the day and throughout normal life.

This TED talk is a nice presentation on unschooling by an unschooled kid: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=h11u3vtcpaY> .

Unschooling is by nature child-led, but is not the only child led style (see Montessori and Waldorf). There are as many different flavors of unschooling as colors in a rainbow, with differences depending on the family and the child’s needs and lifestyle. John Holt is widely regarded as the father of unschooling, so his works are relevant here, but unschooling is so diverse it’s hard to pin down exactly.

For more information, talk to several unschoolers and read <http://www.johnholtgws.com> . Oh, and don’t forget to watch the video linked above.