

HomeEd

Because Education Matters

New DIY Section!

Step by step instructions
for home projects

Drones and Smartphones

How to use technology
for educational good





Home Education Convention 2016

Back to
BASICS
*Strengthening the foundations
of the homeschool community*

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Todd Wilson
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Saturday, June 11th 10 AM - 4 PM

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Benjamin, enjoying his summer camping on Pilot Mountain in North Carolina



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I absolutely love the summer. The long days and warm air propel us along, feeding us with energy and the will to persevere. Long walks in the woods, afternoons at the beach, the occasional book on the porch. Benjamin loves them too; he becomes increasingly active and curious about the world around him, which I am most grateful for and more than happy to indulge him in. Every year his thirst for knowledge and adventure grows, and so too does my pride in him. So, as your children continue to grow as mine does, give thanks for the blessings we all have and the freedom we employ for their betterment. Thank you for helping build this community that facilitates the growth of all of our children.

Have a Brilliant Summer!

Andrew Brown

A handwritten signature of Andrew Brown.

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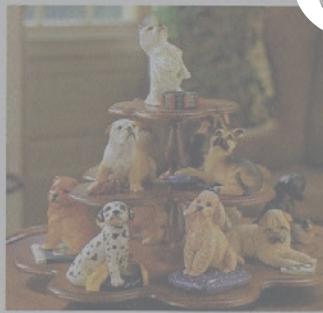
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Porcelain with a pedigree from The Franklin Mint

Homeschool Bulletin Board

Foreign Language Learning Tackled

Kristen Chase

I've always believed in the importance of learning a foreign language, but for someone who only speaks a little German from home school lessons from my German grandmother, the idea of teaching my kids a language is a bit daunting.

For the last year, Quinlan (my 6-year-old daughter) has been taking Spanish at her weekly home school co-op, but since I don't really speak it, I feel a bit out of the loop when I'm trying to help her with her homework assignments. So recently, I decided that it might be fun to learn a language with her, and use a trip to that country as an incentive. And since my husband is an airline pilot, it was a feasible reward for our efforts. We decided on French, mostly because Quinlan really wants to see the Eiffel Tower. And after I told her that ballet terms are all French, she was completely sold. But then I had to figure out how to actually teach her!

I started by sending an email to our local home school co-op mailing list, asking for opinions about certain programs. I specifically wanted to hear about the Rosetta Stone home school program, but also anything else that other home school families might have used. Like everything out there, the Rosetta Stone program

came back with mixed reviews. Aside from private tutors, which are probably a very smart way to go but require a time and money investment that I'm not able to make, I was back at square one.

I tried Googling various French language programs in Atlanta and found a slew of them—everything from Saturday French School to immersion after school programs, and everything in between. However, like a private tutor, all of those options require a pretty large financial investment, but even more so, a time investment that I'm not yet able to make. I realize that learning a language takes time, but we're already involved in a lot of activities; I don't think I can handle another reason to drive at this point in time.

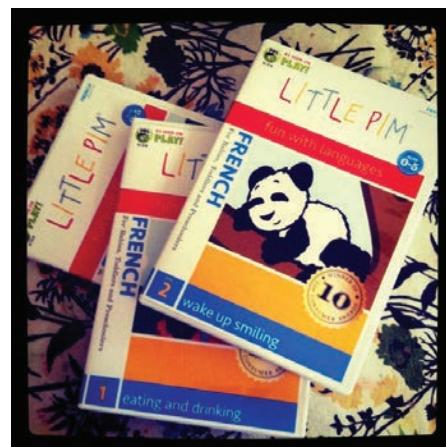
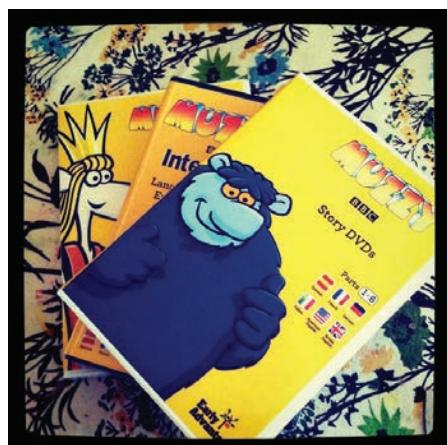
So after all that digging, I still felt as though I didn't have very many options, so I emailed a mom friend of mine who is a college French instructor and she offered me two great tools that are really working for our family.

Muzzy Learning

This European language learning series is fabulous. Complete with story, vocabulary dvds, interactive software, and an audio cd, this is an entertaining immersion program that my kids all loved. Even I enjoyed watching it.

The best part is that most large library systems have these programs available for lending, so you don't necessarily have to invest the money until you decide if it works for you.

My only complaint thus far is that the character "Muzzy," a friendly, fuzzy green monster, has a very low voice, so he can be difficult to understand. And the audio cd is just the soundtrack of the DVD; I was expecting it to be full of songs. However, it's got several different languages on it and my kids ask for it all the time.



Little Pim

I'd describe Little Pim as a Little Einstein type approach to foreign language learning. You'll find lots of repetition with the various phrases mixed in with visuals of kids and people. The DVDs are aimed at kids age 0–5, and I definitely agree with that assessment. Quinlan was pretty bored with these after a few minutes, whereas my younger two kids enjoyed them for a bit longer. However, they were never really a fan of the Little Einstein dvds (I know that some kids love them!), so even they got a bit bored too.

I was particularly interested in the flash cards, which I think are excellent, as well as the audio CD, which is by far the best find out of everything. The songs are catchy, with three sung by the popular kids group "Milkshake."

They've recently launched a Little Pim iPhone app which allows you to drill words and phrases, and my kids enjoy playing with it. I have to agree with the reviews, however, that say the background music is much too loud. All in all, a great package the kids love!

National Spelling Bee Taken Home by Homeschooled Boy Evan O'Dorney

Elizabeth O'Brien

On the evening of May 30th, Evan O'Dorney, a 13-year old homeschool student from Danville, won the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington. The San Francisco Chronicle notes that throughout round after round of constant challenge, he hurtled through words such as "schuh-plattler", "Bewusstseinslage", and "ras-cacio". Edmonton champion Nate Garke misspelled the word "coryza" and lost closely before Evan finished with "serrefine", or "A small spring forceps used for approximating the edges of a wound, or for temporarily closing an artery during surgical operations."

Beating 285 other top spellers from throughout the country, Evan won a trophy and over \$40,000 in prizes. Media News reports that this year, the 80th anniversary of the spelling contest will be broadcasted on national television. Jennifer, both a proud mother and Evan's elementary school teacher, told reporters, "We're hoping he gets to ABC, but either way, we're celebrating."

After the competition, Evan himself



admitted to ESPN commentator Stuart Scott that he enjoys other subjects such as math and music far more. "The spelling, it's just a bunch of memorization." So what makes him different from the other children? According to the San Francisco Chronicle, not only is he a top spelling champ, but he plays piano concertos, has a black belt in Tae Kwon Do, and is a math champion as well.

 **Homeschoolers overall do better academically, socially, and most important, spiritually**

Is it just random chance that the winner of the national spelling bee is a homeschooled child? Home school advocates suggest that home study has a significant impact on the development of a normal child. Home schooling doesn't try and make a child fit one specific size or mold.

 *Evan O'Dorney, the winner of the National Spelling Bee, celebrating with his mother*

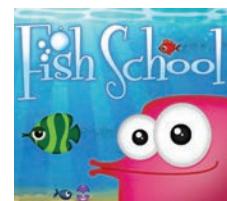
Sometimes kids can be working on two or three different grade levels at once. If they love science, they might be a couple of levels ahead, but if they're struggling in English, they might go a bit slower to make sure that the concepts are cemented in before moving ahead.

Charles B. Lowers, Executive Director of Considering Homeschooling, says "Homeschoolers overall do better academically, socially, and most important, spiritually." The majority of Christian parents still send their children to public school, he says, not realizing the catastrophic spiritual and social damage most children may suffer there. "While some parents maintain that their local school is different, the evidence is overwhelmingly clear," says Lowers, "that the public schools are no place for Christian children." 

HELPFUL LEARNING GAMES



Freerice.com is a great educational game that tests your child's vocabulary at varying levels while also promoting a good cause.



Geared towards young children, Fish School uses cute fish to teach the alphabet, numbers, shapes, and colors.

Three Reasons to Pursue Extracurricular Activities

by Sarita

After I spoke at a homeschool conference last year, a mom came up to me with a big thank you. She breathed a huge sigh of relief as she told me I had just given her great freedom. I looked at her quizzically; what had I said that would have freed her? She explained that she had just come from another session where the speaker said she should never put her children in extracurricular activities. He had said that good homeschool moms keep their children with them at all times.

I know that different approaches work for different families. And many do well with no outside activities. But when I had my kids at home, a select few extracurricular activities provided a great blessing to my family and those around us. I learned a few things from my family's experience.

Extracurricular activities can help teach valuable life skills.

Different activities help kids learn important skills they can carry with them for life. For example, I think that music can teach perseverance, sports can teach teamwork, any structured outside activity can teach responsibility (e.g., how to get out the door on time and keep track of your belongings), and competitions can teach sportsmanship. Is there something you want your children to learn that an outside activity could help you teach or, perhaps, help your children learn?

One advantage of teaching responsibility in the context of an extracurricular activity your kids love: There will come a time when you say to your child, "You must take care of your equipment," or "Don't lose this," and then your child promptly loses the equipment or leaves it at home. If you refuse to jump in to save them, they will never forget the lesson; the loss etched in their mind.



Bolster geographic knowledge with the help of this fun Xbox game, which allows players to quiz themselves, complete puzzles, and explore.

Sports can help children get the exercise they need.

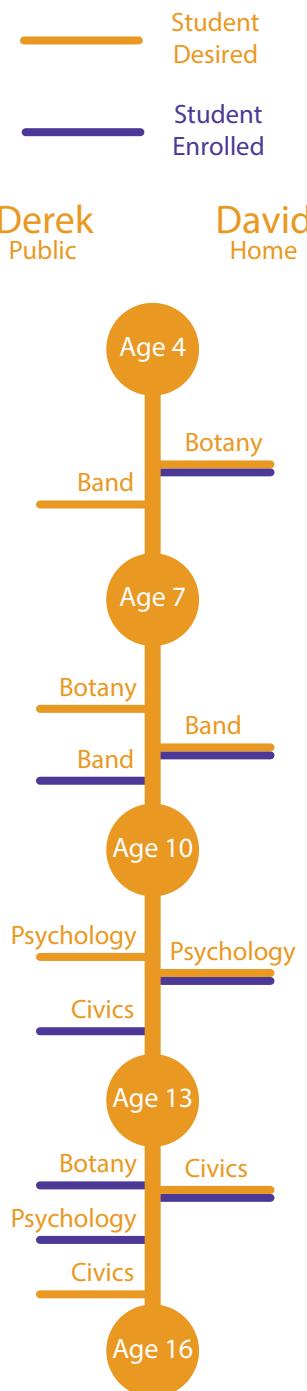
I enrolled my children in a club swim team as a way to encourage them to get out and exercise. Additionally, I actually found that swimming for two hours a day was very effective in keeping them calm at home. With such a fun and productive outlet for their energy in the pool, they didn't really want to do anything too wild in the house. Plus, I really believe the great exercise helped them stay healthy and prepared them for active lifestyles continuing into adulthood.

Extracurricular activities can help children develop socially.

Dare I say it? I do think that a carefully-chosen extracurricular can help with socialization. It can give opportunities for children to develop new friendships, learn how to interact with a variety of peers and their families, work together with people different than them, and be part of a team. There are other ways to find these opportunities, but consider whether extracurriculars might be a good fit to help with this.

With that said, it's important to remember that all extracurricular activities are not created equal. Some activities help your kids get the exercise they need. Some involve incredible time commitments. Some teach self-discipline. Some seem to attract encouraging families while others seem to attract parents who display a shocking lack of sportsmanship at games. So my advice is to think carefully about which activities to pursue before you sign your kids up. 

Public vs Home



**Give your child freedom.
Homeschool.**



Turtlecraft is a fun and interactive way to get your children interested in basic programming using the tried and true platform Minecraft.

When should my child begin music lessons?

Sarah Baldwin

As a Waldorf early childhood teacher, and the mother of two young musicians, I have been asked many times over the years what the ideal age is for a child to begin music lessons. I've been asking myself the same question for as many years. In my quest for an answer, I have asked many music teachers and experts.

Waldorf Education and Suzuki Music Instruction

As a young mother I became familiar with the Suzuki method of music instruction, in which children as young as three or four begin to learn an instrument. When my children started music lessons—one son played piano, another played cello—I chose Suzuki teachers for both of them, and as a result I have become a strong supporter of Suzuki methods.

Adding music to your child's life can foster forever-lasting friendships

Because I am also a Waldorf teacher, I was struck by the many similarities between Suzuki and Waldorf education.

What is Similar?

Suzuki students are taught to play beautiful music by ear before they are able to read music. They start with real music and simple classical pieces. In a similar way, Waldorf students are taught to recite beautiful poetry by heart before they learn to read or write.

Just as speech precedes reading in language development, Suzuki students learn to play music before learning to read notes. Learning to read music should not be attempted before the child is able to read language, since the same skills are needed and may not yet be developed.

In his book "Nurtured by Love," Dr. Shinichi Suzuki describes a philosophy of education very similar to that of Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf education. Dr. Suzuki stresses that it is more important for a child to strive to become a beautiful human being, than the most perfect musician. When a child is experiencing beautiful thoughts and feelings, he will produce beautiful music.

Steiner also felt that developing a child's inner life to become a full human

being, was more important than filling a child's head full of knowledge. In both methods, it's stressed that process is more important than product.

Another similarity in approaches is that both Suzuki and Steiner felt that being able to play music was the right of every human being—not just for those with "talent." In Waldorf education, all students learn to play music, starting with a pentatonic wooden flute in first grade, graduating to a stringed instrument by fourth grade, and, in some schools, brass or woodwind in the upper grades.

What is Different?

The primary disagreement between the two philosophies is about the age at which a child should begin music lessons.

Suzuki students sometimes begin violin lessons as early as age two or three. By contrast, students in a Waldorf school do not begin string instrument lessons until the age of nine or ten.

My personal feeling is that Suzuki, for many children, starts too early, and that Waldorf schools start too late. Based on my own observation and research, I have come to the opinion that the age of seven is a good time for most children to begin private music lessons.



Why Seven?

Seven is the ideal age for a child to begin formal, academic learning. The first seven years of a child's life are a period of intense physical growth. After this period, all the energy that has been previously used to help the child body and organs to develop are now freed up for more cognitive learning. A child of seven is better able to sit, focus and do desk work than a younger child. So it makes sense to be that a child over the age of seven would also be better able to focus on formal music lessons, and to practice.

It is unnatural for a child under seven to be asked to sit and practice an instrument daily, even if the practice sessions are short and playful. Children under seven need to be moving, playing, and engaging their imaginations without the pressure of practicing, or even worse, performing and feeling the need to please.

Deciding for Yourself

I recommend waiting until a child starts showing an interest in learning to play an instrument before offering private music lessons. Children are more likely to be motivated when there is a genuine interest. For most children, this rarely occurs before the age of 5-7.

Of course, there are some children who are musically gifted, and may prove to

be prodigious musical students. If your younger child is insistent on learning a particular instrument, listen to them and take advantage of their interest!

If you do decide to pursue musical instruction for a child under age seven, I strongly suggest you find a Suzuki teacher who, like Waldorf teachers, will teach out of imitation, use repetition, and present lessons in a playful, imaginative way.

How Can I Encourage My Child's Love of Music?

The most important thing a parent can do for a young child at home is to expose them to lots of music, especially the human voice. Sing with them and to them all the time—even if you think you can't. Your child will not be critical, and will appreciate your effort more than you can imagine. It is also important for children to hear live music being played. In this way they will learn that music is something that human beings make, and are not just sounds that come out of an electronic box.

Research indicates that listening to music early in life is what develops a child's musical ear. So no matter if or when a child starts lessons, having

been exposed to many types of music and tonalities early in life will develop his ear and make it easier to learn to play an instrument later.

Sera Jane Smolen, Ph.D., a cellist who has taught music in a Waldorf school and wrote a thesis comparing Waldorf and Suzuki, told me that no world-class musician (think, Yo Yo Ma or Emanuel Ax) ever started lessons later than the age of five. This statement may give you pause. But then she asked me, "Is our goal to raise world-class musicians, or Martin Luther Kings?" As to whether or not your child becomes a music prodigy or develops a love of music which may fulfill Dr. Suzuki's vision of bringing world peace through music, that's something you and your child should decide yourselves. 



Lovable Teaching Assistants

Jules Verne

If you are like me and have animal loving kids, you may be thinking about getting a pet for the homeschool classroom. I personally think that it's a great idea! Pets can provide so many opportunities for learning, as well as contributing to the overall development of children.

Having a pet in the homeschool classroom is a great opportunity to learn all about your animal. Not only can you learn things like the history and proper care for the animal, but you can also use it as a launching pad to learn about where the animal comes from as well.

Classroom pets are a great way to teach responsibility. Depending on the children's ages, they can help out by being responsible for things like changing the food, water, or even the cage.

A great way for children to practice

reading out loud is to have them read to their pet. Children tend to lose the apprehensiveness they may feel when reading to their parent or sibling. A pet can also serve as a subject of other things like having them write a story about their pet, or having them list words to describe it.

Depending on your situation, some animals that (in my opinion) can make great pets for kids are a dog or cat (had to start with the obvious), fancy rats (they are actually quite clean & fun), a leopard gecko (quiet & has the "cool" lizard factor), guinea pigs (fun & cuddly), or a betta fish (quiet & serene). Of course there are others, but they are the animals I would look into first. Just remember getting a new pet takes commitment, so please research your selection thoroughly.

Some of you may not be ready to make a long term commitment to a new pet, but keep in mind, there are options out there other than the typical gerbil, lizard, frog type. If you like the idea of having a pet, but want to test the waters first, try something simpler like raising caterpil-

lars, earthworms, or ants!

If you are thinking about getting homeschooled room pet, I hope you will be able to find something that is a good fit for your home, and can teach your child the joy of caring for a pet. 



Coacoa, pictured above, is an adopted guinea pig. Adoption can be a great option for pets, especially for the financially conscious. It's also a wonderful experience for children to go through, teaching them to think outside of their immediate social sphere and to think of helping others, in all sizes.

Should I consider economics?

Amy Roberts

Even if the state we live in didn't require us to teach economics, we would. It is that important. I'm not teaching it the way the public school would, but rather from a Christian worldview—one that is responsible, charitable, and stewardship-minded.

It is imperative we give our kids a solid Christian foundation in economics. This doesn't just affect our cash flow and stance on debt; it affects how and when we give of our time and resources, policies we support, and how we view governmental systems and agencies. However, because most of us are not stock brokers or Economics professors, we will probably need a little help. So, let me give you a run down of how we teach Economics.



The easiest way to get a co-op set up is to simply ask around! Your local church or neighborhood may already have one set up that you can join. If not, post a few flyers around with your phone or e-mail address, and you're sure to get a few hits. There's also online options such as virtualhomeschoolgroup.org and homeschool-life.com that provide online co-op environments for your kids.

Start with "Economics for Everybody"

Let me explain why we start here. This is the foundational piece. We need to give our kids a solid foundation in how economics really works from a Christian worldview. "Economics for Everybody" does that. The series features R.C. Sproul, Jr.'s teaching complemented by video illustrations that help connect the concepts for you and your child. I highly recommend you watch these with your child—you will definitely learn something! For those of you wondering about age recommendations for this course, it is geared toward middle school, high school, and adults. Also, you can have your middle schooler take this class and count it toward their high school credit.

Stretch their knowledge and application

This is where it gets fun! Pull out newspapers, watch the news, discuss giving to the poor and giving to the Church. "Economics for Everybody" gave you the concepts, now flesh them out! Listen in on financial radio shows and talk over the advice being given. Have your teens consider their own guidelines for saving, giving, and exhibiting fiscal responsibility. Everyone in your family will be challenged! 

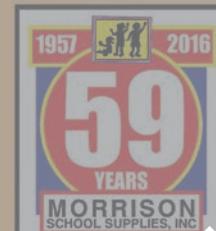
Don't be afraid to Co-op!

Wani

Whereas most homeschool moms (especially newer ones) may not have had previous experience with homeschool co-ops, I have a unique perspective of being a homeschool grad myself. So you may be wondering: What is a homeschool co-op? or What can I expect from a homeschool co-op?

As with any organized group, structure and rules vary from group to group. In general, however, homeschool co-ops are groups of homeschooling families who join together to enrich their homeschooling experience by learning from and with one another. Often these groups will participate in field trips, sports, classes, etc. There are often mom's night out activities and retreats to encourage and refresh us in the midst of our busy lives.

I enjoy meeting together and getting to know the other moms as well as finding out what curriculum that they have used, what activities they recommend, etc. There is so much information out there it is hard to know what to use, so it is great to actually hear firsthand about homeschooling products and ideas. My kids also have fun getting to play and learn with their friends, and they also get to do activities that may be harder to do with just a kid or two at home. 



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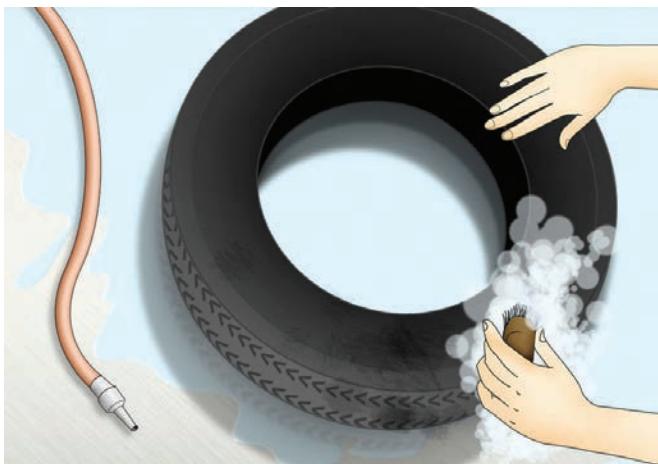
A photograph of a young boy with blonde hair, wearing an orange t-shirt and dark shorts, swinging on a tire swing. He is holding onto the swing's ropes with both hands. The swing is suspended from a tree branch by two ropes. The background shows a green lawn, a line of trees, and utility poles with wires. The sky is clear and blue.

AJ Styles tire swi ng



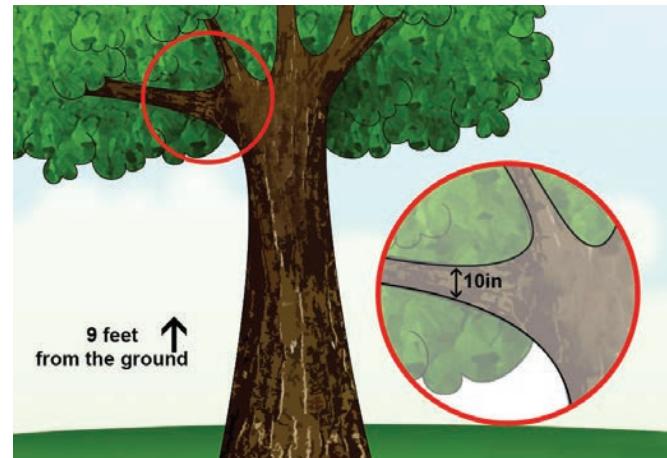
Aquisition

If you are looking for a good source of free tires, drive out to the country and visit some local farms. Chances are, they have plenty of extra tires laying around and are eager to get rid of them! A little steel wool and dish soap is all you need to clean off any grease, dirt, or whatever else may be included with your free tire.



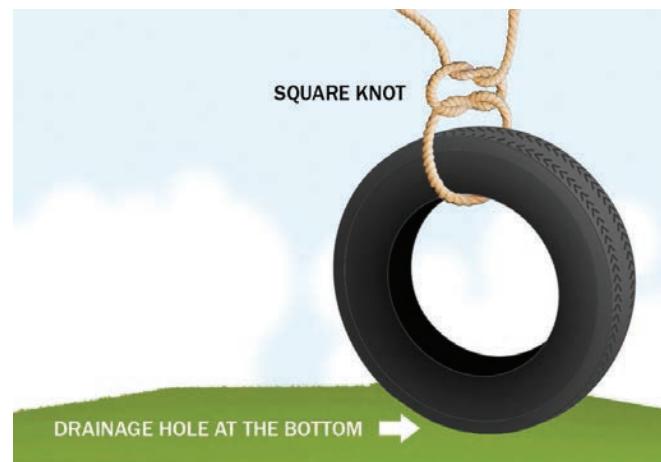
Surveillance

Find a good branch where you can hang your tire swing. The tree branch itself should be thick and sturdy. I've found around 10 inches thick works well. Be sure the tree is large and healthy, with no signs of weaknesses that might indicate the tree is unstable. An isolated Maple or Oak tree usually works best.



Designation

Make sure you pick a good spot for the rope to sit. You don't want the rope to fray, so keep it away from knots or rough spots on the branch. Once you throw it over, tie the rope to the tree branch using a bowline or a fisherman's knot. Don't use square knots for this end.

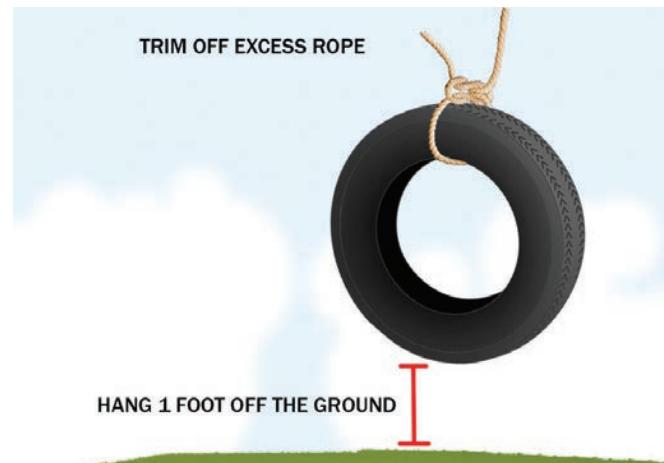
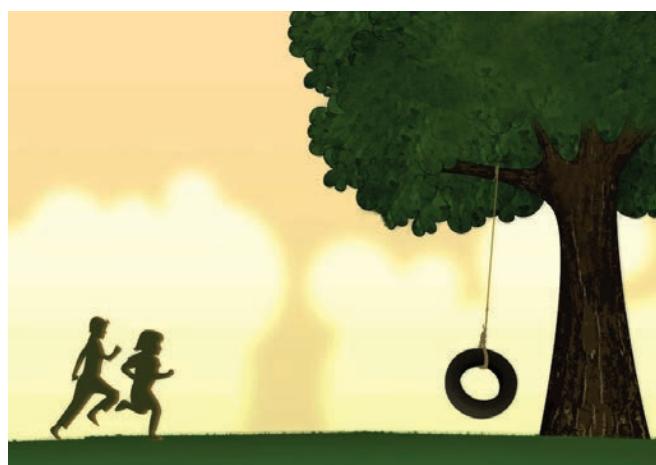


Wrap-Up

Before you finish the bottom end, make sure you measure out where you want it to go. It's a good idea to keep it about a foot off the ground so that way kids can still get on it easily. Wrap the other end of the rope around the tire and tie it off with a square knot. Make sure the tire is where you want it before you tie it off!

Finalizing

After that, you just cut off the extra rope, and you now are a proud owner of your very own tire swing! 

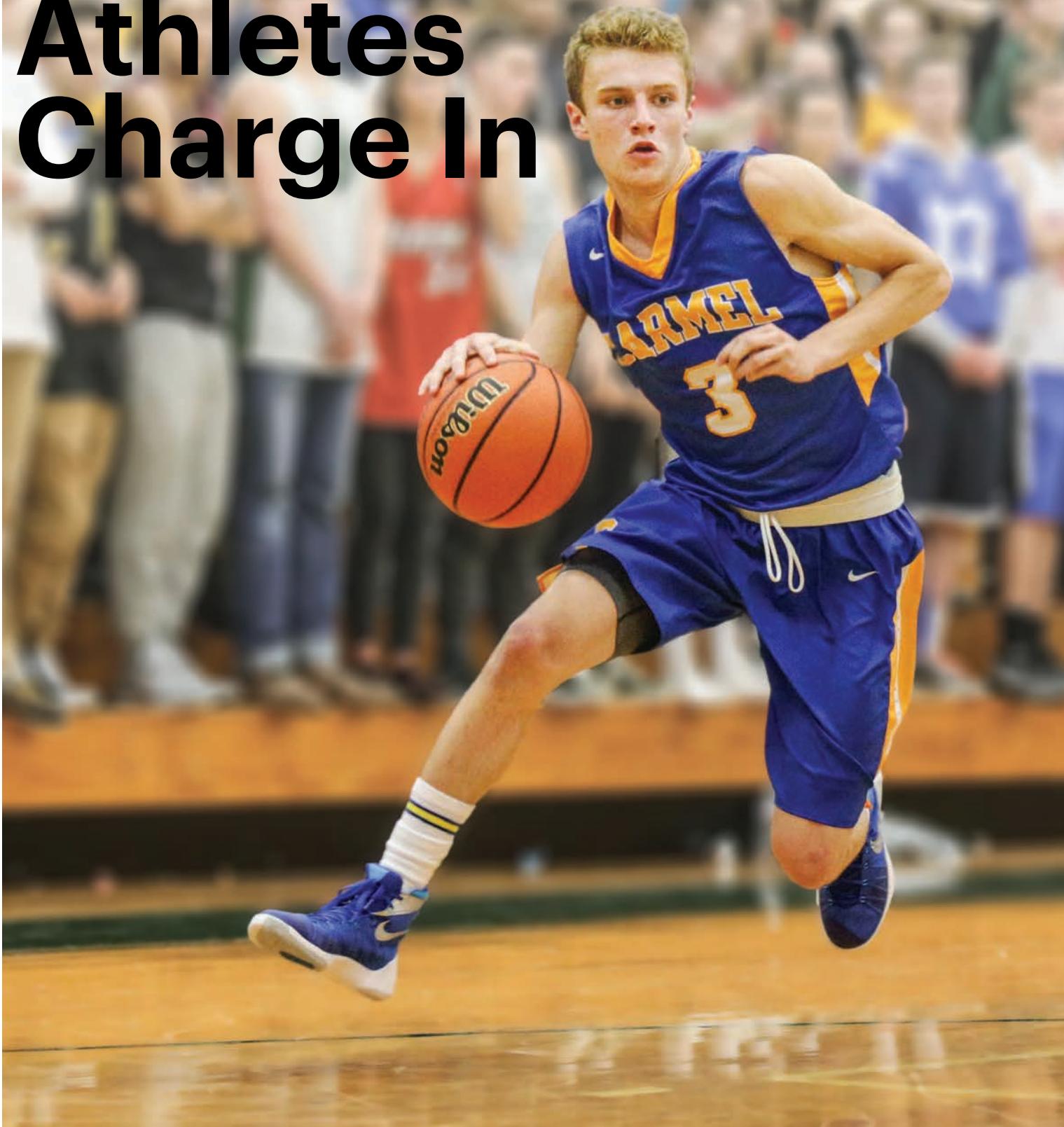


Hi all, Drew here. We've gotten a LOT of feedback from you all asking for DIYs, so we're happy to bring them to you! This feature is the start of staple DIY content, so enjoy! Keep sending those emails letting me know what you like and want more of within our pages. I read each and every one and treasure your time and opinions. They truly make my day and let me know what we do is important.

Have a Brilliant Summer!


Andrew Brown

Homeschool Athletes Charge In





Homeschooler Degrees Welcome, Scholarships Obtainable

By Christopher J. Klicka



Good news for homeschooled students who want to receive National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) scholarships and participate in college sports! Homeschooled students have finally been recognized as high school graduates by the NCAA. Homeschool students no longer have to go through the “waiver process,” but can now register in the same manner as “traditionally schooled” graduates.

Homeschooled students have come a long way and have cleared many hurdles to gain recognition academically. Hundreds of studies have revealed that homeschooled students on the average score 20 to 30 points above the national average on standardized achievement tests. The average homeschooled student’s academic ability is beyond dispute. Colleges and universities across the United States as a result have begun to open their doors to homeschooled students, as I demonstrated in a recent column in the magazine “Practical Homeschooling.”

Over the last several years, homeschooled students have begun to expand their recognition to the realm of athletics. For instance, homeschooled student Jason Taylor played football at the University of Akron on a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) scholarship and later signed a contract to play with the Miami Dolphins. More recently, Kevin Johnson, a 6'8" forward, re-

ceived a full basketball scholarship from the University of Tulsa, an NCAA Division I school. When the Tulsa Golden Hurricanes faced North Carolina in March 2000, Kevin became the first homeschooled student on record to play in the tournament known as March Madness. These homeschooled students, and many others, initially had difficulties entering the NCAA, but the new policy should eliminate these problems.

Both the NCAA and the NAIA recognize homeschooled diplomas and transcripts, making them eligible for athletic scholarships

During the 1998-1999 academic year, the NCAA approved the academic eligibility of 49 homeschooled students to receive scholarships at Division I schools and 20 homeschooled students to receive scholarships at Division II schools. These homeschooled athletes went on to play college basketball, baseball, volleyball, football, wrestling, track, and virtually every sport. Over the last several years, hundreds of homeschooled sports leagues have developed throughout

The Triangle Blazers Basketball Club, club for homeschooled students, Class of 2017.

the states, culminating in several annual national Homeschool athletic tournaments. A major breakthrough for homeschooled athletics recently occurred in Florida when homeschool teams were allowed to compete against public school teams.

Can a homeschooled student receive an athletic scholarship in college?

Homeschooled students are receiving athletic scholarships. Both the NCAA and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) recognize homeschooled diplomas and transcripts, making them eligible for athletic scholarships in colleges throughout the country. The question then becomes: “What steps must homeschooled students take to receive an athletic scholarship?”

In applying for an athletic scholarship, being on top of your game is only part of the challenge. It is equally important to be on top of the academic eligibility, course standards, and core course requirements of the colleges in which you are interested—and to be on top of them early on. It’s not uncommon for high school juniors to be contacting universities to find the answers to these questions. By asking these questions early

in the game, you will be better equipped to ensure that your transcript reflects the necessary core course requirements.

Second, you need to contact the colleges in which you are interested to learn more about their specific athletic requirements for your particular sport. You should also inquire whether the college is a member of either the NCAA or the NAIA. Follow up by contacting the financial aid office and asking for the necessary paperwork to begin the eligibility determination process through one of the athletic associations. This step is absolutely essential in order to obtain an athletic scholarship.

What is a national collegiate association?

Founded in 1906, the NCAA comprises approximately 1024 schools, classified into three divisions. Division I has 326 schools, which tend to be the larger universities. Division II has 288 schools, which are mostly intermediate-size colleges. Schools in both of these categories offer athletic scholarships. The 420 Division III schools do not offer athletic scholarships. The NCAA sponsors 87 championships in 22 sports. Almost 362,000 men and women student athletes annually compete for the NCAA titles.

Member colleges and universities pay the NCAA to establish and execute standards for determining individual students' initial academic eligibility. In order to fulfill this responsibility, the NCAA has retained the ACT organization, which provides college entrance exams, to run the clearinghouse for determining a student's academic eligi-

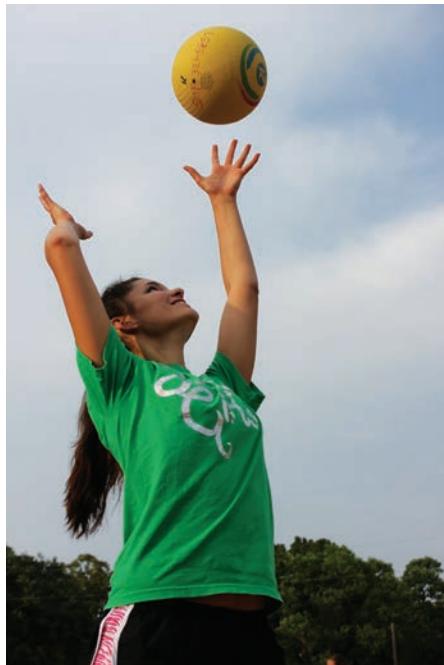
Sarah Orwell, 17, has applied to Penn State's volleyball program }

bility. A student's academic eligibility will determine whether he is able to practice, compete, and receive athletic scholarships. The smaller NAIA is comprised of over 300 member universities and operates much like the NCAA. While the scholarship money comes directly from the colleges, the national collegiate associations serve the schools to determine whether a particular student is academically eligible to receive the money from the school.

Are there unique requirements for the homeschooled student?

In early 2004, NCAA streamlined the process for homeschoolers and the good news is that homeschoolers no longer have to go through a waiver process as individual non-high school graduates. Homeschoolers now are put through the same process as other high school graduates.

Initially, homeschoolers were prohibited from the NCAA because they were considered high school dropouts. HSLDA responded by helping to create the waiver process. Homeschoolers were able to seek an eligibility waiver and then submit the required documentation of their home-school program. HSLDA was able to help many homeschoolers successfully navigate this process. As a result of the excellent performance of homeschoolers, the NCAA has decided to change the policy to place homeschooled students into the mainstream pool with



other high school graduates.

The NCAA has eagerly worked with HSLDA to establish some clear guidelines and procedures for homeschooled students. Homeschooled students must, like all students, meet the NCAA initial eligibility standards in order to be eligible for scholarships at their university. Traditionally schooled student athletes must be certified by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse as having met the initial eligibility requirements. Homeschooled student athletes must be certified as having met the initial eligibility requirements as well, and

Many well known and successful athletes have been homeschooled, such as Tim Tebow (left) and the Williams sisters (below)



Featured

are no longer required to seek an eligibility waiver as non-graduates, but are able to register with the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse in the same manner as “traditionally schooled” students.

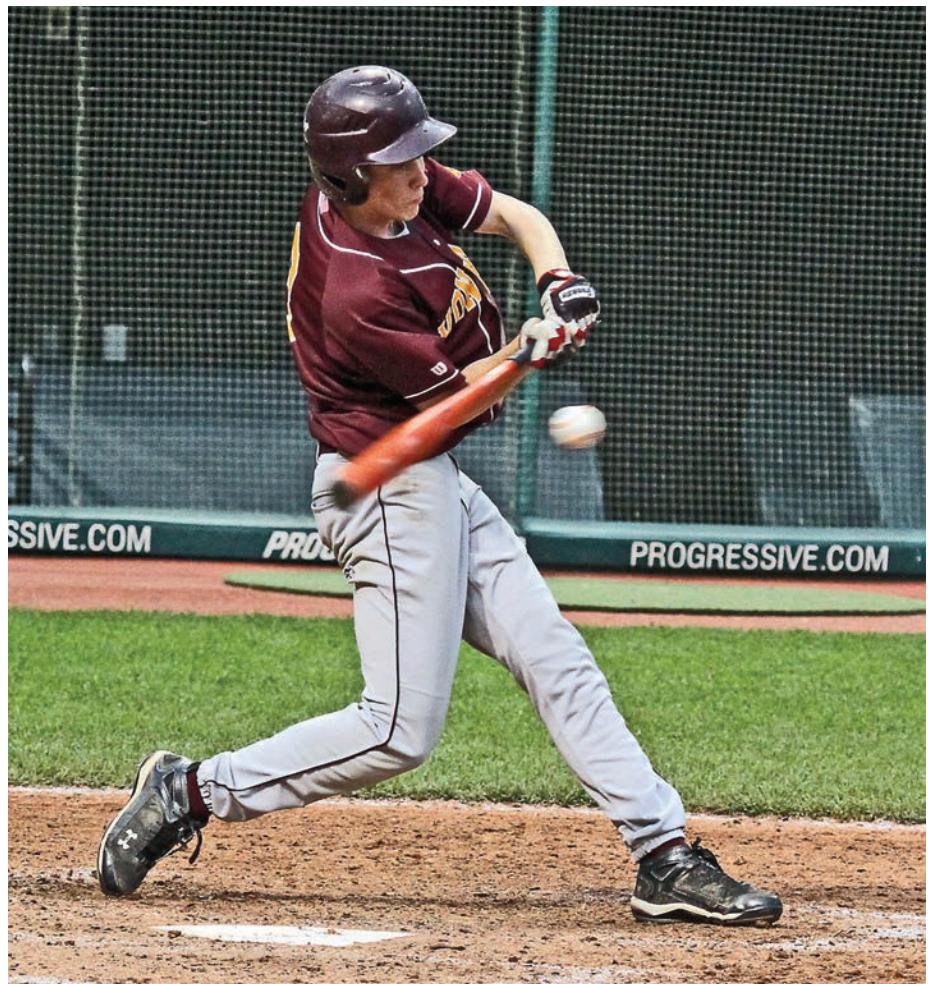
These requirements are much less invasive. Homeschoolers must:

- › Register with the clearinghouse. Online registration can be completed at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.
- › Take the ACT or SAT test. When registering for either test, the student must select the clearinghouse as one of the recipients. The clearinghouse code is 9999.
- › Upon graduation, provide the clearinghouse with the following materials:
 - › Transcript (including course titles, grades, units of credits for courses, hours spent, and grading scale),
 - › Proof of graduation in the form of a diploma, listing the month and year,
 - › A list of texts used in core courses throughout home instruction (including title and publisher), and
 - › Proof that the homeschool was conducted in accordance with state law using either a copy of the state form, or a statement from the homeschool teacher.

The good news is that homeschoolers are no longer required to provide a description of the homeschool teaching environment, copies of the table of contents for textbooks utilized in core courses, or samples of work completed, as they were under the waiver. Discretionary approval of these details and the sheer volume of requested documentation caused much confusion. We are thankful the NCAA chose to discontinue this unnecessary and burdensome process.

Periodically, HSLDA members have run into difficulties with the NCAA. If difficulties arise with the new procedures, HSLDA is available to contact the NCAA and help resolve any potential problems.

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) has also been open to homeschool students, although the organization is still in the process of writing specific standards for homeschooled students. Until these standards are written, homeschoolers must comply with NAIA's normal eligibility standards, which require students to meet two out of three academic requirements: (1) a minimum score of 18 on the ACT or 860 on the SAT test, (2) graduate in the upper half of the student's



high school graduating class, or (3) have an overall high school grade point average of 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale. Homeschool students who cannot meet this requirement may request an exception to the rule from the NAIA National Eligibility Committee. Homeschoolers experiencing difficulties in obtaining the exception should contact HSLDA for assistance.

Above all, I cannot overemphasize the importance that homeschooled student athletes keep their focus. The goal of the homeschooled student should be to obtain a solid college education, not to become a pro athlete. A quick look at the statistics is sobering. There are nearly 1 million high school football players and about 500,000 high school basketball players. Of those numbers, approximately 150 make it to the NFL and only about 50 make it to an NBA team. The odds of a high school basketball player playing in the pros is 10,000 to 1. Less than three percent of college basketball seniors will play one year professionally.

Homeschoolers should always take a reality check to keep themselves focused on academic success, so that when college is

 *Joseph Olsen, a homeschool senior recently accepted to Oklahoma State's Baseball team.*

finished they will be able to put their education to good use.

For the Christian homeschooler, the ultimate purpose in life is to glorify God. We need to remember that God requires us to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” As we serve Him with our whole heart, soul, and mind, God will bless His people. The best advice for the homeschooled, college-bound athlete is to “trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.” 



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