



How to make a secondary school timetable accessible

What is a school timetable

At secondary school, students are given a timetable. The timetable tells them

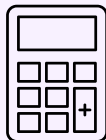
- Which lessons they have
- Which room the lesson will be in
- Which teacher will take the lesson
- What time the lessons starts and ends
- What equipment they might need e.g. PE kit, cooking ingredients

Some schools have a 2 week timetable called Week A and Week B. Some children with communication difficulties can find it difficult to interpret, understand and apply the information in their new timetable.

It can be helpful to make a more accessible version with them using visuals. We can do this by:



**Colour-coding
different lessons**



**Using
Symbols/visuals
in addition to
simple text**



**Including the
lesson times**



**Using only short
and relevant
information**

- Choose a time when the child is calm and engaged to introduce the new timetable.
- You will need to wait until school send the timetable home. This is likely to be when they start their new school.
- Book in time during their first week (or before if you have a copy) to create their new timetable together.
- If you plan some time in beforehand, for example during the summer holidays, they are likely to feel more prepared and not overwhelmed when they see their timetable for the first time.
- Draw the timetable out on paper or create one on the computer and then print it.
- Use coloured pens or felt tips to colour-code the timetable.

How to use the new timetable



Make 3 copies of the timetable

- Stick one copy in their new planner
- Put one copy at home somewhere that they can easily see for example, where they are likely to pack their bag.
- Put one copy in the school locker

If they are using a Week A and Week B system, use a post it note and stick it to the top of the week that they are currently on. Switch at the beginning of each new week.

If they bring their school books home, they could put a coloured stick on each book which corresponds to the colour they have used on their timetable.



Create opportunities to talk about the transition to secondary school

Talk about different lessons and introduce new vocabulary e.g. Design Technology

You can also talk about exciting things about secondary school but also anything your child may be worrying about.

You could talk about the fact that everyone will be starting a new school and are all likely to be working out how to find their way, and where they need to be.

You could problem solve what to do if they were to arrive late to a lesson or get lost.



Practice and consistency helps with memory

Refer to the timetable regularly

Timetables often change each year. Repetition helps with memory.

Reading timetables is a transferrable skill and is useful for planning revision timetables as they go through secondary school. We also use the same skills with diaries and calendars when we go into further education or employment as adults.



If help is needed with Telling the Time

Include a picture of the clock times on their timetable

You could also include on the timetable how long lessons and break times last