

The homeschool portfolio checklist

Whatever your state asks for, a good portfolio answers the same question: what did this child actually learn this year? Collect as you go, reconstructing it in April is miserable.

Check your own state first. Requirements vary enormously, some states want an annual assessment and a reviewer, some want nothing at all. This is a general working checklist, not legal advice.

THE RECORDS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Attendance / days log
Dated, kept as you go. A record written months later is worth less. ☐ Instructional hours log
Where your state counts hours rather than days. ☐ Subjects covered, per child ☐ Curriculum or materials list
Titles and publishers, not just "math". | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Reading log
Often the most impressive single document in the file. ☐ Standardised test or assessment results
If required where you are. ☐ Letter of intent / notice of intent
Filed copy, with the date sent. |
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THE WORK SAMPLES

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Three to five samples per subject
Beginning, middle and end of year shows growth better than perfect pieces. ☐ At least one piece of long-form writing ☐ Math work showing method, not just answers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ A science experiment or project write-up ☐ Photographs of hands-on and physical work
Build projects, art, experiments, field trips. ☐ One thing the child chose themselves
Interest-led work is worth including deliberately. |
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THE CONTEXT

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Field trips and where you went ☐ Co-op, class or group participation ☐ Sports, music, clubs and volunteering ☐ Life skills and practical work
Cooking, budgeting, caring for animals, it counts as learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ A short summary per subject
Three or four sentences on what was covered and how it went. ☐ Goals for next year
Useful for you, and it reads well to a reviewer. |
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HOW TO KEEP IT PAINLESS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Photograph work the day it is finished
A dated photo beats a shoebox in June. ☐ One folder per child, per year ☐ Log hours the same day
Two minutes daily beats a weekend of reconstruction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Keep the reading log where the reading happens ☐ Do a ten-minute tidy each month
Twelve short sessions instead of one long panic. ☐ Back it up
A portfolio that lives on one device is one spill away from gone. |
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WHAT A REVIEWER IS ACTUALLY LOOKING FOR

Not perfection. Reviewers are checking that instruction happened, that it covered the required areas, and that the child moved forward. Growth beats polish every time. a wobbly first attempt next to a confident later one tells the story better than two flawless

worksheets.

- ☐ **Evidence of progress over time**
Same subject, early and late. This is the single most persuasive thing in a portfolio.
- ☐ **Coverage of the required subject areas**
Check your state list and make sure nothing is missing entirely.
- ☐ **Consistency with your hours or days log**
The samples should look like the amount of time you recorded.
- ☐ **The child's own voice**
Work they chose, questions they asked, things they made unprompted.
- ☐ **Your summaries**
A few sentences per subject does more than another twenty worksheets.

IF YOU ONLY KEEP FIVE THINGS

- ☐ The attendance or hours log
- ☐ The reading log
- ☐ One dated writing sample per term
- ☐ Math work showing method
- ☐ Photographs of everything physical

Using this with the HavenKept Homeschool Planner: **Attendance & Hours** logs the days and hours, **Subjects & Grades** and **Lessons** hold what was covered, **Record Keeping** and **Portfolio** gather it together, and **Progress & Reports** prints or exports to PDF when someone asks to see it.