**Top Ten Tips for Homeschooling during the High School Years**

1. Relax. It isn’t grad school. It isn’t rocket science. It’s high school. Did you go to high school? Did you do reasonably well? Did you graduate? Then don’t sweat it. You can homeschool high school.
2. But know your limits. If there is a subject you aren’t comfortable tackling on your own, get some help. You don’t need to be an expert in every high school subject to give your homeschooled high schooler a well-rounded, high-quality education. You do need to be able to find and access resources that will allow your child to learn those subjects from others or on their own. Fortunately, finding and accessing these resources are not difficult things to do. If it helps, think of this journey not as “homeschooling” but as “*a la carte* schooling.” Figure out what is “on the menu” for each subject, i.e., what your child’s options are for learning each subject, and then pick and choose what works best.
3. Ignore the naysayers. Most of them think homeschooling means sitting around the kitchen table all day with mom pretending to be an expert in all subjects. They have no idea that homeschooling looks nothing like that, especially at this stage. If they are nice and you feel generous, explain to them what it really looks like. Otherwise, don’t waste your time or energy. Save it for your kids (and for yourself).
4. Get support. You are going to need it. There will be times when you doubt yourself. There will be times when you wonder whether you might just be screwing up your kid for life (you aren’t ☺). There will be times when you really, truly don’t know what you’re doing and will need someone to help you find your way. Everyone goes through it. You will, too. Don’t go through it alone.
5. If college might be in your teen’s future, start thinking about it and planning for it now. Don’t obsess, but be aware of the prerequisites for college and scholarship applications. Meeting some of those prerequisites will take some time and planning. Don’t wait until your child’s senior year to start figuring out what will be required. You may find that you don’t have time to meet those prerequisites.
6. Get your teen involved in the planning of their high school education. Ask them what they are most interested in learning about. Ask them how they like to learn best. Listen to their answers and find ways to respect their needs and preferences. (But if there are things you are going to require of them regardless of their preferences, that’s okay, too. Just tell them why.)
7. Balance this freedom of choice with good information. Most kids will usually make good choices if they have all of the relevant information in front of them. Are there practical reasons for a teen to study a subject that doesn’t interest her? What are the options for covering a subject later if it isn’t covered now? Be sure your teen is aware of all of their options and of the consequences of their choices.
8. Homeschooled teens have one luxury that most public high school students don’t have: time. ‘Time to become really passionate about something (or a lot of things) and to focus the bulk of their time on those passions. Let them. This makes for happy teens, and interesting adults.
9. “What about the prom?” Yeah, that will be one of the most common questions you get. Well, what about it? Some kids won’t care about the prom or other trappings of high school. Some might care, at least a little. Homeschooling during the high school years gives your teen the luxury of standing outside the predominant teen culture and deciding what parts of it are for them and what parts they want to skip. Yes, they’ll need friends. Yes, they may need to participate in some rites of passage. Figure out what is important to them, and then get creative. Ask other homeschoolers how they’ve met those needs for their own high schoolers. There are options.
10. The high school years will be over before you know it, and then, in all likelihood, your teen will leave home and go on to their next learning adventure without you. That adventure may be in the next county, or in another state, or on another continent. So enjoy having them around every day, while you still can.