

Avoid the Morning Rush

Are you frazzled when you finally arrive at work? Is your attitude at work and work performance affected by the a.m. chaos that occurs at home trying to get you and/or your family out the door to face another challenging day? If you feel you need some help with managing those crucial morning hours, why not look over these suggestions that provide advice for a morning without rushing?

Ten Bright Ideas for a Happier Morning

- ▶ ***Start going to bed earlier.*** It may take your body a few weeks to adapt to retiring earlier, but in the long run, it will be easier for you to rise at an earlier time.
- ▶ ***Place all items you carry to work in one familiar place.*** It's a good idea to place near the door your keys, briefcase, purse, school supplies, important papers, and letters to be mailed. Keep a petty cash fund handy for all those times that you or a child needs to take a quarter, \$.80, or \$1.55 to school for a parking meter, work, etc.
- ▶ ***Clothing choices for the next day.*** Laying clothes out the night before or thinking about what you plan to wear is made easier by stocking your closet with clean matching separates. Morning dressing becomes hassle-free.
- ▶ ***Pull yourself from your pillow at least 1-1/2 hours prior to leaving for work.*** A few more minutes added to your morning preparation time can prevent frantic dressing, no breakfast, and forgotten tasks that need to be done before leaving for work.
- ▶ ***Rise first and dress before waking others.*** Time alone in the morning can be just what you need to get yourself together without bumping into others or being interrupted.
- ▶ ***Have children make their lunches.*** If your children are mature enough, have them prepare their lunches to save you time and get them involved in food preparation.
- ▶ ***Encourage spouse to share in morning tasks.*** Have your spouse share morning tasks so that all the responsibility doesn't fall on one person.
- ▶ ***Take time for breakfast.*** Set the table the night before, a good task for a younger child. Sit down for 15 minutes and eat a light, wholesome breakfast. If you're on the run, grab a piece of fruit, or cheese and crackers, an enriched whole grain muffin, or a small sandwich. Eat while commuting.
- ▶ ***Set your clocks ahead.*** It may be psychological, but having your clocks and watches set 5 to 10 minutes ahead can keep you on schedule.
- ▶ ***Reward yourself for arriving at work on time.*** You'll be surprised how good you'll feel when you arrive at work on time and relaxed! Sometime during the day, treat yourself to something you would not normally do: a leisurely bath, lunch with friends, or a new novel.

Morning Chart

Take a minute to think about all the activities that occur prior to leaving for work. Are your home activities distributed fairly among family members or rotated to prevent feelings of being in a rut? Using this chart, place a check mark indicating each person you think should do these jobs within your family. You may use more than one check mark for each job. All activities listed may not relate to your family. Check the items that are applicable and add others as necessary.

Task	Mother	Father	Children	Others	Others
1. Rising First					
2. Preparing Lunch					
3. Preparing Breakfast					
4. Tidying Up Sleeping Area					
5. Caring for Clothes					
6. Taking Out Garbage					
7. Caring for Pets					
8. Preparing for Dinner					
9. Gathering Important Papers & Materials for the Day					
10. Giving Out Money for Lunches and Other Expenses					
11. Making a To-Do List					
12. Transporting Children					
13. Closing Up House					
14. Other					
15. Other					
16. Other					

Just to compare what you would like with what is currently done prior to leaving home, use an X to indicate who actually does those jobs in your home. You can learn a lot by inviting others close to you to do this with you.