

# morning GET OUT THE DOOR



## Plan Ahead

Face it, setting the kitchen clock 15 minutes fast isn't fooling anyone. Instead, try these reader tips to get your act together in the a.m.

**Separate problem clothes.** "I get dressed for work in minutes because nothing goes into my closet unless it's ready to wear. If it needs ironing or has a spit-up stain or loose hem, it goes into a basket for a weekend fix." —Leslie Fortunato

**Tap your task basket.** "I stock a bin with hairbrush, sunscreen, daily medications and other get-ready things at my fingertips so searching for them doesn't trip me up." —Amy Lester

**Use a bulletin board.** "I have a checklist on a bulletin board that I read to my kids to make sure we all have what we need." —Nancy Earlywine

**IN THE BAG** Your mornings will go swimmingly with these fish-decor totes. Personalize one for each child to keep by the door, and store all those things that go missing at the last minute (\$24, garnethill.com).

## BEAT THE CLOCK

We try to jump morning hurdles with a cup of coffee in one hand and a Bob the Builder toothbrush in the other. Not the best way to set the pace and tone for the day. Handle morning trip-ups with tips from Tara Donohue Rudo, a certified professional organizer and founder of NoMorePiles.com.

## THE UNEXPECTED

Spilled milk or diaper changes.  
**Solution** Add a ten-minute buffer to the amount of time you typically need to get out the door.

## ELECTRONIC DISTRACTIONS

These include phone calls and emails. Or the kids playing handheld games at breakfast instead of eating.  
**Solution** No electronics until everyone is ready—and that means you, too!

## OOPS, I FORGOT

You have car keys in hand when your kid remembers he needs cupcakes for the bake sale, money for the field trip or his soccer uniform.  
**Solution** Help your children be responsible for their own things, and model that behavior. Set a time each evening—say, after homework—to go over what they'll need for the next day.

—Janene Mascarella



FROM TOP: ANITA CALESOTRINK; ANOPIE; JESSICA COHN