

# Homeschool Portfolio/Evaluations for High School-Age Young People: FAQs

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*Thanks to Teresa Giardina and Hannah Mackay from [The Dandelion Project](#) for this information.*

## **The Basics**

- Starting in 9th grade, homeschooled young people are encouraged to create a transcript as part of their end-of-year homeschooling portfolio.
- At age 18/grade 12/when 15 credits have been achieved, this collection of transcripts make it possible for the parents to generate an official high school diploma recognized by the state. This is equivalent to a conventional high school diploma or GED.
- Getting a diploma is not required, but it is certainly handy when transitioning into the adult world.
- You can also sidestep the parent homeschool diploma altogether and earn a high school equivalency option (GED test, HiSET test, or 30 college credits), instead of the parent-issued diploma.
- We suggest making a transcript, no matter what route you take.

## **What are the requirements for the diploma?**

In order to earn a high school diploma, the student must show a transcript that meets the state's requirements. A complete transcript will include proof of:

- 4 English credits (including a language component, literature, speech practice, and composition)
- 3 Math credits (including geometry and algebra)
- 3 Science credits (very loose)
- 3 Social Studies credits (including geography, civics, world history, PA/US history)
- 2 Arts/Humanities credits

## **What is a credit?**

- In a conventional school, 1 credit = 1 year of a class. In homeschooling, 1 credit = 120 hours.
  - You can also document .5 credits and .25 credits for smaller endeavors and count those towards the totals.
  - Complete these credits on your own timeline; you do not have to do a certain combo of credits each year.
- In the unschooler world, this doesn't have to be documented rigorously, so don't stress about the exact minutes/hours.
- **Everything is learning, so pretty much everything can count. Focus more on the content and your interests than the timing.** <https://bit.ly/homeschool-eval-faqs>

## **Can I see a sample transcript?**

Check out a bunch! <https://bit.ly/homeschool-eval-faqs>

## **If we're not keeping track/haven't kept track of all we've done, what do we do?**

- First, take a breath. It will work out! You can figure this out with the evaluator or with NC facilitator beforehand.
- You'll bring your portfolio, your memories of this past year, and you and the evaluator will work together to figure out how activities, interests, classes, and experiences can be placed into tidy classes with credits attached to them. Some things will be marked as 1 credit while smaller interests will become .5 or .25 credits. You may also choose to give yourself a grade, to count towards a GPA, or "Pass/Fail" grade.

### **Is this process legitimate?**

- Yes! By the time they get to 18 years old, unschoolers usually have those 15 required credits and an abundance of electives.
- There will be certain areas that are easy to accrue credits in because it aligns with your existing interests. Other areas may require a little more planning or finessing (which is good to know by 16, if you don't want to scramble at the end). As you become aware of your goals, interests, and tendencies, you'll be able to plan around how you want your future years to look.

### **But really, are these transcripts acceptable for college, jobs, or other things?**

- Yes, this transcript can go into a college application. Because unschoolers have such a personalized education, colleges often like to do an additional interview to get to know their background. You can use your transcript as a talking point - "Look at all these things I've done..." Jobs, summer programs, etc - all of them will receive this diploma and transcript as well.
- **Edit May 2025:** For transferring to a conventional high school and applying to college, we encourage homeschooled high schoolers to send their homeschooled transcripts to a website like <https://fasttranscripts.com/> to make an especially legible and recognizable transcript. This will help the whole transfer/college process. We suggest the cheapest option.

### **What should I bring to the evaluation?**

Watch Teresa describe it here:  [How to - Homeschool Evals and Portfolio with Evaluator Teresa G - March 2025](#)  
(Jump to 37:00 for info about high school evals)

- Everything you did in eval when you were younger + transcript
  - Check it out here: <https://bit.ly/homeschool-eval-faqs>
- Goal at high school level: The young person is keeping track of this and adds a reflection to each of the 10 projects - could be written beforehand or spoken during the evaluation
- In the reflection, write or speak about why the project was meaningful, what you learned, what you would have done differently, etc.

And no, you don't need to include something every year for every subject that you are earning credits in.

### **Who is in the meeting with the high schooler?**

The focus is on the young person, but a parent can join if they wish.

### **How long is the meeting?**

It usually takes 30-45 min.

### **What if there is a gap, or there hasn't been any focus on a particular topic?**

- You'd be surprised what falls into certain categories and what can add up to a credit. The evaluator will get creative with you.
- Some young people wait until CCP to take classes in areas they are not motivated to do in a self-directed way.
- If earning the diploma is a goal for the young person and the gap is obvious, they may want to create a plan about how to get credits in those areas they're not as excited about. That may involve finding a class, creating a reading/media list about the topic, or finding something in that area that aligns with existing interests. Natural Creativity is here to help meet those goals.

### **What's the most important thing to remember in this process?**

- Keep it simple.
- By 10th grade at the latest, a high schooler should understand the expectations around the high school transcript requirements. This can help them organize their high school years, if they're looking for structure.