

Auto

- How to wash a car
- Identify basic car parts & understand their function
- Pump gas
- Check oil
- Change oil (how often and how to)
- Put air in tires
- When to rotate tires
- How to change a flat tire to a spare
- Jump battery
- Refill wiper fluid
- Radiator safety
- Drive a stick shift
- Change a headlight/taillight
- Change wiper blades
- Driving in hazardous weather
- What to do in an accident
- What to do if you get pulled over
- What to do if your car breaks down
- Car insurance basics
- How to navigate without GPS/use a real map
- How to purchase/sell a car
- Important documents related to car (insurance/registration/title)
- How to renew your driver's license

Finance

- Making a budget (tithe, save, spend)
- Carrying cash
- Emergency savings funds
- How to file taxes
- Building good credit
- Dividing expenses with roommates
- Comparison shopping (reviews, prices per lb/oz/unit)
- Bank accounts (how to shop rates, open account, write checks, make a deposit, balance checkbook and understand overdrafts)
- How to use an ATM
- Understanding compound interest
- Explain loans/debt (real price over time of an item purchased on credit)
- Selecting a credit card (perks, rates, annual fees, completing application)
- Applying for a loan
- How to read a bank/credit card statement
- How to handle a lost/stolen credit card

- Protecting from and reporting credit card fraud
- Paying bills
- Understanding identity theft
- Knowing what to file and what to shred
- Who to tip in life, why it matters and how much
- Overview of the stock market
- Explanation of insurance types and how/when to obtain (car, home, renters, health, life, disability)

Home

- Changing sheets (how to and how often)
- Setting a table
- Dishwasher (how to load/what can and cannot be put in/cleaning drain)
- What NOT to use on certain surfaces (i.e., no steel wool on non-stick pans)
- How to set up utilities
- What to do in a power outage
- Hot water heater function
- Basic tool use (names and functions)
- How to build/hang a shelf
- How to change/remove a broken lightbulb
- Plunging/snaking a toilet
- Opening the back of toilet tank to stop running water
- Turning off water source at toilet if overflowing
- How to turn off water to house in case of a leak
- Faucets on to prevent frozen pipes
- Basic cleaning
 - Sweep
 - Mop
 - Dust
 - Clean windows
 - Counters
 - Clean a toilet
 - Clean a sink/disposal
 - Clean an oven
 - Clean out refrigerator (drawers come out)
 - Vacuum (how to change bag)
- Pet care basics
- Organizing in tight spaces
- Changing air filters
- How to sew a button
- Using coasters for drinks
- How to use a ladder

- Popping a lock with a credit card
- How/when to flip breakers
- Basic yard work
 - Mowing
 - Weeding
 - Edging
 - Leaf blower

Kitchen/Food

- Cooking key words (saute, chop, bake, boil, etc.)
- Food safety (raw chicken!)
- Food expirations/sell by dates
- How to sharpen a knife
- Dicing/slicing/chopping fruits and vegetables
- Make a pot of coffee without a Keurig
- Microwave cooking (for dorm life) including what is microwave safe and what isn't
- How to grill
- Selecting produce
- How to handle hot grease/grease fires
- How to boil an egg
- Grocery shopping process (plan meal, make list, shop, compare prices, coupon)
- How to make 3-5 basic meals
- A go to meal for company
- Meal planning (based on sales and how to reuse leftovers later in week)
- How to make healthy cheap meal choices (not all ramen)
- How to use a manual can opener

Laundry

- How to wash a load of laundry
- Stain treatment
- When/how to use bleach
- Identifying what can be washed and what requires dry cleaning
- How to dry clothes/when to hang or flat dry
- How to use the laundromat
- Ironing
- Folding clothes properly/what to hang
- Folding a fitted sheet
- Cleaning the dryer vent

Life

- Waking yourself up in the morning
- Addressing an envelope

- How to hold mail when out of town
- Don't mail cash
- How to return online purchases
- Identifying junk mail from legitimate correspondence (email and snail mail)
- Ordering at a restaurant
- Conducting basic internet research (contact numbers, hours of operation, how tos)
- Make travel arrangements
- Packing for a trip
- Navigating airport alone
- Reading a bus/subway schedule
- Tie a tie/bowtie
- Haircuts (how often/make appointment/tip)
- Calling technical support
- Voting (registration/research ballot & candidates/what to do at poll)
- How to file important papers at home (what to keep, where and how long)
- Completing basic forms
- Memorizing social security number
- Effective goal setting
- Time management tips/managing a schedule
- Reading/writing cursive
- Typing
- Having a good signature
- Hitching, pulling and backing a trailer
- Looking for an apartment/place to live
- Polishing shoes
- Launching/driving/docking a boat
- How to safely cut down a tree
- Operating a chainsaw
- Using a tablesaw
- How to start something with a pull start cord

Health/Safety

- Using cell phone emergency alerts
- Memorizing emergency numbers
- What to do when you smell natural gas
- How to start a fire safely in a fireplace
- Starting/managing a fire safely outdoors (dangers of accelerants)
- Surviving an accident in the wilderness
- Parking lot safety
- Socializing in pairs/groups at parties
- What to do when a friend has had too much alcohol

- The danger of leaving drinks unattended in social settings
- Saying no to drugs
- Dealing with panhandlers
- Elevators with strangers
- Using uber/lyft/taxis safely
- Testing/changing smoke detector batteries
- What to do with live/downed wires
- Types/uses of over the counter medications
- Knowing when to go to the doctor & which type to see
- Making a doctor/dentist appointment
- Filling/refilling a prescription
- Health insurance overview (insurance cards, copays vs deductibles)
- Basic first aid (cuts, allergic reactions)
- Always finish your antibiotics
- How to ask for emotional/mental help

Education/career

- Creating/maintaining a resume
- Completing a job application
- Interview skills/etiquette
- Respect the chain of command in conflict (don't go straight to CEO)
- Take notes
- 401k overview
- Understand tax withholding
- Respect others by being on time
- How to leave a job

Social/Relational

- Eye contact
- Firm handshake
- Stand up for ladies at a table
- Elevator etiquette
- Opening/holding doors (including car)
- Active listening/ask questions
- Listening to understand not just to be right
- Be a good borrower
- Being a polite guest (hostess gift, offer to help, make bed if overnight, etc)
- The importance of an RSVP
- Planning a party
- Wrapping a gift
- How to make a phone call/leave a clear telephone message with return number
- Writing a quality, personal handwritten thank you note

- When to text versus email (etiquette for both--tone, time of day, etc)
- How to be a wedding guest
- Making a toast
- What to do at a funeral/visitation
- Managing social media image/content
- Polite, effective self advocacy (healthcare, workplace, school)
- How to recognize/explain expectations (roommates, relationships)
- Declining a love interest
- How to give/receive genuine compliments
- Being a good roommate
- Choosing friends wisely
- Managing conflict
- Admitting when wrong/taking responsibility
- Sincere apologies

This life skills list was crowdsourced on social media in a few days in June 2019. It is by no means exhaustive, but started with a realization that we had a lot to cover before our children graduate from high school. My husband & I decided to compile a list of around 200 things that can be taught/impressed upon our young people before they go out into the world in approximately 200 weeks.

As I received suggestions I realized families will certainly need to personalize their specific circumstances and offspring...but this is at least a solid start.

In the last week, I realized that simply being intentional about inviting my kids into the work I was already doing crossed many things off the list. (And that I needed to brush up on a few things before I was proficient enough to pass them on!)

I read excellent comments that covered the spiritual, emotional and character traits we also hope to develop but didn't feel they fit within the framework of practical checklist type skills/conversation topics I was considering for this particular list.

Our original idea was covering one a week through high school, but realistically some of them are opportunistic and others naturally go together. We are also discussing how to incorporate other adults into teaching some of this.

Hope this helps somebody!

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