

# How to setup a curfew

---

Before or shortly after your student arrives, you will want to establish a curfew to ensure a good night's sleep or to avoid too many late nights out. Either way, by establishing good habits early in your student's stay with you, it will be easier for you and your student later on.

1. **Decide on an appropriate curfew with the help of your Homestay Coordinator.** Depending on the maturity level or age of the student, you may want to involve him/her in making this decision. Remember that a child is more likely to respect a decision in which he or she has taken a part. Take into account the student's age, what time they have to wake up in the morning, how much school work they need to complete in the evening, and any established evening quiet time hours in your home. Make sure your Homestay Coordinator is aware of the curfew so that they can communicate it to the student's agent/natural parents.
2. **Tell your student about the curfew.** Explain what curfew means to you and what he/she will have to do prior to that time—for example, finish homework, be in their room, have lights out, etc. Alternatively, for older teenagers, you may want to make curfew the time they must be home by. If you choose to do that, you may want to also make a time by which they must be in bed, or at which they must be quiet and respect the other householders' need for sleep/quiet time. Be sure to provide the curfew to the student in writing (template attached on page 2).
3. **Explain what the consequences will be.** Do not leave this portion unclear. *Having consequences clearly spelled out in advance creates a sense of consistency and fairness*, rather than giving out arbitrary consequences that the child may feel are out of proportion to the broken curfew instance. Remember, to be unclear is to be unkind. Examples of potential consequences are listed on page 2 and should be discussed with your Homestay Coordinator.
4. **Before handing out the consequence,** remember that accidents happen. We understand the importance of showing you mean what you say, but you also have to show them that you come from a place of understanding. Explain to them why it's important to be home on time and that they need to plan accordingly. Ask them what caused their lateness and how they can avoid it later. Taking the time to understand what happened will usually make it easier for them to accept the consequence.
5. **Explain what he/she will need to do in order to get an extension of a curfew.** As your student displays responsible behavior or for older students, it is reasonable to expect that not every night will be the same bedtime. Extensions might be given in such circumstances as:
  - When asked for, a day or two in advance, for a specific reason.
  - By calling and explaining to you why they will be late.

For a permanent extension, they should prove that they are not tired during the day, have no problem getting up on their own, and are getting to school on time. By this stage, it is best to shift responsibility for meeting deadlines, getting somewhere on time, etc., onto the child.

## TIPS:

- Curfew times and potential consequences should be age appropriate and reasonably enforceable.

# How to setup a curfew

---

- If your student asks for an extension prior to the day they want one, consider granting one. It can be seen as a reward for proper planning and respect for the process, and will help the student accept the curfew, even if they do not like it.
- If clear, written curfew rules and consequences have been established, simply refer your student to the rule sheet if they have questions. You should not engage in lengthy debates or discussions with your student.
- If you notice your child is having a hard time meeting the curfew due to a large amount of homework, this may be a sign that the curfew should be moved later, at least temporarily.
- Discuss local curfew laws with your student. Help them understand these are not just your rules, they are community laws and carry substantial consequences when broken.

Give your student a little bit of leeway when appropriate. Going to bed two minutes late should **not** cause dramatic consequences, and if an older child got home late because of torrential downpours that caused major traffic, this should not be a problem for you.

**Here's a template to get you started:**

**Curfew starts at \_\_\_\_\_pm on school nights.**

**Curfew starts at \_\_\_\_\_pm on Friday and Saturday night.**

**You must be in \_\_\_\_\_ (the house, your room, etc.) by curfew.**

**Curfew extensions will be considered when: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Consequence for missing curfew can be:**

- You will not be able to go out in the evenings for \_\_\_\_\_.
- You will lose internet access for \_\_\_\_\_.
- Repeated missed curfews should be discussed with the Homestay Coordinator and may result in a Disciplinary Strike per page 45 of the Homestay Handbook.