

MOTHERING



The After-School Landing: Help Children Come Home Without an Immediate Interrogation



A PRACTICAL COMPANION TO THE GUIDE

Create an after-school landing routine with a practical arrival zone, delayed questions, clear responsibilities, and a printable observation and handoff plan.

HOW TO USE THESE PAGES

- 01 Read the guide and choose one manageable starting point.
- 02 Complete the six exercises with details from your own home.
- 03 Return to the record and keep the adjustment that helped.

Small enough to begin. Specific enough to use again.

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EXERCISE 01

Map the actual doorway route

Draw the route from entrance to backpack, shoes, and food or water. Mark any point that requires searching or reaching beyond the child's ability. Move one item closer before buying a new storage unit. Record who resets the station and where wet or dirty belongings go. A landing point without an overflow rule quickly becomes another pile.

YOUR WORKING RECORD

DECISION / NEXT ACTION / CHECK DATE

EXERCISE 02

Choose the first ten minutes

Offer quiet, company, or a simple familiar activity that is possible that day. Write the default and one alternative. Include the adult's availability rather than promising uninterrupted time during a work call. Let the child revise the preference. Their answer may change across the week, and that is information about the day's needs rather than failure to follow the plan.

YOUR WORKING RECORD

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EXERCISE 03

Place necessary tasks in order

List the smallest required handoff: lunch container, adult-action papers, or a time-sensitive school item. Decide whether it happens before or after the first break. State what counts as finished. Teach the order outside the rushed arrival window. If a task repeatedly causes conflict, inspect its size and timing before adding more reminders.

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EXERCISE 04

Write the later conversation opening

Choose a specific, open question that leaves room for an honest answer. Write when you will ask it and what will happen if the child is not ready. A later walk, supper preparation, or quiet car ride may work. Keep an urgent concern outside this delay. Privacy, health, and immediate safety should not wait for the routine's preferred conversation slot.

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EXERCISE 05



Track one useful observation each day

Record what happened rather than a character label. 'Started homework after drawing with one reminder' is useful. 'Finally behaved' is not. Note an interruption, unexpected hunger, or schedule change. These details help you distinguish a poorly timed task from a broader concern. Do not ask the child to monitor themselves for the sake of producing a successful-looking worksheet.

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EXERCISE 06

Agree on the next handoff

At the end of the landing period, name the next responsibility and the available support. Example: 'Now we check what is due, and I can help for fifteen minutes.' Make the limit honest. If an activity requires departure, decide the warning time in advance. A clear ending protects the transition from becoming an undefined period that leaves everyone unsure what happens next.

YOUR WORKING RECORD

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