

Back to School Tips & Ideas

*This free tip sheet was produced by the Cheapskates Club –
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Covering School Books

Every parent's back to school nightmare, but it's a good idea to help protect your kids' schoolbooks from a year of abuse by making covers out of a durable material, such as brown paper.

1. Measure the height of the book you want to cover.

Then measure the distance from the front to back covers. Add 15cm to the two measurements (to create the inside flaps), and cut a piece of paper to this size.

2. Open the book, and place it face down in the centre of the paper. To accommodate the spine, make two vertical cuts on the excess paper at the top and bottom of the book, creating a flap. Fold the flap down and behind the spine, creating two notches. If this isn't possible, carefully trim the flap level with the bottom of the spine.

3. Wrap the paper around the book, making sure the inside flaps are equal sizes. Fold top and bottom flaps over the side flaps and tape in place.



Decorating School Book Covers

I print out favourite photos of my son playing cricket and pictures of our pets and his friends and glue them on to the exercise books then cover with clear contact, which is cheaper than printed. My son loves his schoolbooks. Sometimes I put his sporting heroes on there also. He loves going back to school and your child will to. .

Contributed by Heather, Caloundra

Re-vamping Last Years School Bag

Often last years backpack just needs a good clean and it is ready to go for another year. I spray any stains with a spot remover, or cover them with a paste of bicarb and water and leave overnight. Then just pop the backpack into the washing machine with some detergent and wash it on the gently cycle. Hang it upside down over a broom handle to air dry in the sun. Usually brings them up as good as new.

Contributed by Cath

Double Strength

Boys can be very hard on the knees of their school trousers and they are very expensive to replace on a regular basis. You can re-enforce the knees by ironing onto the inside of each leg an iron-on patch of similar weight fabric. Then very carefully 'ditch stitch' the edges of the patch into the seams of the trouser leg. I do this with all my boy's pants and they are yet to go through the knees. -

Contributed by Cath

Removing Hem Marks

If you have a mark left after letting down a hem, dampen a cloth with white vinegar; lay it on the crease and iron. The mark will disappear like magic.

No-Sew Hemlines

For readers who do not have sewing machines or hate to sew, there is a product called 'Hemming Web' available in a roll designed for hemming. Just iron it on the fold with a damp cloth and you have hemmed your item. There are a couple of different weights, and it is sold under different brand names, so you may have to ask for it. It's available at Lincraft, Spotlight and other fabric stores.



Contributed by S.M., Newcastle.

Button Savers

To save buttons on shirts (especially school shirts!) dab a little clear nail polish on the back of the button and across the centre front. This will help to stop the thread from coming undone and the buttons will stay on much, much longer.

Contributed by Debra, Shepparton

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time and energy and still have fun!
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