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Timers for ADHD Children

ADDitude readers -- and their attention deficit children -- put three timers to the test.

by *ADDitude Editors*

On Task On Time for Kids

On Task On Time for Kids timer, timelymatters.com, \$49.95

Reviewer: Theresa, mom of Harley Ann, 7, and Hayden Marie, 5

The Challenge: My ADHD daughter has trouble staying focused on a task. She starts out well, but scrambles to get the task done or to be somewhere on time.

The Solution: The timer looks like a see-and-say toy. It has three clear disc plates, to which a child attaches stickers depicting a variety of tasks -- getting dressed, brushing teeth, eating breakfast, and so on. A child aligns the dial with a sticker and sets the number of minutes for the task. The first day we used it, my daughters loved it -- and they did complete their tasks. By the second week, the novelty wore off, though.

Next: Time Timer

This article comes from the Winter 2009 issue of *ADDitude*.

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Time Timer

©Time Timer LLC

Time Timer 8-inch timer, timetimer.com, \$35

Reviewer: Steve, dad of Matt, 10

The Challenge: Matt gets stressed when he does homework. He works himself into a fit, worrying about whether he has time to finish everything. He needs a timer that will clearly let him know how much time he has left for an assignment.

The Solution: The Time Timer looks like an oven timer, but with a difference. As you set the timer -- for up to an hour -- a red disc covers the face of the clock for the desired time interval. As time passes, the red disc diminishes, allowing a child to see how much time he has left. Matt and I estimated how long each assignment would take. He set the timer for each task, then raced the clock to finish. The good news is that he often overestimated the time allotment, so he could take breaks. The Time Timer focused Matt's attention on the task at hand, so he didn't worry about the big picture.

Next: My Time Activity Timer

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My Time Activity Timer

Courtesy of My Time Timer, LLC

My Time Activity Timer, mytimeactivitytimer.com, \$24.95

Reviewer: Amy, mom of Aidan, 8, and Andrew, 6

The Challenge: Aidan struggles with homework, and we used the oven timer to help him manage how long he should be working on each assignment. I want Aidan to manage his own time rather than having me monitor it for him.

The Solution: My Time Activity Timer has buttons with icons representing different activities -- TV, video games, computer. You set the timer for a selected activity, and a voice recording gives 10- and five-minute warnings until time is up. I struggled to set the timer, but my sons found it easy to use. The warnings were a little muffled, but the boys caught on quickly. They were excited to monitor time on their own.

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