

Count-back date planner

Start with the last day of school and count backwards. Write each date in the blank. Say every date in every team update from October on: a date people have heard once is a date they will miss.

Date	Your date	How to work it out
Last day of school		Get this from the school office.
Books handed out by		Leave time to sort the boxes by class and hand them out. Two weeks is a good start.
Books arrive at school by		The same day, or a little earlier. Check who will receive the boxes.
Book seal date		Count back about three weeks from arrival. This is the day the book is approved, goes to print and ordering closes.
Close family ordering		At the book seal date, or a few days before it, because books are printed from the orders in hand.
Photo seal date		The day photo collection stops. Leave time for review: at least three weeks before the book seal date if a first draft is built for you, four to six weeks if your team builds every page.
Ladder settled		Before photo collection ramps up, so every event has a page and an owner.

Example: last day of school Friday 4 June 2027. Two weeks to sort and hand out, so books arrive by about 21 May. Count back three weeks, so the book seals by about 30 April. Close ordering in the last week of April. Put the photo seal date in late March to leave April for review.

If approval slips, delivery slips with it. Before you approve the book, check the shipping address and who will receive the boxes, the final book count, and any extra copies.