


The *Every Day Before You Say* Chart

february




NAME	MARKS	DEMERITS

FEBRUARY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
DISCIPLINES OR TASKS:																	
DEMERITS:																	
TOTALS:																	
NAME																	

If you're a creative mama and want to make sure each month reflects you and your crew, this DIY version is a great fit for you! Do it yourself or let the kiddos add color, too!

Looking for something that's already adorable and ready to go? We've designed a sweet and unique chart for each month, so all you need to do is add the details for your family!



NAME	MARKS	DEMERITS

FEBRUARY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
DISCIPLINES OR TASKS:																												
DEMERITS:																												
TOTALS:																												
NAME																												
GROSS																												
- GIVING																												
- DEMERITS																												
- SAVINGS																												
- NET																												

How do I get my children to follow through with...?

How many times have I talked about this with them?

I wish I could see some progress in the area of...

You are not alone. We're all in the process of becoming more disciplined, more self-governed, at least that is our hope. But sometimes we wonder if we are succeeding with our children in this area. We've wrestled through knowing that our children are old enough to understand a concept or rule, yet not seeing the discipline or habit take root. While there are no magic wands in parenting, there are some tips and tools that turn out to be pure gold, and this is one of them.

As they say, "Necessity is the mother of invention," and through our own experience in this area, we have devised a system to help children become more disciplined. And it is adaptable so that it can be modified to remain relevant to your children and their ages and needs. Once you figure out this balance, *The Every Day Before You Say* Chart just might become part of your family routine.

The beauty of this resource is that kiddos see their success and are encouraged to continue to grow... all while you save your breath and lessen the number of times you give them the look or have to remind them... again. Of course, we want our children to be intrinsically motivated, but that takes training. We all need a little something to spur us on in a desired course so that we can experience success, and this point system is just the right use of a reward. Pre-schoolers to sixth-graders are most ripe for developing spiritual disciplines and good habits with this tool. Your expectations will be slightly different with different ages, but this same resource can be used to encourage them and record your goals for each of them.

A few days before the month begins...

Get out your *Every Day Before You Say Chart*. On the top, use the narrow column to record the names of each of your children who will be involved, one child per row. Also record their names in the **Total** section on the bottom right-hand side.

Take a moment to brainstorm. If Dad is available, get his insight too! Think and pray about the disciplines you want to establish in your children right now. Just six or so, not everything you can think of! Is that morning routine usually a quick flick of the toothbrush and pjs whipped near the laundry bin? Is your hope of your children memorizing Scripture often reduced to a lightning-round review on the way to AWANA? Is the phrase, "Okay, Mom" needing a bit more joy behind it? YOU get to decide what is most important or necessary at the time. Write these desired **Disciplines** or **Tasks** in the lower left-hand section of the chart. Your kids will benefit from knowing just what it is that you're looking for. Clear, age-appropriate goals—met with consistency—will encourage growth!

Next, assign a point value to each **Task**. Certain jobs require more effort and time, so this should be reflected in the number or points that may be earned daily. Perhaps you decide playing with a younger sibling while you prepare dinner could transform your evenings – make that task 2-3 points each day! A simpler task such as taking out the trash may be just 1 point. Older kids may have greater opportunity to earn more points if their tasks are more demanding. More examples? We thought you might ask...

- Homework complete by 7:00 (+3 or +1 depending upon their age)
- Mom's Task (+2) This means that if you ask one of them to do a simple task, and they quickly and cheerfully respond, they can earn extra points. (For example: "Please clear the table," or "Go upstairs and get the baby's shoes, please.")
- Bible and pen ready to go for church or youth group (+1)
- Daily hygiene (as defined by you) (+1 or more). You may break this down into multiple tasks or lump hygiene together especially once they get this down.
- Teach an AWANA verse or section to a younger sibling (+2)
- Go all day without screen time (+4)

You get the idea. Just don't dump the truck or they will be overwhelmed. Once you've decided upon six to eight target disciplines and their appropriate point values, record these next to the listed tasks. (At the beginning of each month, you will use the top center portion of the chart to tally the positive points, called **Marks**. Make them small and close together because you're hoping your kiddos will earn lots of points—and because you are going to stick to this, right?!)

Now it's time to assign a monetary value for each **Mark**. Maybe you decide that 10¢ seems motivating enough without the threat of overhauling your budget. (You might want to determine their potential for earning to see if you are able to commit to that amount. Typically they won't reach full capacity, but you want to be prepared! There is a natural ebb and flow to the process, some months they are more motivated, some months, less so. The difference comes in Mom's consistency to not toss out the chart when they seem to be lagging.) Your child's total may be lowered if they earn negative points (**Demerits** - explained below), but you want to be sure that you can be faithful to pay what they have earned.

Starting to see how this all works together? Good! Next, selectively determine 2 to 3 habits or actions that you want to nip in the bud. Again, these should not be an overwhelming list – just a couple of target behaviors. You can change to something different next month. These behaviors earn negative tally marks and are called **Demerits**. Are interruptions out of control? Do sibling quarrels continually overtake the peace in your home? Write these behaviors on the right side of the chart. Weigh their values

appropriately and add them next to the **Demerits** as you did in the **Mark** section. These marks, though hopefully rare, have a greater negative value than the **Marks**. You might make them 25¢, for example. Here are some examples that you might consider:

- Every ½ hour past bedtime (-1)
- Using words or actions that hurt a family member (-1 or -2)
- Interrupting phone call (-1)

The **Demerits** are recorded on the top right column of each child's row.

Don't miss this step: **it's time to let your kids on the scoop!** To be most effective, your kids need to clearly understand the entire process of the chart. Have a family chat and get them excited to engage! Let them know that you are cheering for their success! Explain why you chose the **Tasks** and **Demerits** that you did, and why each is important as we grow in the Lord. Post the *Every Day Before You Say Chart* in a prominent area, like on the fridge or inside a cabinet door.

february

NAME	MARKS	DEMERITS
sophia		
will		
henry		
mia		

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

DISCIPLINES OR TASKS:

- * Homework complete by 7 (Sophie)
- * Sophie or Will read 15 min. to Henry
- * Clear your place at dinner (-1)
- * Neatly put away shoes by back door (+1)
- * Wet towels hung up (+1)
- * Brush your teeth twice/day (+1)
- * No screen time all day (+4)
- * Work on Scripture Memory 15min (+2)
- * Help Henry or Mia learn a verse (+2)
- * Have laundry in laundry room Mon.am (+1)
- * Make bed (+1)

DEMERITS:

- Every ½ hour past bedtime (-1)
- Interrupting (-1)

TOTALS:

NAME	GROSS	-GIVING	-DEMERITS	-SAVINGS	+NET
sophia					
will					
henry					
mia					

Okay, now you can start! You need to commit to being faithful in this process yourself! Have a set time of day that you mark the chart. We recommend just before bedtime and only once per day to keep things straight. (However, at any point of the day, a **Demerit** can be marked.) Only Mom marks the chart. Ask each child how they did for each task and mark their row. A great follow-up is "The Story of Today" in which you can reinforce how things went that day. (See Lesson ----). Your kiddos are counting on you every day to mark the chart, so don't throw a wet blanket on their excitement by not being consistent!

Next step - teaching some wise financial lessons! At the end of the month, sit down with each child and count all their positive Marks and multiply them by the monetary value you decided upon. Record this total under Gross. Celebrate your child, let them know that you are proud of them, and use this time to affirm them in the areas in which they grew.

Have them calculate 10% of the gross amount, and record this in the **Giving** cell. This will train them to

give to God first, because it is all really His and we want to steward His gifts to us. Help your child think about how their giving can be used to serve the Lord. They may want to take it for a Sunday School offering, or perhaps save it for a missionary family or to support a needy child. Next, have them take another 10% to place in savings. You might even encourage them by saving whatever they save, you will match. **Or** whatever they give, you will match. Enter their **Savings** amount in the savings cell. Lastly, tally the **Demerits** and have a discussion if need be. This moment has the potential for discouragement and frustration. Guide your child in the process. They are learning that acting in the moment can have a longer term effect. Let them know that on the first of the month, they have a clean slate and a fresh start. Trust me, they do not like having any Demerits displayed on the refrigerator, so while they are monitoring their own behavior, be careful not to mark too many demerits. This will only dishearten them. The goal is to encourage them to make progress. The situation may require a chat with Mom and Dad to get back on track without overly discouraging them.

The next step, subtract **Giving**, **Saving**, and **Demerits** from their **Gross**, and you will have their **Net** amount for the month.

Gross - (Giving + Savings + Demerits) = Net

Pay each child and write “**paid**” on the last day of the month.

They only get paid once/month and this is a long time to wait for them so be sure to do this on the last day of the month. And that same day, prepare the chart for the next month so that it is in full view on the first. They will be very interested to see how you have changed up the chart on what you will be emphasizing. Be sure to keep them engaged in the process by making it exciting!

Perhaps you realize your expectations were off and you gave too many Demerit opportunities, or perhaps your expectations were spot-on, but your kids did not work on developing disciplines faithfully. Maybe you gave too many opportunities for them to earn marks, and now you’re broke! You will learn what needs to be adjusted within a short time. The key is to be willing to BEGIN. You can’t tweak the process if you don’t start. Don’t be held back by trying to get it just right the first time! You’re learning here too!

Each month you will create a new chart with new disciplines and keeping those you wish to emphasize. This will ensure that the chart remains interesting, challenging and effective. It is natural for there to be an ebb and flow to life and at the end of the month they will be learning that they reap what they have sown. Don’t worry if they lag a month. They will be motivated to work harder the next month. The beauty of the chart is that you will not need to be their constant reminder, but that they will learn to monitor themselves and become disciplined!

You’re going to have to stick with it. All your problems won’t be solved in a week, but if you are faithful, you will be amazed at the progress a season of using the chart can make. Go for the harvest, Mama. By the end of a few months, you just might be looking at your kids and thinking, *How ‘bout them apples?*