Homeschooling Styles

Homeschooling Style	Philosophical Reasoning (Why)	Practical Application (What)	Pros	Cons	Brand Names
Classical	Learning should follow natural stages of child development (grammar, logic, rhetoric).	Early: focus on memorization; middle years: focus on logic; older years: focus on persuasive expression.	Strong foundation in critical thinking, language, and history; clear developmental stages; proven over centuries.	Can seem strange with the heavy emphasis on memorization in early years; parent prep can be demanding.	• Classical Conversations (+ a bit Literature-based) • Memoria Press • Veritas Press • The Well-Trained Mind (Susan Wise Bauer)
Literature-Based / Great Books	Students should encounter truth and beauty through great stories and ideas.	Core learning comes from whole books rather than textbooks.	Builds deep thinking through discussion of classic ideas; flexible across ages; cultivates cultural literacy; rich exposure to stories.	Reading-heavy, which can be hard for struggling readers; less emphasis on STEM unless added; may feel elitist or limited in perspectives.	• Sonlight • My Father's World (really, a mix of Literature-based, Charlotte Mason, unit studies, and Classical) • Tapestry of Grace (+ a bit Classical) • Beautiful Feet Books (+ a bit Charlotte Mason)
Charlotte Mason	Children are persons who thrive on living ideas.	Rich literature, narration, nature study, and habit training.	Inspires love of learning through "living books"; gentle pace; habit training helps with life skills; lots of beauty (art, nature, poetry).	Narration and copywork can feel repetitive; less focus on math/science rigor unless supplemented; requires parent involvement for reading/discussion.	• Ambleside Online (free, online, + a bit Literature-based style) • Simply Charlotte Mason • Living Books Curriculum • A Gentle Feast
Unit Studies	Learning is meaningful when subjects connect around a central theme.	Integrated projects covering multiple disciplines within one topic.	Fun, creative, hands-on; helps kids see connections across subjects; adaptable for multiple ages learning together.	Can be time-consuming for parents to design; risk of shallow coverage in some subjects; harder to track "grade-level" progress.	• Konos (with a Charlotte Mason flavor) • Five in a Row • Trail Guide to Learning (+ a bit Charlotte Mason and Classical) • My Father's World (really, a mix of Literature-based, Charlotte Mason, unit studies, and Classical)
Traditional / School-at-Home	Uses school structures to provide stability, continuity, and measurable progress.	Use of textbooks, grade levels, and schedules at home.	Familiar structure for parents; easy to track progress; aligns with grade levels; good for standardized testing or re-entry to school.	Can be rigid and stressful; risks replicating the negatives of public school at home; less room for flexibility or creativity.	• Abeka • BJU Press (Bob Jones University) • K12 / Stride (online school at home) • Saxon Math / Rod & Staff textbooks

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Montessori	Children learn naturally through purposeful, self-directed activity.	Specialized hands-on materials, independence, and structured environments.	Encourages independence and responsibility; hands-on, sensory-rich learning; well-established philosophy; good for self-motivated learners.	Hard to replicate at home without costly materials; requires parent training; less emphasis on collaborative/creative play compared to Waldorf.	• Montessori for Everyone • Montessori Compass • NAMC (North American Montessori Center) homeschool materials • Montessori Made Easy
Waldorf	Education should nurture head, heart, and hands in harmony.	Arts, storytelling, crafts, and nature woven into a developmental sequence.	Whole-child approach (head, heart, hands); emphasizes imagination, storytelling, arts, and crafts; nurturing and rhythmic structure.	Delays formal academics (reading, writing); may not align with college-prep goals unless adjusted; materials can be specialized and costly.	• Oak Meadow • Lavender's Blue Homeschool • Christopherus Homeschool Resources • Earth-schooling
Multiple Intelligences	Intelligence is varied, and each child learns best through different strengths.	Lessons tailored to linguistic, logical, musical, kinesthetic, or other intelligences.	Values each child's strengths; highly adaptable; builds confidence; encourages varied teaching methods.	Hard to cover all intelligences equally; can lead to spreading too thin; not a full curriculum on its own (usually combined with others).	• MI-based lesson plans from sites like Teacher Created Resources • Moving Beyond the Page (multi-sensory, + a bit Unit Studies & Literature-based) • Parents often adapt mainstream resources (hands-on kits, music programs, nature journals) to suit each intelligence
Unschooling / Relaxed / Eclectic	Children learn best by pursuing their interests and natural curiosity.	Freedom in schedule, using resources as needed, learning through daily life.	Freedom to follow the child's passions; low stress; flexible for different family needs; fosters independence and self-motivation.	Risk of educational gaps if interests are too narrow; may lack accountability or structure; can feel overwhelming for parents without a clear plan.	• Moving Beyond the Page (eclectic/literature-based) • Time4Learning (online, flexible) • Khan Academy (free, customizable) • Parent-created "mix and match" resources

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