



# Coordinating a Successful Science Fair

- Select your judges at least eight weeks in advance of the science fair. Provide them with copies of the judging form so they can be prepared ahead of time.
- Invite students to send letters of invitation to the judges. Thank you letters after the fair would also be appropriate.
- Judges can be selected from different parts of the community (college professors, high school teachers, business people, shopkeepers, parents, etc.) Including people from different walks of life will help ensure extended community involvement.
- Set up the science fair (gymnasium, auditorium, and classroom) approximately 48 hours in advance of the actual fair. Take a group of students through the exhibits to “test” for traffic patterns, loose cords, safety problems, etc.
- Organize the room according to science topics — all the life science projects in one area, all the physical science projects in another, earth science in another, and space science in a fourth area.
- Projects requiring electric sources should be placed on tables against walls.
- Make arrangements to have student monitors in attendance during any viewing times. Provide them with badges or appropriate ribbons.
- Invite a reporter and photographer from the local newspaper to “cover” the event.
- Schedule one or more evening sessions for parents and community members to view the exhibits and displays.
- Take photographs or a videotape of the entire science fair. Use it in your preparations for next year’s science fair — providing students with ideas on exhibits and displays. Students may also want to use this photographic record to create a special notebook or diary for inclusion in the school library.
- Be sure to “advertise” the science fair throughout the school and throughout the community.
- Invite teachers and other school personnel to contribute projects to the science fair, too. This modeling can be a stimulus for increased student participation.
- Schedule a special post-fair ceremony that recognizes every entrant.
- Keep an ongoing journal of all the preparations done prior to the fair. Record both positive and negative events. This diary can be extremely helpful in planning future events.

To find even more helpful guides and resources, visit:

[www.sciencebuddies.org](http://www.sciencebuddies.org)

<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/sciencefaircentral>



# Keeping your project on schedule

A science fair project can be the biggest, most complex assignment a student does all year — and it can seem overwhelming. To keep students on track, break the process down into manageable steps, each with its own deadline.

## Timing: 6 months prior

- Discussion: project and topic selection
- Project turned in
- Project topic has already been approved or student has met with teacher
- Go over bibliography requirements. Note card & bibliography card presentation by teacher in class
- Due: Four credible resources for research; minimum of 25 note cards

## Timing: 5 months prior

- Discussion: Outlining before we write, work time
- Peer review of presentation outlines
- Review of how to write a step-by-step procedure
- Determine time range for writing research paper
- Oral presentation of proposed procedure for peer evaluation
- Review of variables and hypothesis
- Due: Final outline; rough draft of procedure; minimum of 25 new note cards

## Timing: 4 months prior

- Peer review of variables
- Work on developing hypothesis
- Peer review of procedure
- Work on rough draft of research portion of paper
- Peer review of research portion of paper
- Experiment should be started once procedure, variables, and hypothesis have been approved  
Plant experiments must be started immediately
- Due: Documentation of variables, hypothesis and procedure; revised research paper with parent signature

## Timing: 3 months prior

- Discussion: How to write an abstract; how to set up presentation boards
- In class review of data collection/tables & graphs
- Take photos of your experiment in progress to be used on your board
- Work on final versions of title page, table of contents, research question, hypothesis, purpose, materials, sample size, procedure, variables & bibliography
- Due: All tables & graphs; bibliography

## Timing: 2 months prior

- Discussion: How to do a science fair presentation
- Formal presentation of science projects begin
- Due: Final copies of full report

## Timing: 2 months prior

- Middle School Science Fair date announced
- Local Science Fair (must qualify through local judging process)
- State Science Fair (must qualify through local science fair)