

# Adulting: Teaching Your Children How to Survive Life

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word adulting, which means “to do the things that adults regularly have to do” started appearing on Twitter in 2008, but it is now a term most of us are familiar with. Did you know that universities now offer classes on adulting? That means there are enough freshmen coming in that don’t know how to do laundry and basic money management that they need to teach it in college. Yikes!

Adulting is hard and surviving life is tough, but as parents we need to start teaching our children in the teen years (and even younger) how to make it in the real world. By the time they are ready to be on their own, they can have the basic skills needed to maintain a household and function as an adult.



Here are nine basic life skills everyone should know:

## 1. Laundry

The earlier they learn this, the better! Make this a chore from the time they are old enough and tall enough to reach into the washing machine. Not only will it make them more self-sufficient at home, it will also keep you from having those bags of laundry follow them home on breaks from college.

## 2. How to Make an Appointment

It seems like a simple task, but many parents still have to make appointments for their teens and even their adult children. Instead, teach them responsibility and get them ready to make (and keep track of) appointments now and in the future.

## 3. How to Ask For What They Want

This is not just handy when visiting a store, but when they are out of school and are asking for a raise or expressing themselves in their relationships. This is something you can start from a young age by allowing your kids to order their own food, and encouraging them to talk to teachers and coaches and friends’ parents with-

out your help whenever possible. They will learn a whole bunch of life lessons by asking for things from adults and communicating with people they don’t know well.

## 4. Basic First Aid and CPR

Everyone should know how to take care of a cut, or know when a cold needs to be checked out by a doctor. Teens should also know things like the Heimlich maneuver and CPR. These skills could save a friend or stranger’s life and they aren’t difficult to teach.

## 5. How to Write a Check and Balance a Checkbook

Basic money management skills are important. Chances are they will have a checkbook or debit card so they should know how to keep track of their money to avoid overdraft fees and be responsible stewards of their money. Now is the time to help kids learn about managing their money instead of you becoming their endless ATM machine.

## 6. How to Cook

Learning how to cook for yourself is an important skill. Not only will it save money (eating out is expensive!), it will also be a great way to teach them how to prepare food that is healthy. Kids of all ages can learn to prepare a meal for the family.

## 7. How to Communicate Professionally

Your young adults should know how to email and write correspondence (yes, email not text message) in a professional capacity. This is a skill they will need when communicating with professors in college, with other adults, and in a work environment.

## 8. What to Do in an Emergency

Fender benders, illnesses and other minor (and sometimes major) emergencies occur. Does your kid know what to do in those situations? Talk to them about what to do in an accident, if they are broken down on the side of the road, if they get pulled over by a police officer, or if they come across a breakdown or accident.

## 9. How to Be a Good Roommate

If you weren’t related to your child, would you want to live with them? Does your child know how to share a couch and a TV? Keep common areas clean? Move someone else’s laundry to the dryer rather than dump it on the floor? Clean a bathroom? If you don’t teach your kids to be decent roommates, they will lose out on housing opportunities and likely lose friendships - or even worse, become your permanent roommate!

By taking the time to teach your kids these skills now, you will ensure they are prepared for the future!

Source: Deborah Gilboa, M.D.