



Should kids attend school year-round?

Some people say that one long summer break does more harm than good.

What you need to know

- Most states require about 180 days of school instruction each year, but schools get to choose when vacations start and end. Typically, US students break for winter holidays and get 10 to 12 weeks off in the summer.
- In the early 1900s, a few schools started replacing summer vacations with year-round instruction.
- By 2011, about 3,700 public schools had year-round class schedules.
- Today, about 2% of schools in the US are year-round.



LOTS OF LEARNING

In the US in 2025, there were 5.7 million teachers and 54.1 million students in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Most schools in the US start in August or September and end in May or June. But in some schools—and in other countries, like Japan, Australia, and Nigeria—classes take place throughout the year. Instead of one long vacation in the summer, there are smaller breaks during each term. Typical year-round schedules might include a 15-day break after every 45 school days, a 20-day break every 60 days, or a 30-day break every 90 days. Some education experts say students learn, remember, and achieve more that way. Others think kids are better off having their summers free. What do you think? Should kids attend school year-round?

Yes—it's a better balance

Over the summer, students tend to forget many things they learned during the school year. One study found that year-round students keep more of their knowledge from grade to grade, which adds up over the course of a child's education. And kids still get to take vacations—lots of them. Instead of working through a semester without much rest, students and teachers get time off more often, which is actually more refreshing. Year-round school is also better for working parents, who don't need to figure out what their kids will do during their long summer vacation and pay for expensive programs. That's a hardship for many families.

No—it's not worth it

Nobody knows for sure whether year-round instruction is better for learning, and the downsides are significant. Attending school all year means kids can't go to summer camps or play summer sports, and teens can't get summer jobs. Those activities are helpful for young people's development. Meanwhile, schools would have to use more electricity to keep their lights on and provide air-conditioning in hotter months, which is expensive for districts. Besides, summer vacation is an important tradition kids, families, and teachers look forward to. It shouldn't be taken away.

YES

Three reasons kids should attend school year-round

- 1 Students forget class material over long summer breaks. Studying all year helps kids hold on to what they've learned.
- 2 Having shorter breaks more often is actually more refreshing.
- 3 Year-round school would be less of a hardship for parents who otherwise have to pay for summer programs.

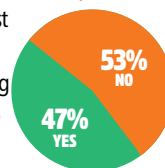
NO

Three reasons kids should not attend school year-round

- 1 Summer activities, such as camps and jobs, are important to many kids. Year-round school would interfere with that.
- 2 Schools would have to use more electricity to keep their buildings operating all year.
- 3 Summer vacation is a special tradition that shouldn't be taken away.

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if kids should have to make their bed every day. It was a fairly close vote, with just under half of you preferring a tidy start to the day.



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote **YES** if you think kids should attend school year-round or **NO** if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.