Lesson Hollow: a homeschool planner with no calendar and no subscription

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Lesson Hollow turns a curriculum into a daily task list for each child, with AI help and pay-as-you-go pricing. What it does, what it costs and who it suits.

Lesson Hollow is an online homeschool planner that swaps the calendar for a daily task list, and it has two things we rarely see in this category: no subscription, and open-source code anyone can read. Each child's first curriculum enrollment is free, and after that enrollments cost $0.50 each, sold as $10 for 20. If you have ever bumped a whole school year forward because of one field trip, this is the first planner we would look at, on paper. It is now number 4 on our list of homeschool planners.

What we know, and how we know it

Sally Cole, who founded Lesson Hollow, wrote to us on 2 November 2026 and suggested it for that list. We read the pricing page, the privacy policy, the terms, the founder's post on calendars and the public code that day.

We have not used the app with a family yet, so this is a note about what its pages and code show, not a test of how it feels on a Tuesday morning. Nobody paid for this post or for the place on our list, and nothing here is an affiliate link. We have asked Lesson Hollow to mention Peabody, and this post and the listing stay up whatever the answer.

The idea: a path, not a date

Most homeschool planners pin each lesson to a day. When life happens, you move the lessons. Lesson Hollow's founder used to plan that way, and the post linked above tells the story: a farm trip, water slides, a sick child, and a year that kept sliding out past its end.

The answer Lesson Hollow offers is to keep the order of the work and drop the dates. You set a curriculum, a start date and a pace. Miss some days, and the lessons left are spread over the days you still have. The founder's view is that most catch-up weeks need two or three more lessons a day, not a rebuilt schedule. Real appointments, such as a co-op class or the dentist, stay on your ordinary calendar.

That is a real point of view, and it won't suit everyone. Homeschool Planet, the planner the founder left, is still number 1 on our list, because it keeps grades, attendance and transcripts in one place and many families need exactly that. The two are answers to different problems.

What it does

- Curriculums from anywhere. Build one by hand or import a spreadsheet. A task can be something to read, watch, listen to or do, with an optional link. A boxed math program and a bird-watching project can sit side by side.
- A daily list for each child. Each child gets their own list, with their own login if you want it, and a timer to start, pause and resume. Children can see what's next. Parents can see what got done.
- One grown-up, many children. One parent account follows up to 20, which also covers a small microschool group.
- Ready-made paths. The Discover page has curriculums to adapt, such as 52 library visits in a year and a long reading path for ages 3 to 7. Some are for adults, so read one before you import it.

The AI help

Lesson Hollow has a help page with a prompt you paste into a chatbot such as ChatGPT, which then writes a curriculum file to import. For anyone comfortable with more, it also speaks the Model Context Protocol (MCP), so a connected AI assistant can create curriculums, enroll children and report on progress.

This saves real typing, and a chatbot is good at turning "a year of ancient history with library books" into a neat list. Two habits make it safer. Check what it writes, since chatbots can invent books and links that don't exist. Keep your child out of the prompt: a grade and an interest are enough, with no full name or school, and remember that a connected assistant shares what it reads with the company behind it. Our guide to ChatGPT and kids goes further.

What it costs

There is no subscription and no auto-renewal, and sign-up needs no card. The smallest purchase is $10, which buys 20 enrollments. Credits don't expire and aren't refundable. You spend one only when you enroll a child in a new curriculum, so the bill follows how many paths your children start:

- One child, six subjects: one free, five paid, so $2.50 of credits from a $10 top-up.
- Three children, six subjects each: fifteen paid, so $7.50 of credits from one $10 top-up.
- Three children, twenty short curriculums each: fifty-seven paid, so three top-ups, $30.

The founder told us the average student spends under $10 a year. We can't check that, but the sums above fit it.

- Planner: Lesson Hollow · Cost, from the maker's page: First enrollment per child free, then $10 for 20 · Built around: A paced list of tasks · Grades, attendance, transcripts: None that we found

- Planner: Homeschool Manager · Cost, from the maker's page: $49 a year · Built around: A weekly schedule · Grades, attendance, transcripts: Yes
- Planner: Homeschool Tracker · Cost, from the maker's page: $65 a year · Built around: Reusable lesson plans on a schedule · Grades, attendance, transcripts: Yes
- Planner: Homeschool Planet · Cost, from the maker's page: $84.95 a year · Built around: A family calendar · Grades, attendance, transcripts: Yes

Prices for the other three were read on 27 October 2026.

Who it suits, and who it doesn't

It looks like a good fit if your state asks for little paperwork, you mix bought programs with projects of your own, you dislike subscriptions, or you enjoy getting an AI to do the first draft. People who care about owning their tools will like that the code is under the MIT license and can be run on your own server.

Look elsewhere if you must show grades, attendance or a transcript. We found none of those in its pages or code, so you would keep them somewhere else, and our list has planners that do. The same goes if you want each lesson on a dated calendar. It is also new, with its first posts in spring 2026, so it has no long record yet. The code we read exports a curriculum as a spreadsheet, and we did not find an export for a child's progress log, so ask before you rely on one.

What it keeps about your child

Children's accounts are made by the parent and take a username, a name and a password, with no email address. The policy says Lesson Hollow doesn't sell personal information, shares data with outside services only as needed to run the site, and removes children's accounts and data when a parent deletes the account. An optional rewards feature makes AI songs and images through outside services. We have tested none of this. A nickname in the name box is a simple habit that costs nothing.

Questions parents ask

Is Lesson Hollow free?

Partly. Sign-up is free with no card, and each child's first curriculum enrollment is free. After that, enrollments are $0.50 each, sold as $10 for 20, as of 2 November 2026.

Does Lesson Hollow keep grades or attendance?

We didn't find them in its pages or its public code as of 2 November 2026. It tracks tasks, time and progress by subject. If your state asks for grades, attendance or transcripts, use a planner that keeps them or keep them separately.

Does Lesson Hollow work with ChatGPT?

Yes, in two ways. A prompt on its help pages has a chatbot write a curriculum file to import, and AI assistants can connect to it directly through MCP. Check what the AI writes, and leave your child's full name out of it.

Is Lesson Hollow open source?

Yes. The code is on GitHub under the MIT license, so you can read it or run your own copy. Most families will simply use the website.

Does Peabody do this?

Not this way. Peabody's free homeschool planner is a week grid and loop list saved in your browser, with no AI and no accounts. It is free through 2026. Our story library has stories at each child's level, and a line like "read one Peabody story" fits nicely on a Lesson Hollow list.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/lesson-hollow-homeschool-planner-without-a-calendar