

## SECTION 1 • THE STRIP, THE CHAIN AND THE COLOR PIECES

12 blank cut-apart links (11 to write a number on, one Winter Break end link): cut on the dashed lines, write a number on each starting from the real countdown total, link them together, and tear one off every school day. This is the color set; the same 12 links in the ink-saver set are on page 12.

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|                |                |                |                                                                                                             |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WRITE A NUMBER | WRITE A NUMBER | WRITE A NUMBER | WRITE A NUMBER                                                                                              |
| WRITE A NUMBER | WRITE A NUMBER | WRITE A NUMBER | WRITE A NUMBER                                                                                              |
| WRITE A NUMBER | WRITE A NUMBER | WRITE A NUMBER | <br><b>Winter Break!</b> |

Cut each link apart, loop it into a ring, and tape or staple the next link through it, so the chain reads in order from the highest number down to the Winter Break link at the end. Need more than 11 links? The extra blank sheet (page 10) prints 12 more.

Tear off the lowest-numbered link at the end of each school day, in order, so the chain always shows how many days are left just by its own length. The Winter Break link is the last one standing.

Winter Break Countdown Strip and Paper Chain

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◆ BRIGHT PATH SPED

## THE CHAIN AND THE COLOR PIECES

### Ways to Count Down (Color)

...a break, side by side. This is the color set; the same page in the ink-saver set is on page



**How it works:** blank paper links you write on, assemble, and tear apart one per day.

**Good for:** a student who does better pulling something apart than reading a chart.

its number in the blank (page 7), color or  
box, every school day.

From the total, link them together, tear day.

A hands-on, physical version a student builds and takes apart themselves.

copies of the strip on one sheet (page

A small group table, or a second room.

## BAG

PAGE

page

page



age

ige :

10

ge 1

WHY NOTHING ON THIS PAGE HAS A DATE ON IT

next break changes every year and every school calendar — so this file never prints one. The blank in the panel above, and every link on the chain pages, is filled in by your own team, for whichever year and whichever year it is. The same printed page works whether this is the first time your room has used it or the fifth year running.

room. A class that likes a shared wall display usually starts with the  
 their hands on something usually starts with the chain. Many rooms  
 picking just one.

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♦ BRIGHT PATH SPED

♦ BRIGHT PATH SPED

# What Is Inside, and Where

## Before you begin

PAGE 4



Start Here —  
Three Steps  
START HERE

4

## 01 The Strip, the Chain and the Color Pieces

PAGES 6–10



Two Ways to  
Count Down  
(Color)  
REFERENCE

6



Countdown Strip  
BOARD

7



Two Desk-Size  
Countdown Strips  
BOARD

8



Countdown Chain  
Links (Color)  
CARDS

9



Extra Blank Chain  
Links  
CARDS

10

## 02 The Ink-Saver Set

PAGES 12–13



Countdown Chain  
Links (Ink-Saver)  
CARDS

12



Two Ways to  
Count Down (Ink-  
Saver)  
REFERENCE

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## 03 Using It, Data and Home

PAGES 15–22



How to Use the  
Strip and the  
Chain  
REFERENCE

15



Countdown Log  
LOG

16



Weekly Roll-Up  
TRACKER

17



Filled Example  
EXAMPLE

18



Family Page  
NOTES

19



Hand-Off to  
Another Adult or  
Room  
NOTES

20



Phrase Bank  
REFERENCE

21



Storage and  
Binder Labels  
REFERENCE

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### HOW THE TAGS ON EACH PAGE WORK

Every page carries a small tag in its top corner, the same word used above: **Board** a form to fill out, **Cards** a sheet of cut-apart pieces, **Log** the data sheet, **Tracker** the weekly roll-up, **Example** the filled-in sample, **Notes** a page meant to be sent out or handed off, and **Reference** everything else you read rather than fill in.

☆ START HERE

Start Here — Three Steps



1

Print and choose a method

Print the countdown strip (page 7) for a wall or desk display, or the countdown chain (page 9) for a hands-on version your student builds and tears apart — or both. Page 6 compares them.

Need a smaller copy, or more links than one sheet holds? Pages 8 and 10 have you covered.



2

Count the days, mark one each day

Count how many school days are left until the break your team is counting down to, and write that number on the strip's blank or the first chain link.

Every school day: update the strip's number and color or check one box, or tear one link off the chain (page 15 has the rest).



3

Log it, roll it up, send it home

One row on the log (page 16) for each school day the countdown is marked.

Total the week on the roll-up (page 17). Send the family page (page 19) home when the countdown is new; the hand-off page (page 20) goes with it to any other adult.

WHAT THIS FILE IS

A fillable PDF: a Countdown Strip board with a blank fill-in number and a row of blank boxes, two desk-size strips, 12 blank cut-apart chain links plus a Winter Break end link, a second sheet of 12 spares, both in color and ink-saver sets, a log, a roll-up, a family page, a hand-off page, a phrase bank, and labels. It never prints a date or a starting countdown number, so the same file works for any school year. It works offline with no account or subscription and prints the same on every machine.

WHAT THIS FILE IS NOT

It is not an editable online slideshow or word-processor document, and it is not a behavior plan or a program. It names no clinical finding, supplies no prompt hierarchy, fading schedule or mastery rule, and promises no outcome. How many days are in your countdown, and which break it counts down to, is your own call, never this file's.

WHICH PAGE, WHEN

| YOUR SITUATION                                 | GO TO                                      |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| A whole class, counting down together          | Countdown strip, page 7                    |
| A student who does better with a hands-on tool | Countdown chain, page 9                    |
| A small group table, or a second room          | Desk-size strips, page 8                   |
| A photocopier, or a copy that goes home        | Ink-saver set, page 12                     |
| The IEP meeting or a family conference         | Roll-up summary, page 17; example, page 18 |

IF SOMETHING DOES NOT WORK, AND WHERE THIS FILE LIVES

**A field will not hold my typing.** Open in Adobe Acrobat Reader or Preview, not a browser tab. **We need a longer countdown than the strip or chain prints.** Use the extra blank links (page 10) or a second strip sheet; the **Ask a Question** tab reaches me for a free fix. **Confidentiality:** a filled-in log or example is a student record — initials only leaving your hands, first name only on the family page.

📖 REFERENCE

# Two Ways to Count Down (Color)

Two ways to count down to a break, side by side. This is the color set; the same page in the ink-saver set is on page 13.

THE STRIP



**How it works:** a blank number you update by hand, next to a row of blank boxes.

**Good for:** a whole class, or a student who likes looking at a chart.

THE CHAIN



**How it works:** blank paper links you write on, assemble, and tear apart one per day.

**Good for:** a student who does better pulling something apart than reading a chart.

| COMPARING THE TWO METHODS |                                                                                                                             |                                                                           |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| METHOD                    | HOW IT WORKS                                                                                                                | GOOD FOR                                                                  |
| The Strip                 | Write today's number in the blank (page 7), color or check one box, every school day.                                       | A visual, at-a-glance display for a desk, a wall, or a folder.            |
| The Chain                 | Cut out the links (page 9), write a number on each one starting from the total, link them together, tear one off every day. | A hands-on, physical version a student builds and takes apart themselves. |
| Desk-Size Strips          | Two half-size copies of the strip on one sheet (page 8).                                                                    | A small group table, or a second room.                                    |

WHERE EVERYTHING LIVES IN THIS FILE

| PIECE                   | PAGE    |
|-------------------------|---------|
| Countdown Strip         | page 7  |
| Two desk-size strips    | page 8  |
| Chain links (color)     | page 9  |
| Chain links (ink-saver) | page 12 |
| Extra blank links       | page 10 |

WHY NOTHING ON THIS PAGE HAS A DATE ON IT

How many school days fall between today and the next break changes every year and every school calendar — so this file never prints one. The blank in the panel above, and every link on the chain pages, is filled in by your own team, for whichever break and whichever year it is. The same printed page works whether this is the first time your room has used it or the fifth year running.

**WHICH METHOD TO START WITH**

Neither method is the right one for every room. A class that likes a shared wall display usually starts with the strip; a student who learns better with their hands on something usually starts with the chain. Many rooms run both at once — nothing here requires picking just one.

BOARD

# Countdown Strip

A blank number to update by hand, and a row of blank boxes to mark one school day at a time.

STUDENT OR CLASS

OUR COUNTDOWN STARTED AT

.....

## HOW MANY SCHOOL DAYS ARE LEFT?



school days until Winter  
Break

WRITE THE NUMBER IN BY HAND, AND CHANGE IT EVERY SCHOOL DAY — NOTHING HERE IS PRE-PRINTED

### THE COUNTDOWN TRACK

July

17

BREAK!

### A FEW DAYS AT A TIME

| DAY | COUNTDOWN NUMBER | MARKED? |
|-----|------------------|---------|
|     |                  |         |
|     |                  |         |
|     |                  |         |
|     |                  |         |
|     |                  |         |
|     |                  |         |
|     |                  |         |

#### HOW THE STRIP IS USED

Count how many school days are left until the break your team is counting down to, write that number in the blank, and color, check, or put a token on one box every school day moving toward the flag. Use as many of the 20 boxes as the real countdown needs, and leave the rest blank.

#### MOVING A DAY TO THE LOG

Use the quick table below to track a few days at a time, then copy each one onto a row of the full log (page 16) at the end of the week. The strip itself is never the record; the log is.

#### WHY THE BOXES START BLANK

No box is numbered ahead of time, because the real count is your team's own calendar, not a fixed number this file could print. The first box is simply the next school day, whichever day that is.

## CARDS

## Countdown Chain Links (Color)

12 blank cut-apart links (11 to write a number on, one Winter Break end link): cut on the dashed lines, write a number on each starting from the real countdown total, link them together, and tear one off every school day. This is the color set; the same 12 links in the ink-saver set are on page 12.

|                         |                         |                         |                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER | .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER | .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER | .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER                                                                                       |
| .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER | .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER | .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER | .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER                                                                                       |
| .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER | .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER | .....<br>WRITE A NUMBER | <br><b>Winter Break!</b> |

## ASSEMBLING THE CHAIN

Cut each link apart, loop it into a ring, and tape or staple the next link through it, so the chain reads in order from the highest number down to the Winter Break link at the end. Need more than 11 links? The extra blank sheet (page 10) prints 12 more.

## TEARING ONE OFF

Tear off the lowest-numbered link at the end of each school day, in order, so the chain always shows how many days are left just by its own length. The Winter Break link is the last one standing.

LOG

Countdown Log

One row every school day the countdown is marked. It counts one thing: the number reached that day.

| STUDENT OR CLASS | COUNTING DOWN TO | OUR COUNTDOWN STARTED AT |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
|                  |                  |                          |

COUNTDOWN NUMBER = THE NUMBER MARKED OR TORN OFF THAT DAY · MARKED INDEPENDENTLY = DID THE STUDENT MARK OR TEAR THE LINK WITHOUT A REMINDER

| DAY OF OUR COUNTDOWN | COUNTDOWN NUMBER | MARKED INDEPENDENTLY? | NOTES |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------|
|                      |                  |                       |       |
|                      |                  |                       |       |
|                      |                  |                       |       |
|                      |                  |                       |       |
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|                      |                  |                       |       |
|                      |                  |                       |       |

WHAT ONE ROW COUNTS

One row is one school day the countdown was marked: which day of the countdown it was, the number reached, whether it was done independently, and anything you noticed.

TOTALING THE WEEK

Count how many days were marked, and how many of those were independent, across the week. The roll-up (page 17) rolls that up to a weekly count.

IF A DAY WAS SKIPPED

Write it down as skipped on the Notes column rather than leaving the row blank — a skipped day is still something that happened.

 TRACKER

Weekly Roll-Up

One row per week. Count how many days were marked, and how many were independent.

| STUDENT OR CLASS | COUNTING DOWN TO | NOTES |
|------------------|------------------|-------|
|------------------|------------------|-------|

| #  | WEEK | DAYS MARKED | DAYS MARKED INDEPENDENTLY | NOTES |
|----|------|-------------|---------------------------|-------|
| 1  |      |             |                           |       |
| 2  |      |             |                           |       |
| 3  |      |             |                           |       |
| 4  |      |             |                           |       |
| 5  |      |             |                           |       |
| 6  |      |             |                           |       |
| 7  |      |             |                           |       |
| 8  |      |             |                           |       |
| 9  |      |             |                           |       |
| 10 |      |             |                           |       |
| 11 |      |             |                           |       |
| 12 |      |             |                           |       |

COUNTING DAYS MARKED

Add up how many days were marked on the log (page 16) for the week, and how many of those were independent.

READING THE NUMBERS

A rising share of independent marks across the weeks often means the student needs fewer reminders to update the strip or tear the chain. What that share should be is your team's call, not this file's.

USING THIS FOR MORE THAN ONE BREAK

Nothing on this page is tied to one specific break — use a fresh set of rows the next time your team starts a new countdown, for any break, any year.

 **EXAMPLE**

**Filled Example**

 **SAMPLE · INVENTED STUDENT**

Every number in the read-out is re-counted straight from the tables above.

Nina is invented, and so is every mark on this page, including the 12-day countdown itself. One week on the log, then three weeks on the roll-up, to show how the pages read once real marks are on them.

The log, one week (page 16)

| DAY OF OUR COUNTDOWN | COUNTDOWN NUMBER | MARKED INDEPENDENTLY? | NOTES                        |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Day 1                | 12               | Yes                   | –                            |
| Day 2                | 11               | With a reminder       | Needed a reminder            |
| Day 3                | 10               | Yes                   | –                            |
| Day 4                | 9                | With a reminder       | Marked at the end of the day |
| Day 5                | 8                | Yes                   | –                            |

The roll-up, three weeks (page 17)

| # | WEEK   | DAYS MARKED | DAYS MARKED INDEPENDENTLY | NOTES |
|---|--------|-------------|---------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Week 1 | 5           | 3                         | –     |
| 2 | Week 2 | 5           | 4                         | –     |
| 3 | Week 3 | 2           | 2                         | –     |

READING THE NUMBERS

This week: 3 of 5 days were marked independently (60%). By Week 3, the last two days before the break, both days were marked independently (100%).

A LINE THIS SHEET COULD WRITE

“Nina marked the countdown independently on 100% of days the week of Week 3, up from 60% the week of Week 1.”

WHERE THE THREE WEEKS COME FROM

Week 1 (5 days) plus Week 2 (5 days) plus Week 3 (2 days) adds up to all 12 days of Nina’s invented countdown — the roll-up always accounts for every day the strip or chain counted down.

WHAT THIS EXAMPLE IS NOT

One invented class’s 12-day countdown. It sets no typical length for any real break, predicts nothing about a real student, and does not say how many days a countdown should be — that number is your team’s calendar, not this file’s.

WHICH METHOD THIS INVENTED CLASS USED

Nina’s class used the Countdown Strip (page 7) for the wall display and the Countdown Chain (page 9) at a small-group table — both tracking the same 12-day countdown, logged on the one log above.

WHAT A CASE MANAGER MIGHT BRING TO A MEETING

The roll-up table above, re-stated once: independent marking moved from 60% to 80% to 100% across the three weeks of this invented countdown.