

The Weekly Family Retro

Steal your sprint retro and run it on your household

Any decent team runs a retro after every sprint: what went well, what didn't, what we'll change. Nobody expects it to fix everything, they just expect it to stop the same problem from repeating for the fourth week running. Families almost never do this, which is why the same fight about the school run or the same Sunday-night scramble keeps happening on a loop nobody named out loud. A 20-minute retro breaks the loop, because you can't fix a pattern you've never actually said out loud.

What you need: everyone old enough to talk, 20 minutes, ideally Sunday evening while the week is still fresh.

The steps

1. **Set the tone before you start.** (1 minute) Say it out loud: "This isn't about blame, it's about what we change next week." Kids especially need this framing.
2. **What went well?** (5 minutes) Everyone names one thing. Genuinely celebrate it, don't rush past it to get to the problems.
3. **What didn't go well?** (7 minutes) One thing per person, described as a situation, not a person. "Mornings were rushed" not "you were late again."
4. **Pick ONE thing to change next week.** (5 minutes) Not five things. One. Retros die when the action list is too long to actually do.
5. **Write it somewhere visible.** (2 minutes) Fridge, shared calendar, family group chat. If it's not visible, it's not real.

This week's retro

What went well

What didn't go well

The one thing we're changing next week

Who's checking on it

When it goes sideways

It turns into a blame session. Stop it immediately, restate the rule (“situations, not people”) and move on. One derailed retro doesn’t mean the practice is broken, it means this week’s retro needs a redo.

Little kids just say “everything was good” every time. Give them a scale instead: thumbs up, sideways, or down for their week, then ask one follow-up question about the sideways or down day.

You pick a change and nobody follows through. That’s what “who’s checking on it” is for. Assign it to one person, even if that person is you. Vague ownership is why good intentions die.

The point was never a perfect week. It was catching the same problem before it happened a fifth time.