

High School College Prep

Summary

Freshman: all about college: http://www.offtocollege.com/first_time/freshman.html

1. Keeping Up the Grades
2. Review College Exams

Sophomore: thinking college: http://www.offtocollege.com/first_time/sophomore.html

1. Mapping Your Road
 - Meet with Your Guidance Department
 - Develop Strong Academic Skills
 - Become familiar with the college entrance exams
 - Develop those All-Important Extracurricular Skills
 - Become familiar with the College Planning Process
 - Start Saving Your Money

2. Review College Exams
 - Advance Placement Exams
 - College Entrance Exams

3. Get To Know Yourself

View some career and personal self-assessment tests to determine your aptitude and character for career opportunities. The last thing you want is to start college in a career that you will not like.

By understanding your personality type, it will help determine what career opportunity will bring you the most satisfaction.

Junior: plan college: http://www.offtocollege.com/first_time/junior.html

1. Starting on the Road to College

"Is college, junior college or trade school right for me?"

2. Meet With Your Guidance Counselor
3. Getting Ready for College Exams
 - Advance Placement Exams
 - College Entrance Exams: PSAT, SAT, ACT
4. Research Job Trends
5. Get To Know Yourself
6. Explore a College Major
 - What would you like to do?
 - Evaluate Your Career Interests:
Understand your interests and career relationship

Senior: off to college: http://www.offtocollege.com/first_time/index.html

Freshman: *All about college*

http://www.offtocollege.com/first_time/freshman.html

1. Keeping Up the Grades

College seems so far away for the starting HS freshman. But note that every grade counts. So do you best in high school. Colleges look at every grade.

- **Keep Your Grades Up:** Your grades during your freshman to senior years will determine whether you qualify for some schools or not. Academic scores do count. It is important to develop good study and planning skills.
- **Take the Right Courses:** Many colleges require completion of academic courses in math, science, English, etc. Now is the time to find out what is required so that you can plan the course structure for your sophomore through senior years.
- **Get acquainted with your HS guidance counselor:** They can help you design an academic plan through high school. Schedule a meeting with them to discuss your academic plans.
- **Prepare for the Entrance Exam:** Most colleges require entrance exams, usually referred to as that SAT and/or ACT. You should begin thinking about those exams and prepare yourself for taking them during your Junior and Senior years.
- **Plan Your Finances:** Colleges don't come cheap, so what is your financial plan? Preparing yourself now by saving and working summer jobs can help defray some of the costs.

2. Review College Exams

Discuss with your guidance counselor about the following college exams. You will take them in your sophomore and Junior years:

- **Advance Placement Exams:** You should consider taking Advanced Placement Exams or CLEP tests in your Junior and senior years. This allows you to test out of some college courses that can save you time and money. The exams are administered each year in the spring with some preparation required prior to the exam. Check with your school for exam administration, enrollment and information.

Information about the advanced placement program:

The College Board administers the AP exams. This site has all the information you need including test programs and dates:

Visit collegeboard.com for more information:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/ap/students/>

View advanced placement prep/study guides: Includes prep planning books and other reading materials that can help you with these exams: view AP prep:

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- **College Entrance Exams:** Almost all colleges and some trade programs require a college entrance exam. These exams measure your ability to understand college-level materials. Most colleges require the SAT college exam; some require the ACT Assessment exam. A few college will require both exams. So check with your college which exam will be required.

You will take these exams in your junior year. So get some practice with the college entrance "preparation" exams. It will help on the day of the real exam.

Sophomore: *thinking college*

http://www.offtocollege.com/first_time/sophomore.html

4. Mapping Your Road

College still seems so far away even for a HS sophomore. But note that every grade counts. So do you best in high school. Colleges look at every grade.

Use your sophomore year to map out your college plans

- **Meet with Your Guidance Department:**

Design an academic blueprint for your sophomore, junior and senior years that ensure that you complete all of the required courses for college entrance.

- **Develop Strong Academic Skills:**

Continue developing those all-important vocabulary, math, and reading and problem-solving skills

- **Become familiar with the college entrance exams:**

Namely the SAT and/or ACT. Plan to take some practice tests using PSAT practice booklets (see below).

- **Develop those All-Important Extracurricular Skills:**

Colleges love students who not only have strong academic backgrounds but also students who show interest in outside activities.

- **Become familiar with the College Planning Process:**

Link through the college planning calendar for juniors and seniors to get an idea what you need to do. See college planning calendar

- **Start Saving Your Money:**

Every dime counts when you think about college costs and personal needs. Having a cash fund will make college a fun experience.

5. Review College Exams

Get with your guidance counselor (or teachers, if you don't have access to a guidance counselor) about the following college exams:

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6. Get To Know Yourself

View some career and personal self-assessment tests to determine your aptitude and character for career opportunities. The last thing you want is to start college in a career that you will not like.

By understanding your personality type, it will help determine what career opportunity will bring you the most satisfaction.

Junior: *Planning College*

http://www.offtocollege.com/first_time/junior.html

7. Starting on the Road to College

Take this time at the start of your junior year to research what you want to do after graduating from high school. You need to answer the question:

"Is college, junior college or trade school right for me?"

To answer this question, research job statistics, employment trends, and collegiate majors using the quick reference sources. Then evaluate your aptitude skills for different career selections.

8. Meet With Your Guidance Counselor

Meet with your guidance counselor (or school administrator or teacher) as soon as you can to discuss your post-high school plans.

Items to coordinate with your guidance counselor:

- The availability of and enrollment in Advanced Placement classes
- The schedules for the college entrance exams (includes SAT I and II, and ACT). Discuss with your counselor on the exam required to get into your college of choice
- The admission requirements to college including GPA requirements, credits, exam type and scores, etc. Try to fill in any gaps.
- Review your transcripts to make sure you are on track to graduate with the required credits and courses to get into your college(s) of choice
- Understand what career type you should pursue based on your scholastic and aptitude abilities
- Scheduling visits to college campuses and college admission offices after you select your college of choice
- Discuss preparatory classes or seminars on the various exams to help boost your scores
- Review all other information related to your college planning tasks.

9. Getting Ready for College Exams

Discuss with your guidance counselor about the following college exams:

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10. Research Job Trends

Research future career opportunities to help decide what you want out of college. Find out what jobs are going to be hot and what jobs are not. This will help decide whether to go to college, vocational school or jump right into your career.

11. Get To Know Yourself

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12. Explore a College Major

What would you like to do?

By understanding who you are and what you like, you can now explore career opportunities that will be most satisfying to you:

- **Evaluate Your Career Interests:**
Your first step in finding the right career is to evaluate what you would like to do and what career fits your overall aptitude www.careerkey.org
- **Understand your interests and career relationship:**
Online career assessments for a small fee: <http://www.cpp.com/>

Senior: *Off to College*

Sep-08

[Registration Deadline Oct SAT: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html)
[Late Registration Deadline Oct SAT: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html)
[Registration Deadline Nov SAT: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html)

- Continue to research financial aid options
- Make sure you have all applications required for financial aid and admission.
- Check admission and financial aid deadlines for the schools you plan to apply to.
- Register for the fall ACT and/or SAT test dates as needed.
- Get letters of recommendation and plan college visits.

Oct-08

[Oct SAT Test Day: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/testday.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/testday.html)
[Late Reg Deadline Nov SAT: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html)

- Meet with your guidance counselor to review your final list of colleges.
- File early decision applications if decision made
- Attend college fairs to schools you plan to apply
- Have official test scores sent by the testing agency to the colleges on short list.

Nov-08

[Nov SAT Test Day: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/testday.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/testday.html)
[Registration Deadline Dec SAT: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html)
[Late Registration Deadline Dec SAT: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html)

- Edit application essays with school guidance counselors and other writing professionals/counselors
- Complete your college applications (make copies before mailing).

December

- **Mail all applications.**
- **Schedule college admission interviews, if applicable.**

January

- File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon after January 1 as possible. *
- Request high school send grade reports/transcripts to the colleges applied
- Complete your tax forms as soon as possible. Contact the colleges to see if they require more forms.**
- Contact colleges to confirm they got all application materials (transcripts, recommendations, and financial aid forms)

February

- You will get your Student Aid Report (SAR) within 4 weeks of completing the FAFSA online (longer for the paper application).
- Review the SAR, make any necessary corrections, and return it to the FAFSA processor. (If you have not received your SAR and more than four weeks has passed, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center.)
- Complete Scholarship applications

March - April

- Review acceptances and compare financial aid packages

May

- By May 1, decide what school to attend and send acceptance of the school's offer along with any other necessary paperwork.
- Notify other prospective colleges that you have selected another school.
- If the 1st-choice college placed you on waiting list, let school know that you are still interested in attending the school.