

# Tips for High School

## Stay active in and out of school by:

Volunteering in your community • Playing sports  
Joining school clubs • Working part time



## Step it up!

**Improve your study skills** to prepare for more challenging high school courses.

**Maintain good grades** throughout high school. Don't wait until your junior or senior year to improve your grades.

**Research college majors and career options** at [planningyourdreams.org](http://planningyourdreams.org).

**Get organized** by using a planner/calendar so you can manage your time wisely!

**Make time for homework** so you can turn every assignment in on time.

**Grades matter!** Colleges use your GPA to make admissions decisions, and your grades from freshman through senior year all factor into this average.

## Ask for help!

**Work with your counselor** to choose challenging courses that support your college and career goals.

Don't hesitate to **ask for help** or find a tutor if you need help in a class.

**Involve your parents** in your academic and extracurricular pursuits.

**Get to know your teachers.**

### Don't follow the crowd

when choosing courses and extracurricular activities. Make choices based on your genuine interests.

**Follow your own dreams!**

## 8th Grade Year

- Research possible career and college choices
- Meet with your school counselors to decide which courses you should take
- Develop a college savings plan with your parents
- Attend freshman orientation
- Visit the school's website to get an idea of all the school's offerings and policies
- Take a tour of your school before the first day

## Sophomore Year

- Plan your finances for college and learn how to budget
- Research careers and colleges at [planningyourdreams.org](http://planningyourdreams.org) and [eCampusTours.com](http://eCampusTours.com)
- Practice for college entrance exams by taking the PSAT or ACT Aspire

## Senior Year

- Request official transcripts from your school to include in your college applications
- Submit admissions, scholarship, and financial aid applications
- Take or retake the ACT or SAT
- Participate in college open house and orientation programs
- Register for an FSA ID and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after October 1st

# College Planning Timeline

## Freshman Year

- Start high school with excellent grades and study hard to keep them up each year
- Commit to extracurricular activities in which you'll be involved for several years
- Start a resume to track all of your activities and accomplishments and update it every semester

## Junior Year

- Attend college fairs and financial aid workshops
- Take the ACT or SAT in the spring
- Visit college campuses to help narrow your list of choices
- Research and apply for scholarships to meet early deadlines