

Freshman Year

Students:

To Do:

Take challenging classes in core academic subjects. Most colleges require four years of English, at least three years of social studies (history, civics, geography, economics, etc.), three years of mathematics, and three years of science, and many require two years of a foreign language. Round out your course load with classes in computer science and the arts.

Establish good study habits and commit to a consistent study routine. Strive for a high GPA, especially in required college prep courses. Manage time effectively.

Get involved in school- or community-based activities that interest you or let you explore career interests. Consider working, volunteering, and/or participating in academic enrichment programs, summer workshops, and camps with specialty focuses such as music, arts, or science. Remember—it's quality (not quantity) that counts. Strive for leadership positions.

Ask your guidance counselor or teachers what Advanced Placement courses are available, whether you are eligible, and how to enroll in them. Update guidance counselor about your career and college major interests and reaffirm that high school course selections remain appropriate. Formulate your sophomore year college prep course schedule.

Start a list of your awards, honors, hobbies, paid and volunteer work, and extracurricular activities to begin to build your high school resume and keep this updated throughout your high school career. This can be a useful tool for prepping for college interviews and to give to teachers who will write your letters of recommendation. You can use the linked sample resume document to get started by clicking [here](#).

Seek summer employment for income and savings for college.

Parents:

To Do:

Talk to your child about college plans.

Keep an eye on your child's study habits and grades—stay involved.

Encourage your child to take advanced placement or other challenging classes.

Add to your child's college savings account regularly; and make sure you are fully aware of the provisions of the account.

Calculate an estimate of your child's financial aid and Expected Family Contribution using www.studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/estimate to know if eligible for need-based financial, and whether legal repositioning of income and assets to increase eligibility is feasible and warranted.