



High School Students

September to November To-Dos

There's no better time than the start of the school year to implement and cement good habits. We've incorporated our favorite suggestions into a checklist to help you start the year off on the right foot.

ALL STUDENTS

- Take time to organize your materials—determine how and where you will keep notes for each class.
- Create a homework routine—decide when and where you will do your work.
- If you're having trouble understanding subject matter, ask for help. Your parents, teachers, classmates, and tutor(s) can all help you get over the hump if you feel stuck.
- Set realistic goals for each of your classes and create a plan to reach those goals. Focus on process (which you can control) rather than outcome (which you can't). Be sure to revisit your goals and adjust them as necessary.

FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORES

- College applications may seem far away, but your grades in freshman and sophomore year will appear on your transcript. So, stay focused and put your best foot forward this fall.
- Sophomores, consider taking the PSAT if it is not required by your school.

JUNIORS

- Take a diagnostic test for the ACT and the SAT so you can start to make a decision about which test is best for you.
- If you're an especially capable test-taker, you should consider taking the PSAT even if you think you'll eventually take the ACT and not the SAT. Starting with the class of 2020, National Merit semi-finalists will be allowed to submit ACT scores to confirm their status.
- Talk to your tutor about when your first ACT/SAT should be, then register. The earlier you sign up, the more options you'll have for testing locations.
- Deepen your engagement in extracurricular activities that you are most passionate about; take on leadership positions when possible.
- Find ways to take ownership of your responsibilities. Get in the habit of signing yourself up for standardized tests and initiating college research and visits. Soon enough, you'll be on your own and glad you got some practice taking responsibility.

SENIORS

- Keep putting in your best effort at school. Your grades still count!
- Find ways to take ownership of your responsibilities, especially those related to college admissions. You'll be on your own soon enough and glad you got some practice taking responsibility.
- Complete your college essay and any supplements. Make sure you have editors (parents, friends, or teachers) lined up.
- Research and add application deadlines to your calendar. Consider whether you plan to apply Early Decision and/or Early Action.
- Learn the protocol at your school for getting recommendations and transcripts.
- If you're taking the October SAT/ACT or November SAT, your scores are still fair game for most early applications. But, you won't have time to preview your score. You can notify colleges that scores are on their way, but make sure to have your score reports sent directly to your schools of interest.
- Finalize any ED and EA applications due in November.
- After November deadlines: exhale and pat yourself on the back. Give yourself a week off from college-related activities. You deserve it!

The first months of school are crucial for setting a strong foundation for the months to come. Contact us if you have any questions or need guidance along the way.