

High School Checklist

JANUARY - MARCH TO-DOS

At Private Prep, our diverse team of tutors and experts cover a wide range of academic needs at the high school level. We've compiled advice from our team into a single to-do list to help you manage the middle of the school year and plan for the future without getting overwhelmed or burned out.

ALL STUDENTS

- Get some perspective on how things are going by writing down one positive and one challenging item for each class you're taking.
- Revisit your first-semester goals. Cross off the ones you reached and circle the ones you missed. Use this reflection to create a new set of attainable goals for second semester.
- Define specific obstacles that could prevent you from reaching your new goals. Then identify who you can go to for support, be it a teacher, parent, tutor, or friend, when you're struggling to overcome these obstacles.
- Scope out your timeline by populating your calendar with weekly/monthly check-ins and mini-goals. Be sure to lock in times for rest, recovery, and adventure. Now is the halfway point in a long grind, so it's vital to take breaks and stay energized.

FRESHMEN & SOPHOMORES

- For each class, note when you started preparing for midterms and how those exams went. Write down anything you want to change about your approach for finals.
- By February you'll have a few quizzes under your belt. The results of these can provide essential data to make an informed decision on whether or not a subject tutor could be helpful for the rest of the school year, even if it's just for homework help or test support.
- Consider the demands on your schoolwork in combination with any sports, extracurriculars, and rest/recovery time. Do you feel like you have the right balance to keep stress under control? Overlay your academic goals against your extracurricular schedules to ensure that you won't be overextended.
- You might be taking a course with curriculum that aligns well with an SAT Subject Test, such as Biology. It could benefit you to take the SAT Subject Test while the material is fresh. However, these classes often don't cover all the material on Subject Tests, so getting support early will help you fill in any content gaps come May and June.
- Use this time to take stock of your extracurricular life. Are you pursuing activities that are meaningful to you? What opportunities do you have to build upon your interests in new ways?
- Don't wait for summer planning. Application deadlines for camps, classes, and internships can fly by while you're busy with school work in these coming months. Research summer ideas, make plans now, and add those registration deadlines to your calendar.

JUNIORS

- If you have not taken the ACT or SAT yet, consider scheduling a test date for the spring. Make sure your test dates and preparation plans don't overlap with your school finals and sports schedules. If you are still deciding between the ACT and SAT, we can help you determine which tests amplify your strengths.
- Be your own advocate. Halfway through this jam-packed year, if you feel you have bitten off more than you can chew, reach out to teachers, mentors, and tutors for support. Do not let the pressure make you passive about feedback. If a class isn't going how you expect, step up and talk to the teacher about how to improve.
- When it comes time for course selection, consider how you can continue to build rigor into your schedule in a way that's the right fit for you and your academic strengths.
- Which extracurricular activities are you most passionate about? Look for leadership opportunities in those activities. Do not wait until senior year to polish your resume.
- Keep an eye on your summer plans. Take a moment to write down application deadlines for any programs you hope to attend and put them in your calendar now.
- Considering your college goals and the courses you're currently taking, determine whether SAT Subject Tests is the right fit for you. AP classes, honors science, and math classes often lend themselves well to Subject Tests. Plan ahead so you can fill in any content gaps before the Subject Test dates in May and June.
- Look ahead to upcoming school breaks and pencil in trips to visit colleges. You'll want to visit as many as possible to make sure you find the school that's the right fit for you.

SENIORS

- Congratulations on finishing college applications! Check your email regularly to make sure all your materials have been submitted successfully to your Regular Decision colleges.
- Avoid burnout by deliberately scheduling time for rest, recovery, and vacation on your calendar now. For each class and extracurricular, write down what you love about it. Why would it be rewarding and fun to continue to participate and excel for the next few months?
- Take stock of anywhere you have fallen behind during your application crunch. Meet with teachers to make a plan to finish the year successfully.
- If you aren't already managing your schedule, make it a goal to do so this semester. It's essential to practice managing your time and responsibilities before you go to college.
- Create a bucket list that motivates you to create memories and spend time with classmates and teachers during the remainder of high school. Remember, these are your final months of high school—forever. Netflix will always be there, but this is your last opportunity to fully engage with your high school community. You have come this far, finish strong.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- If English is not your first language, enroll in supplementary classes to accelerate English acquisition. Watching movies, TV, and YouTube with English audio and subtitles can be an enjoyable way to improve English skills and vocabulary.
- Challenge yourself to read a classic novel in English each month. Reading, discussing, and writing about English literature is a critical skill you'll need if you are considering a university in the United States or another English-speaking country.

It is important to keep the momentum high after the first few months of school and winter break. We are here to help ensure that you are supported, so please contact us if you have any questions or need guidance along the way.

[CONTACT US](#)

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