



How to Prepare for College as a 9th Grader?

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As a 9th grader, you may think that it's too early to start thinking about college. However, a lot of what you do during your freshman year can ultimately affect your future college applications and acceptance. Thinking about college early can help keep you motivated and give you a goal to strive towards.

But since you are in 9th grade, college should be in the back of your mind. Ensure you focus your time on maintaining your grades and learning good study habits.

What's the Importance of Starting to Prepare in 9th Grade?

1. It Can Help You Plan For Future Courses

By beginning college preparation early, you can plan on what classes you want to take in high school and how they can benefit your future major. Once you have decided on a possible future career, you can take certain courses directed towards that field. If you are interested in pursuing Engineering, you may want to take advanced math and science courses such as Calculus and Physics.

2. You Won't Be Overwhelmed with Tests

Most schools require their applicants to take either the SAT or ACT. Without planning, students can end up with many standardized tests to take in a short period of time. By planning ahead, you can begin thinking about what months you want to take the SAT or ACT, leaving yourself more time to prepare for them. This also leaves opportunities for you to take additional tests like SAT Subject Tests.



3. Building Your Resume

When applying to college, admissions officers look at more than just your grades. They want a student who is well rounded in extracurriculars: sports, clubs, etc. They also look for applicants that are dedicated to a particular extracurricular. If possible, try to hold a position in your extracurriculars, such as team captain or Club President.

4. You are Presented With Scholarship Opportunities

Even as a freshman, you can begin applying for different scholarships which can lessen the financial burden that comes with college. Since most students don't know the wide variety of scholarships that exist, there are less participants, leaving you with a better chance of receiving them.

How Can You Prepare For College as a Freshman?



1. Maintain Your Grades

Although schools spend more time looking at your junior and senior year grades, they will still glance at your freshman and sophomore year results.

2. Knowing What Classes are For You

By preparing as a 9th grader, you can begin planning what courses you want to take in the future. While you shouldn't overload our schedule with every possible AP or honors class, you should

try to incorporate a few. Colleges will look at what classes you take and this shows that you are willing to take on challenges. Some classes you may want to take (if offered at your school) include Honors Geometry, Honors English and Honors Biology. If possible, take a language course as well. Admissions officers will be impressed with students who are bilingual/trilingual.

3. Getting Involved

Like previously mentioned, your participation in clubs and sports play a large role in your admission decisions. Schools are looking for students who excel in the classroom and outside of it. You should also try to dedicate yourself to a particular activity or club for all four years.



4. Utilize Your Guidance Counselor

As a student who is studying in the U.S, your guidance counselor's job is to help guide you with your college preparation. They work closely with you to ensure you are right track to fulfilling your graduation requirements. If you are not attending U.S. high school but are interested to pursue your higher education in the U.S., Success Pathway Consultants can help you with our [High School Action Plan](#) program to prepare you to become an appealing candidate for the college/university application.

5. Preparing for Exams

Although there aren't many AP classes offered to 9th graders, you should plan which ones you want to take in the future. If you do well on the exams, they may be able to transfer credits to your future college/university.

Along with APs, there are also SAT Subject Tests, sometimes known as the SAT II. Unlike the SAT and ACT, these are not required. But if you are proficient in a particular subject, you can use these tests to show the schools your abilities in certain subject areas.

6. Start Looking into Schools

Begin by looking into what schools that have a high reputation for your major. Once you've found a few appealing schools, you can register for Success Pathway [college tours and school visits](#), so you aren't as overwhelmed during your junior and senior years. By visiting the school's website, you can also look at their admission requirements so you have an idea of what grades you need to maintain and what classes to take.



7. Don't Waste Your Summer

Most students use their summer to relax and have fun. As important as taking a break from the busy school year is, you should also make your summer as productive as possible. If you nervous about an upcoming class, take the summer to study that subject. It is also important to volunteer over the summer to add more credentials to your college application.

8. Your Parents Roles

Tell your parents about the schools you have in mind and ask if it's possible for you to visit. If they are worried about tuition, tell them about [financial aid opportunities and scholarships](#). Your parents will be thrilled about your desire to start college planning!

If you want more information as an underclassman, our staff at Success Pathway can help you! Contact us at info@successpathwayconsulting.com for more information.