

Freshman Year Checklist

Fall–Winter

College Planning

- Attend college information events in your community (www.collegenights.org)
- Learn the high school courses required by colleges (<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/plan-for-college/college-prep/thrive-in-high-school/high-school-classes-colleges-look-for>)
- Meet with your high school counselor for advice on your college plan
- Identify your interests and skills to help you focus on your goals

Extracurricular Activities

- Join a club or try out for a sports team
- Volunteer for something you find important

Spring

Academics

- Focus on your study habits and finish the school year strong
- Keep up your grades—colleges look at your grade point average (GPA)
- Set your sophomore class schedule with your counselor to include honors or Advanced Placement (AP) classes
- Create your four-year academic plan with your counselor

Career Exploration

- Start searching for summer programs (e.g., academic, work, volunteer, travel)
- Spend a day at work with a family member, friend or community member and learn about their job
- Attend career fairs or career day at your school or in your community

College Exploration

- Research the different types of college options—career and technical education (CTE) institutions, two-year community/junior colleges, and four-year colleges and universities
- Attend local college fairs in your area or at your school (www.nacacnet.org/nacac-college-fairs)
- Talk to current college students about their path to college and college life
- Try virtual campus tours (<https://campustours.com>, www.appily.com/virtual-college-tours, www.thecollegetour.com)

Summer

Summer Enrichment

- Participate in an enrichment program that expands your knowledge
- Get a job—many important skills are developed in work environments
- Volunteer with an organization you find interesting
- Apply for a service learning program
- Prepare for sophomore year by doing summer reading
- Visit college campuses

Money Management

- Open a bank or credit union account and save money for college
- Take a financial education course online (www.fdic.gov/resources/consumers/money-smart/index.html)
- Talk to your parents or guardians about a college savings plan



The **Freshman Year Checklist** is part of the 2024-2025 *Opportunities Preparing for College Guide and Workbook*. This free college planning publication provides students and families with important information and tools to guide their pursuit of postsecondary education. These books are available in English and Spanish. Full PDFs of each *Opportunities* booklet can be downloaded at www.ecmc.org/opportunities.