

Sophomore year checklist

Fall–Winter

Time management

- Learn how to make the most efficient use of your time
- Use SMART goals to keep you on task (www.studyright.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/SMART-Goals-Tracker.pdf)
- Include down time in your schedule

College entrance exams

- Many campuses may be test optional, check fairtest.org for the most updated list
- College placement test preparation
- Take the PSAT (Pre-SAT) to help prepare you for the SAT (www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat)
- Take the PLAN (Pre-ACT) to help prepare you for the ACT (<https://academy.act.org/>)

Spring

Academics

- Keep up your grades—colleges look at your grade point average (GPA)
- Plan rigorous academic courses for your junior year
- Review your four-year academic plan with your counselor
 - Enroll in Honors, Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, which may earn college credit
 - Take college courses while in high school and earn both high school and college credit (known as dual/concurrent enrollment)

Extracurricular activities

- Join a club or try out for a sports team
- Volunteer for something you find important
- Explore summer opportunities—be mindful of application deadlines

Career exploration

- Seek summer opportunities to work or volunteer in your field of interest
- Take an interest inventory—it expands your ideas for careers you may enjoy (<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/explore-careers>)
- Have conversations with counselors, teachers, family and community members about their career paths and what they studied in college

College search

- Visit campuses—think about size, location and academic programs
- Attend local college fairs in your area (www.nacacfairs.org/attend/national-college-fairs)
- Try online college fairs and virtual campus tours (<https://campustours.com>)
- Use an online search engine to find colleges (<http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>)

Summer

Prepare for summer

- Create a summer reading list from teacher recommendations
- Confirm your summer plans (e.g., work, academic enrichment programs, summer workshops, service learning, travel, camps, internship, campus tours)

Money management

- Learn about types of scholarships and grants (www.finaid.org, www.studentaid.gov)
- Take a financial education course (www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/young.html)
- Use the tools found on the College Affordability and Transparency Center website (<https://collegecost.ed.gov>) to compare and estimate your college costs
- Research Net Price Calculators on the websites of colleges and universities that appeal to you