



TEXAS
The University of Texas at Austin

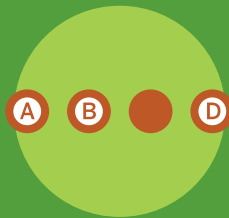


10TH GRADE

College Prep



NEW GOALS



PSAT



LOCAL VISITS

Congratulations on completing your first year of high school! Your college prep should continue with new things to do this year. Use this checklist to guide you through your sophomore year as you continue to explore your future.

AUGUST

- **Make Adjustments** Meet with your counselor to make any necessary changes to your four-year high school plan. You've learned new things and had new experiences over the past year, so your goals and the types of classes to take may be different now. Use wayfinder.utexas.edu to help align your college academic interests with your current plans and goals in high school.
- **Continue Improvement** If you enjoyed the activities you did in the 9th grade, continue doing them. You may have new interests or options this year, so be sure to explore those clubs/organizations. Remember to keep updating the activity log you created last year.

SEPTEMBER

- **Join Mailing Lists** Sign-up for college mailing lists of the schools that you are interested in. You can join UT Austin's mailing list at utx.as/sign-up. Mailing lists are a great way for schools to let you know when they will be in your area and events or information you should know about. You may have already signed up for some last year, but this is an opportunity to explore other schools you may like.
- **Register for the PSAT** The Pre-SAT is a practice version of the SAT standardized test by The College Board. It's a good idea to register about one month in advance.

OCTOBER

- **Take the PSAT** The PSAT has multiple timed sections with brief breaks in between. You'll want to bring some reliable pencils and a light jacket in case the room is cold. Try to relax as much as possible and aim to do your best. The results of this test will give you an idea of what academic areas you may need to improve and study before taking the SAT next year.

NOVEMBER

- **Connect with Family** This month is a great time to speak with your family and update them on the progress you've made in school and preparing for college. Take time to discuss how they can be involved in the process and ways they can best support you.

Thanksgiving is also a great time to seek support from your extended family members.

- **Check Your Email** Start getting in the habit of regularly checking your emails. Colleges and universities may be reaching out to you with more information about their programs. This will be beneficial information to you as you continue to explore your interest in going to school to pursue a degree. You can also use this as an opportunity to practice writing emails using appropriate formatting.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

- **New Semester** Start getting into a rhythm for the new year and semester after your winter break. If you have a resolution for the new year, work on setting smaller goals to help you maintain it. Small goals are great for staying on track to achieve academic and non-academic success.

MARCH/APRIL

- **Spring Break Activities** Like last year, spring is a great season to try and explore new things. Read a new book, pick up a new hobby, learn a new skill or research activities to get involved in during the summer. If you are traveling, visit historical sites, museums or tour a college campus. Try to have a new experience!

MAY

- **Wrap-Up the Year** You've worked hard all year and are probably looking forward to summer vacation! Make sure to continue doing your best through the end of the school year. Continue making plans for the summer and start getting excited about the upcoming school year.

JUNE/JULY

- **Summer Activities** Continue doing the types of activities you did last summer. If possible, visit colleges or universities in your local area for an info session and tour. Take time to research in-state and out of state schools and speak with your family/friends about your interests.
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Myth or Fact

As you learn more about college, you may receive different information from a variety of sources. To make sure you know the correct information, let's see if the following statements are facts or myths.

1. My preferred major to study in college doesn't have to match my career interests.

Fact. While you may benefit from your major aligning with your career interests in some cases, it is generally not something that is necessary. You should study the academic fields that interest you most while in college. Use the skills you develop and career services on campus to help you plan and prepare for your desired career.

2. I should be involved in as many extracurricular activities as possible to make my application stand out.

Myth. It is okay to be involved and dedicated to a few activities over a longer period of time. Taking part in a lot of activities is time consuming and you may not actually enjoy everything that much. Admissions committees are able to see if you participate in a lot of things just to be in them or if they are actually important and meaningful to you.

Questions to Ask

YOURSELF

Now that you have one year of high school under your belt, you should begin to think about the steps you can start to take to set yourself apart from your fellow classmates. The following self-reflection questions can help you determine how you can begin taking on new challenges and developing good habits. In terms of your schoolwork, ask yourself:

- Which subject do I excel in? Why does this subject seem easy to me?
- Which subject do I struggle with the most? Why does this subject seem difficult to me?
- How can I utilize the skills I have in my easiest subject to help me improve my skills in my most difficult subject?
- In the class I am best at, are there more ways I can take on leadership roles to assist my teacher or fellow classmates?
- In the class I am not as good in, are there more ways I can reach out for help from my teacher or fellow classmates?

If you are involved in sports, clubs, band, etc., ask yourself:

- Am I taking on any leadership roles in the activities I am involved in?
- Am I passionate about what I'm involved in? Is this something I would like to continue to pursue?
- Are there ways I can improve at my activity?
- Am I effective at balancing my time between school and extracurricular activities? If so, what skills do I utilize to maintain that balance?

OTHERS

Sophomore year is not only a time to start challenging yourself, but also a time to utilize the resources around you. Your family, teachers, counselors, mentors, and even friends can all give you useful advice and help you stay on top of your responsibilities. The following questions are just some of the ways your support system can start to assist you during this time.

- What steps should I take to make sure I am signed up for the PSAT?
- What are some of the best ways to study for the PSAT?
- Does *blank* college offer spring break/summer programs for sophomore students?
- What is the difference between a junior college and a four-year university?
- Do we have local junior colleges? If so, how can I go visit the campus?
- Do we have local four-year universities? If so, how can I go visit the campus?
- Are there any summer job/internship opportunities I can currently apply for?
- Who would be the best person to reach out to for support during this stage of my college preparation?

Getting Family Involved

Continue to keep your family in the loop about your four-year plan and how it changes throughout the years. Talk to them about meetings you have with your counselors and goals that you've set. Tell them about the activities and organizations that you are involved in and let them know what classes you really like and which ones you don't. This is a great time to advance your knowledge of the professions in your family! Ask the following questions to learn more:

- What are your job responsibilities?
- What kinds of problems do you solve?
- What have you accomplished at work?
- How does your job fit into the company/field's purpose?
- How did you become interested in this career choice?
- How much school/training does this job require?

You can also ask if they would be willing to let you observe or shadow them at work. Use this time to figure out what you would and wouldn't be interested in doing as a career by observing and asking questions. Be sure to reflect on any experiences. What did you learn about this particular career path?

Your family can also play a significant role in your PSAT preparations. Sit down together and talk about what the PSAT is and how you need to prepare. Explain to them why the PSAT is important if they are not as familiar with it. Determine if you should use a test preparation company to take a course. Together, you can research the most cost-effective ways to study and which materials you will need to invest in for the best outcome. You can also discuss important test taking strategies that may require their support, e.g. good "brain-food" to eat the night before, the morning of, and snacks to pack for the day.

In the spring and summer, start thinking about which colleges you may be interested in. You can start by visiting local colleges during the school year.

During spring break and during the summer, visit schools that are farther away. Together you can come up with questions to ask your tour guides and presenters during the visit. If you haven't already, this would be a great time to join the mailing lists of colleges that you're interested in. Use your contact information instead of your parents/guardian and don't forget to talk to your family about financial planning for college and continue to have those conversations regularly.

Additional Resources

PREPARING FOR THE PSAT

To get ready for the PSAT, prepare yourself by looking at sample questions and taking practice tests. Both of those resources can be found on the College Board's website. Keep these tips in mind when studying for the PSAT

- See where you are at before studying by taking a full-length practice test. Try to mimic the testing environment as much as possible by being in a quiet room, avoiding any distractions, and following the timing guidelines.
- Looking at your practice test score, set a goal score for yourself that you can work toward.
- Analyze your problem areas and build a study plan based on improving these areas.

- When making your study plan, try to avoid cramming and set realistic goals. For example, try setting aside 30 minutes each day over a period of several weeks rather than four hours every night the week before the test.
- Utilize your resources. Check to see if there are PSAT bootcamps in your area, visit your local library to check out PSAT prep books, and search online for study tools from reputable sources like Khan Academy.
- Continue to take practice tests as you study to see how your score changes and to familiarize yourself with the PSAT.
- Remember to celebrate your hard work as you keep up with your study plan! Take care of yourself while preparing for the PSAT by making time for your favorite activities and practicing self care.

SETTING UP YOUR EMAIL

Colleges will frequently communicate with you via email, so it is important to maintain your email account.

- If you need to set up an email account, make sure that your email is professional (e.g. opt for an email like bevo77@utexas.mail rather than bevo<3queso@utexas.mail). Make sure to write down your password!
- Create separate folders in your account for messages from colleges, test providers (ACT, College Board, etc), and scholarships.
- When you sign up for college mailing lists, use the same email so that you are not receiving important information at multiple emails.
- Also, use this same email when registering for tests, applying for scholarships, and applying for college summer camps. This will allow for all of your important messages to be in one spot.
- Get in the habit of checking your email often—a few times a week is ideal at this stage!
- Open new emails, and flag emails that contain important updates or you would like to look at again.



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