

HIGH SCHOOL HACKS

PREPARING TO MIC DROP
AT YOUR GRADUATION



9TH - 12TH GRADE
THE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT

Academic Success Checklist

PRE-HIGHSCHOOL

- If you are considering applying for a magnet program or transferring to a new private school - make sure to submit your application by their due date. Some require an application before Winter Break of your 8th grade year.
- If your high school has a 9th grade orientation make sure to attend. You will most likely receive your class schedule and campus planner at that time.
- Begin to develop an understanding of the graduation requirements at your school / state.
- Begin to develop an understanding of what testing will be required each year and in order to graduate and / or attend college.
- Your first quarter as a freshman is your foundation. Lay a strong foundation now with courses and grades to make it easier to keep a strong GPA.
- If you and your parents and counselor agree - choose honors and AP classes to start building a strong curriculum.
- Find out your new school overall schedule - what time will your school day start and end? If it is a major shift from middle school - begin to prepare your biological clock a couple of weeks before school starts by going to bed 5-10 minutes earlier and waking up 5-10 minutes earlier each day so it won't feel like a shock.
- Discuss and arrange transportation - will you be taking a bus? Drop off? Car pool?
- What supplies will you need for high school? Check in with the school for a list if they have one.

Academic Success Checklist

FRESHMAN YEAR Q1

- If your high school has a 9th grade orientation make sure to attend. You will most likely receive your class schedule and campus planner at that time.
- Begin to develop an understanding of the graduation requirements at your school / state.
- Begin to develop an understanding of what testing will be required each year and in order to graduate and / or attend college.
- Your first quarter as a freshman is your foundation. Lay a strong foundation now with courses and grades to make it easier to keep a strong GPA.
- If you and your parents and counselor agree - choose honors and AP classes to start building a strong curriculum.
- Begin exploring the extracurricular activities (clubs / sports / teams) your school offers. The more you are connected and plugged in at the school and with friends the more support you will have and the easier the transition will be. This also shows colleges that you are well rounded.
- Begin searching for a organization / charity / or after school club that offers volunteer work that you can believe in.
- Get to know your support system! Who is your Academic Adviser or Counselor at school? At the Education Department? Put their names and contact info here:

- Get the name and contact info of 1 student per class. This way if you are absent you can find out what you missed right away.

Academic Success Checklist

FRESHMAN YEAR Q2

- Start thinking about life after school (I know...I know! Trust me!) What interests you? What activities do you do, that when you are doing them you lose track of time? What do you not like?

- I like / Things that interest me

- I don't like / Things that are not of interest to me

- Take the PSAT. You can receive scholarships based on your scores and you have all the way to your sophomore year to take this test and once taken, it can be imported into www.SATpractice.org for free and personalized SAT testing. If you take it this early - there is no pressure and you can begin to see what it is like and what you need to work on. If your school doesn't offer it - talk to your K-12 Advisor to find a place that does.
- If you haven't already decided - find volunteer activities that make you happy and better the world around you. If you have already found one - keep going! Learning to commit to something long term takes practice - it's a muscle that needs to be worked out.
- Begin to talk to your Advisers about SAT Subject Tests. Very few schools require them, but many accept them and they help you stand out. It is best to take them right after you have finished a course (for example: take SAT Biology at the end of or close to the end of your Biology class).
- If you are interested in spring sports find out when the tryouts will be and start practicing - some schools have open gyms to get you started on track.

Academic Success Checklist

FRESHMAN YEAR Q3

- Third quarter is where students receive the lowest grades on average - this is the time for you to brush up on your study skills and learn new habits. This is also the quarter to discuss Sophomore year classes and schedule with your Guidance Counselor at school (i.e. Dual Enrollment). Contact the Education Department to take a Learning Style Evaluation to help you learn more about yourself and what will make studying easiest for you.
- Begin planning out your summer - it should be a time of fun and relaxation and exploring. Have you considered shadowing someone who has a career you've always been curious about? Perhaps you have always wanted to travel and learn a new language or volunteer around the world? There are plenty of opportunities out there to discover.
- Websites that will make studying a breeze....
 1. www.GoConqr.com - great for visual learners!
 2. www.Quizlet.com - awesome for making or borrowing flashcards and playing games with them online!
 3. www.EverNote.com - this site will help you with research papers and presentations as well as keeping your life outside of high school organized as well!
 4. www.StudyBlue.com - Crowdsourcing for your study guides! Create flashcards, see a digitized countdown to your exam day with progress notes and download the app for easy studying and collaboration anywhere!
 5. www.marinaratimer.com - did you know the best way to study is 25 mins at a time with a 5 min break? This website uses this interval to help you be productive.

Academic Success Checklist

FRESHMAN YEAR Q4

- Find out what are the requirements needed by your school to finish the year strong. Do you have finals? A end of year project? Need to turn in forms? Get it done quickly.
- Some sports and clubs meet and practice over summer - find out if this applies to you.
- This is your time to show a college or career or just yourself that you are more than your SAT score and GPA - what will you do this summer????
- Consider summer classes for college credit or take a class at your local college you would love to know more about like photography or graphic design.
- Create a significant and mature online presence. Contact your Adviser to learn how to set up a blog showcasing your talents and abilities, an online portfolio showcasing your music or ideas - there are so many options! By building up slowly you will be able to shine by senior year.

Academic Success Checklist

SOPHOMORE YEAR Q1

- Look over and adjust class schedule with Guidance Counselor.
- Sign up for a fall sport if you are interested (most practices begin in mid-August).
- Get the syllabus from each teacher and organize all the beginning of the year handouts teachers give you.
- Introduce yourself to each of the teachers one on one. Building your relationships with each teacher is vital for success.
- If possible - pick back up with any sports or clubs you started freshman year and continue till graduation. You don't need to try to do everything. Colleges are more interested in focused commitment. However - if you disliked what you did last year be open to trying something new.
- Sign up for the PSAT (preliminary SAT) | Use your scores to begin searching for scholarships.
- Get a planner and start filling in all your important school and family/friend dates. Make sure to plan for exams, tests, and vacations.
- Moving your body is important - find something you love to do and do it! Exercise helps to combat stress, keep your mind sharp and focused and even helps you sleep better.
- If you would like guidance on how to organize your time and make the most out of your days - set up an appointment with your K-12 Advisor to walk you through time management 101.

PUSH YOURSELF TO THE LIMIT

DON'T Q1

Academic Success Checklist

SOPHOMORE YEAR Q2

- If you are considering a winter sport - now is the time to check with the coaches for try outs.
- Finals? Set up a schedule - and remember to look back at the Freshman hacks for websites to use for studying successfully.
- Create a mature and simple email address for College admissions. Avoid user names that any college representative might find silly, inappropriate or immature. (We highly recommend gmail). When you attend university presentations, college fairs, apply for internships and when you register to receive scholarship and college admissions information they will ask for an email. Having one where all this information is going will be helpful in staying organized.
- Take your PSAT - when you have received your scores have them imputed into www.SATpractice.org to begin your personalized preparation for the SAT.
- Most students state that the more vocabulary they know the easier the SAT and ACT is. Download MAGOOSH - an app for Android and iPhone to help easily build your vocab.

Not sure if you want to prepare for the SAT or ACT? It can be helpful

to decide by taking an online full length practice exam and determining which you prefer. Once you know you can begin focusing on preparing for your exam of choice. Go to www.ACT.org and click on test prep and www.SATpractice.org for their test prep. There is no rule that says you can only take one - but most students prepare better when they are focused on one.

The Magoosh logo is displayed on a dark purple rectangular background. The word "Magoosh" is written in a white, sans-serif font. The two 'o's in "Magoosh" are replaced by green circular icons, each containing a white checkmark.

Academic Success Checklist

SOPHOMORE YEAR Q3

- Most students don't realize the thousands of colleges and vocational schools that are open to exploring. Begin comparing and contrasting college and vocational schools around the country. What are some qualities your school MUST have? (ex. A small school or large? A school with all 4 seasons? A certain type of program?)

- What are some qualities your school MUST NOT have?

- Many colleges and companies around the country (like the FBI / Harvard) offer summer programs. Make an appointment with your K-12 Advisor to begin exploring options.
- Ready to give some colleges a more in depth look? Try www.campustours.com to set up virtual tours and see videos. This can help you start narrowing down the actual visits you want to do over the summer and / or your junior year.
- Check in with your teachers - see if there are any areas within your subject you are doing well in or where you need extra practice. When a teacher gets to know you one on one they will be much more likely to help you out and understand any problems you are facing.

If you haven't already - create an account at www.CollegeBoard.com.

This website can help you track your progress through high school and beyond.

What is your username? _____

- Password? _____

Academic Success Checklist

SOPHOMORE YEAR Q4

- Apply for any summer programs that you are interested in. If they offer college credit - set up a time to meet with your K-12 Advisor to go over scholarship opportunities.
- The summer is a great time to learn about topics that are interesting to you personally - just like after freshman year - consider a photography course at Broward College? Yoga? Computer coding?
- Under the Billy L. Cypress Scholarship you can attend 2 in state and 2 out of state college tours per year. Get connected with your Higher Ed Academic and Career Advisor by setting up an appointment to learn how you can begin seeing colleges and vocational schools around the country! Email: **HigherEd@SemTribe.Com** Phone: **954-989-6840**
- Register at www.Raise.me to begin your hunt for micro scholarships.

List of schools I am interested in touring

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

One of the best and easiest ways to prepare for the SAT or ACT is to read books that interest you. Try out www.GoodReads.com - it is social media for books. Take quizzes to find out what book to read next, see reviews and follow your favorite musicians and authors. You never know what your next favorite book will be! Which books will you read?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



Academic Success Checklist

JUNIOR YEAR Q1

- Register to take the first available SAT and ACT of the school year. Begin using, if you haven't already at www.SATpractice.org. You can import your PSAT scores and receive free personalized prep. Plan on taking the SAT or ACT 2 to 3 times to get your best score. Most people's score goes up the second and third time around.
- Introduce yourself to each of your teachers, and get to know them. The teachers you have gotten to know well since freshman year will be the ones you will ask for recommendation letters for college, jobs, scholarships, etc.
- Begin to look at the requirements for schools you are interested in. A general rule is to have 15 schools to compare, then begin to set up what is needed for your top 10. Start looking at what will be needed to apply, what the deadlines are, and what the average incoming GPA and scores are so you can begin to set goals for this year.
- Whichever sports and volunteer work you have been doing - keep going! Again, colleges consider long-term commitment as a major component of the application.

Take the time to be introduced to your Higher Education Academic and Career Adviser - let them know schools you are looking into so

- they can begin to guide you. My Higher Ed Advisor is: _____

Take the time to set up goals for Quarter 1 and the school year with your K12 Advisor and write them down here.

Goal Quarter 1: _____

Goal Quarter 2: _____

Goal Quarter 3: _____

Goal Quarter 4: _____

Goals Junior Year: _____

Academic Success Checklist

JUNIOR YEAR Q2

Review how your Q1 Goal went: _____

• _____

Go over your Q2 Goal - what do you need to do to prepare for this goal?

• _____

- If you have your scores from your first take of the SAT / ACT make sure to update your profile at www.SATpractice.org and your planner and being your study plan. If you want help creating a concrete plan set up an appointment with your K-12 Advisor.
- If appropriate (students in arts / drama / photography / sports or other option) begin to create a portfolio of your achievements and work done. This can include any writing or photography you are proud of, maybe sports statistics or records you have broken.
- Consider touring any other college on your list. The best time to visit a school is during the fall and spring semester when you will get a true feel of the vibe on campus. Set up an appointment with your Higher Education Academic and Career Advisor to see if you are eligible to go on tours under their scholarship.
- Try out some new extra curricular activities or volunteer opportunities to expand your horizon and network.
- If you have been curious about different career paths - look into securing an internship, or if you don't have enough time try shadowing someone in a career field you are interested in for a day or two. Many times you can tell pretty quickly after shadowing someone if that sort of career path is one you're interested in.

Create a file folder for your top ten schools if you haven't already and keep it organized with information you get from tours or in the mail or even off the internet. Touch base with your teachers on how your grades are doing. This is an important year!

Academic Success Checklist

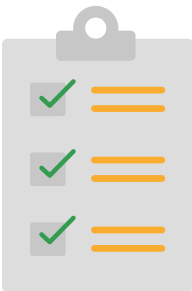
JUNIOR YEAR Q3

Review how your Q2 Goal went: _____

• _____
Go over your Q3 Goal - what do you need to do to prepare for this goal?

- _____
- _____
 - The SAT/ACT is usually offered in March, May and June - if you aren't already go ahead and register and set up a study plan. This should be your final time taking your SAT and / or ACT unless you are not happy with your scores and if so you can plan on taking it one more time your senior year.
 - Set up a plan to visit any schools left on your list. You should try and finish any tours before summer if possible (to get a true feel of life on campus) if it isn't possible plan on finishing up in the summer.
 - Begin to ask for letters of recommendation from your teachers now. Once senior year hits - many teachers are overwhelmed with the amount of letters and won't be able to take the time to personalize yours and make it stand out.
 - If you are taking any AP exams -create a study plan and begin using it to manage your time before May. Also, consider taking AP courses your senior year as well. Schools will take passing scores for credit for your senior year to.

Begin planning your summer activities now. This summer is important for creating opportunities to showcase who you are to colleges and creating memories that will last a lifetime. Many high profile summer programs fill up quickly. Set up an appointment with your K-12 Advisor to explore unique and fun opportunities for this summer. It is your last summer before your last summer before you leave to college!!!



- Talk with your K-12 Advisor to set up an appointment to meet one of our many successful students; find someone who is going to a school you're interested in or a career you'd like to explore.

Academic Success Checklist

JUNIOR YEAR Q4

Review how your Q3 Goal went: _____

• _____
Go over your Q4 Goal - what do you need to do to prepare for this goal?

• _____
Go over your Junior Year - what do have left to do to prepare for finishing this goal? _____

- _____
- If you are planning on playing sports for college register with the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Eligibility Center.
www.NCAAClearingHouse.net
- If you would like to be eligible for grants and scholarships outside of the Billy L Cypress Scholarship you will need to complete a FAFSA. In order to complete a FAFSA you need an FSA ID (your username and password for FAFSA). You can register for the ID at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>. Many scholarships are available to help with expenses not covered by the Billy L. Cypress Scholarships. Set up an appointment with your K-12 Advisor to begin looking for scholarships. They range from a few hundred to thousands of dollars and can cover clothes, cars, meals and other expenses. Sometimes, you only need to fill out an online application, others require an essay, video or even photo. There are so many! You will be sure to find a few. Make an appointment to create your Curriculum Vitae (CV) which is a resume that highlights your High School career, including extracurricular activities and classes. If you are just starting to think about college now - great! We can help you look over your high school transcripts and take any courses needed over the summer to prepare you for college.

Academic Success Checklist

SENIOR YEAR Q1

- Welcome to Senior year! Congratulations! Enjoy your final year and be ready to make your next steps. This is the time to schedule a meeting with your K-12 Advisor who will reach out to your Higher Education Academic and Career Advisor to make sure your pathway to college is clear and successful.
- Finalize your college list - you should have between 5 and 10 schools you have chosen to apply to.
- If you have not received your recommendation letters from teachers yet - do this now. Once the school year gets into full swings most teacher will be overwhelmed with letters and they will be delayed.
- Plan out the schools you will apply to and in which order based upon early action deadlines. Applying for early action or priority gives you a much better chance at acceptance. Also - check which schools allow you to apply through the Common Application. **www.commonapp.org**
- If you feel you need to take the SAT or ACT one more time do it in the first quarter. It takes on average 7 weeks for scores to be sent and many times they will not have enough time if you are applying for the priority deadlines.
- Make an appointment with your school guidance counselor to ensure you have all the classes needed for graduation and all your college applications get what is needed (official transcripts for example).
- Begin working on your college application essay for schools that have it listed as required and/or optional. Set up an appointment with your K-12 Advisor to give you tips and feedback on your essay.

List colleges

- here -->

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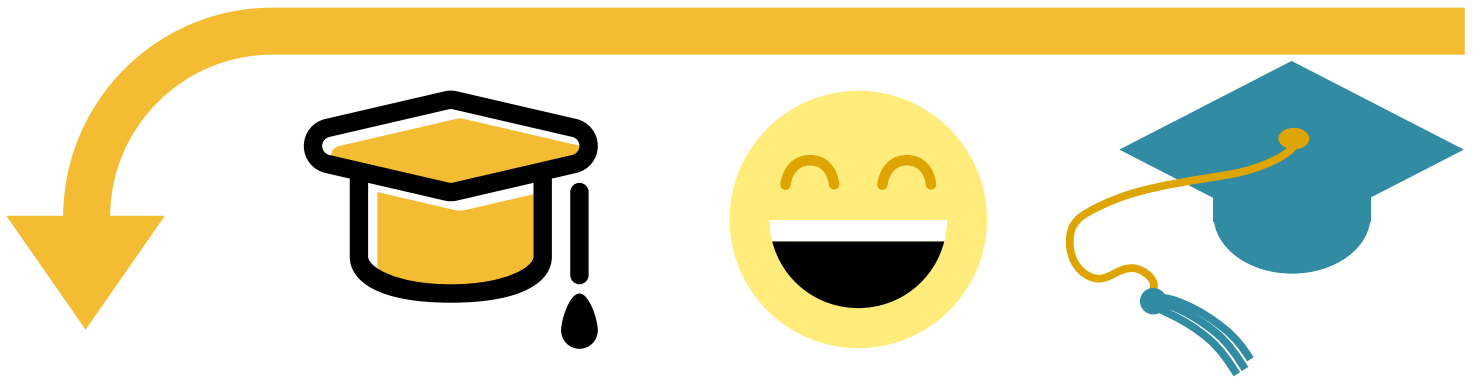
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Academic Success Checklist


SENIOR YEAR Q2



- Some schools might request an interview. If so - set up a meeting with your Higher Education Academic and Career Advisor through **HigherEd@Semtribe.Com**. They can help you prepare with mock interview sessions, give feedback and tips for your big day.
- If you are requesting additional financial aid, grants or scholarships through your school, you will need to fill out a FAFSA. Do this as soon as possible to get the most financial assistance beyond the Billy L. Cypress Higher Education Scholarship.
- Many scholarships are available outside of the Billy L. Cypress Scholarship - and these can be tailored to your career, ethnicity, hobbies and interests and abilities.
- Finalize your applications for any school with an approaching deadline.
- Be aware of your grades your senior year - schools can retract your admission of acceptance if you do not do well.
- *If you have just decided that college or a trade/vocational school is for you - or if you are still unsure there is still time. The longer you wait the less options available to you - contact your K-12 Advisor as soon as you can to set up a meeting.*

Academic Success Checklist

SENIOR YEAR Q3

- You should be receiving answers to your applications at this point. Most schools have a hard deadline of making a decision by May 1st - some earlier if you applied for priority or early action. Once you have received responses - make your final decision! If you need help deciding the best fit for you set up an appointment with Higher Education to run through the pros and cons of each school. 
- If you are taking AP exams - make sure any scores are sent to your school of choice.
- Once you have chosen your college - make an appointment to come in and fill out your Billy L. Cypress Scholarship Application. You will also get a chance to meet the Higher Education Program team that you will be working with closely.
- Still deciding? While State Universities will be mostly closed for applications at this time there are still options for schools that are on a rolling deadline. We can help you decide your best fit for post high school education.
- Make sure you are on track with your grades and graduation checklist and requirements from your high school. Any holds on your account will delay the sending of transcripts and diplomas to your college and to the K-12 and Higher Ed Advisors who need them.

Keep your "senioritis" in check - these grades are important and will allow to to skip out on PERT testing as well as not having your acceptance retracted.

Not sure which major to choose? No worries!

Set up a time to talk with a Higher Ed Advisor!

Contact: HigherEd@Semtribe.com

Academic Success Checklist

SENIOR YEAR Q4

- This is your final term - touch base with your teacher and guidance counselor to ensure you are on track and have no holds for graduation.
- Stop by the Higher Education Program to fill out the Billy L. Cypress Scholarship application if you have chosen your school. The items needed to complete your transition into Higher Ed are a copy of your high school diploma, a copy of your high school transcripts, your welcome letter from your school, and your class schedule with 9 minimum credit hours. For further details set up a time with your Higher Education Academic and Career Advisor to fill out your application and discuss the next steps.
- Over the summer - make sure to stay up to date with all the items needed from your college or trade/tech program to move forward smoothly. They usually have housing agreements to fill out, freshman orientations to attend, class schedules to create, and many other items.
- As soon as possible fill out a FERPA with your new college or trade/tech program. This will allow your Higher Education Program team to contact the school on your behalf.
- If you will be living on campus - make sure to stop by the Higher Education office to pick up your Dorm Room Checklist.
- If you would still like to search for scholarships outside of the Billy L. Cypress to assist with meal plans, off-campus housing, gas, and tolls, etc.
- Stop by for a Scholarship Consultation. You've come a long way - as your Education Department team we would like to congratulate you!



PRE-COLLEGE CHECK LIST

Make sure to stop by the Higher Education program to fill out your Billy L. Cypress Scholarship if you haven't already. Deadline is the last Friday in June for Fall.

Before first term at college/university/trade or technical program you will need to do/send us the following:

- Copy of schedule for the upcoming term
- Copy of Welcome / Enrollment letter from the school
- Meet with Higher Education Academic and Career Advisor over the phone or in person to go over in detail scholarship policies and how we will be working together during your time in school.
- Copy of high school Diploma
- Copy of high school transcripts
- Program Map/Outline

Needed after each term (Starting at the end of your first term):

- Copy of final grades
- Copy of next term schedule

To remain in good standing:

- Have an average/cumulative 2.5 GPA or higher
- Be on track to have a 18 credits for the school year
- Remain in contact with Higher Ed Advisor

In terms of your checklist with your college or trade/technical program make sure to do the following:

- Attend any orientations needed
- Fill out and finalize any paperwork
- Most schools require a physical and vaccination form - make sure to get that done as soon as possible to avoid delays

Discuss and arrange transportation - if you are going to need an airplane ticket to get to school make sure to fill out your travel request form with us 30 days in advance to the date you need to leave.

