The Ultimate Summer Checklist for High School Students

Once you enter high school, you should spend each summer adding something to your college resume. This means that, instead of lounging around for three months, you need to have something impressive and productive lined up for the summer before it even starts.



The Summer Before Freshman Year

- [ ] Acquaint yourself with your high school, specifically how the classrooms are laid out, so that you won't be lost on the first day.
- [ ] Make sure that you're ready for high school by buying all your school supplies, figuring out transportation, buying your textbooks, finalizing your class schedule, and working out all other logistics.
- [ ] Create a four-year plan of the classes you intend to take throughout high school.
- [ ] Make a list of which clubs and activities you may want to pursue during high school.
- [ ] If you can, try and do some community service work or attend an academic program.

The Summer Before Sophomore Year

- [ ] Taking on an impactful community service project. See 32 Community Service Ideas for Teen Volunteers to get you started.
- [ ] Shadowing someone in a career that interests you. Even if it is just for a week or two, the experience could prove to be invaluable.
- [ ] Working in a lab or hospital that takes high school volunteers/interns.
- [ ] Attending a pre-college summer program at a university you really want to attend in a field you think you may want to pursue.

The Summer Before Junior Year

- [ ] Getting a job at any local business or company that will hire high school students. Don't expect anything too fancy. Most students' first job is a simple minimum wage job.
- [ ] Again, working in a lab or hospital that takes high school students/volunteers is a great way to gain real-world business skills while making a difference.
- [ ] Taking on a big personal project like starting your own business or writing/publishing a novel.

The Summer Before Senior Year

- [ ] Gather all of the information you'll need for your college applications, including your test scores, your extracurricular profile, your community service work, and you work experience.
- [ ] Secure a copy of your latest transcript, GPA, and class rank so that you can refer to it when you're filling out your college applications.
- [ ] Take on a project that will really set you apart from other applicants on your college applications. This could be an internship at a company that takes high school interns, creating your own business or startup, etc.
- [ ] Finalize your college list. This is an ideal time to figure out which colleges you are going to be applying to and getting everything in order for application season.
- [ ] If you're still trying to take the SAT or ACT to get a higher score, focus on studying for those exams. You're running out of chances to improve your score!

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