



Ninth and Tenth Grade

Get your academic game plan. Meet with your School Guidance Counselor to discuss your college plans and lay out a plan for your high school career. Take a challenging but manageable course load. Don't be so aggressive that you max out your subjects your junior year and have little left to create a strong schedule your senior year. Stay strong in the core classes and make sure to get 4 credits each of English and math, 3 credits each in history and science. Make sure you get a fine art and one credit of Govt/Economics before graduation. Have at least 2 years of a foreign language, 3 is even better since more schools are now requiring it. Find out which AP courses and dual enrollment courses are offered at your school and factor those into your plan.

Get disciplined and organized in managing your time and assignments. Maybe you've always been a student who can sail through without a lot of organization or effort. Prepare for that to end. Develop a dependable time management system, using a planner or smartphone calendar (especially if it syncs to an internet based calendar for backup), in which you track all of your assignments, tests and other commitments. Create your good habits now.

Plan your activities at school. Look into what extracurricular activities are offered in your high school and decide which ones you can pursue without sacrificing your grades. Don't hop around to every club. Pick some activities you can truly enjoy and grow in, not just ones that will look good on paper.

Plan activities outside of school, especially volunteering. Volunteering is important in its own right. It can also provide a way for students to demonstrate their commitment to their community or special causes about which they feel strongly. There is an emerging genre of scholarships available to students who have demonstrated a passion for serving. (Keep up with your hours for your Legion Community Service Hours.)

Be creative. Whenever possible, look for ways to discern an unmet need and take the initiative to meet it. Such an effort shows leadership and an entrepreneurial spirit in addition to your desire to serve others. (For example, rather than volunteering to deliver meals on wheels, which is admirable, how much more would it say about you if you negotiated a program with local grocery stores to donate certain items on a regular basis that could be used for meals on wheels to expand their services.)

Look for ways to have meaningful summer experiences. Go on mission trips with your church, volunteer at a camp for disadvantaged children, pursue an interesting internship. Do something that will reflect your interests and passions.

Start exploring colleges/universities you might like to attend. Try to visit them while students are still on campus to get an authentic "feel" for the school. (Try a few Virtual College Tours for colleges/universities that interest you.)

Look for ways to find leadership roles. Pursue leadership roles that actually mean something and aren't just empty titles. Become a leader on your sports team, in your youth group, in a club or anything else that strikes your interest. It just needs to be meaningful to you.

Reference: [Hartley, E. Scholarship Gold Consulting, June 2016 Newsletter](#)

Athletes: Begin exploring the NCAA and NAIA. Learn about collegiate athletics from websites or attend a webinar.