



## College prep timeline for 9th graders

### AUGUST

- Build that vocabulary! Use flash cards, online tools, or post a list on your fridge.
- Set the tone for high school. Academics, health, and extracurriculars are all important.

*Also this month...*



**Help your teen learn time management.** Help your teen learn to use digital tools and a planner to keep track of their schedule and homework and plan their time.



**Encourage involvement.** Kids who participate in extracurriculars have higher self-esteem, get better grades, and are more likely to graduate from college.

### SEPTEMBER

- Make sure your teen's classes meet both graduation *and* college admission requirements.
- Prop those STEM doors open. Encourage your teen to take an interesting STEM class, join a club, or participate in a STEM activity in or outside of school.

*Also this month...*



**Talk about grades.** Explain that colleges will see this year's grades and that this is the easiest year to earn a high GPA. (Also, it's easier to earn good grades now than to boost their GPA later).

### OCTOBER

- Help your child become a strong test taker. Teach your teen to self-test when they study and to use test-taking strategies, such as reading the entire test before starting, reading questions closely, eliminating wrong answers on multiple-choice tests, and more.

*Also this month...*



**If your child will be a first-generation college student,** make your teen's college goal clear to their high school counselor and ask what resources may be available. Make sure your child's courses are challenging and put them on a path to college.

### NOVEMBER

- Look for opportunities for your teen to practice their group discussion skills.
- Think about which honors or AP courses your teen is interested in taking next year.

*For more info on the college admissions process, check out the full interactive timeline at [GreatSchools.org/gk/9th-grade-college-prep/](https://GreatSchools.org/gk/9th-grade-college-prep/).*

## DECEMBER

Support your teen as they study for finals by making sure they eat well, get enough rest, and study effectively by testing themselves as they go.

## JANUARY

Encourage your teen to get involved in extracurriculars. Now is a great time to explore what they're interested in (e.g. sports, activities, clubs) and join in.

*Also this month...*



**Have your teen take a personality test online.** It's a great way to get your teen thinking about careers and college majors they want to work toward.

## FEBRUARY

Check out a career day to help your teen learn more about possible career paths.  
 Think about summer plans that include work, volunteer and/or learning opportunities.

*Also this month...*



**Choose classes wisely.** Encourage your teen to create a class schedule for next year that includes challenging courses and electives that cultivate their talents and interests.



**Investigate what college will cost.** Use the Dept. of Education's net cost calculator to see how much need-based funding your child is likely to get.

## MARCH - APRIL

Visit a college campus to give your teen a taste of the college environment.  
 Keep track of your teen's accomplishments. Note dates, official names of awards or prizes, and a few details. This information will help come college application time.

*Also this month...*



**Is your child being tracked in math?** It's likely. Make sure your teen's classes count toward graduation *and* college admission. Challenging math classes look good to colleges.



**If your teen is taking an honors or AP science, math, or foreign language class,** they may want to take the associated SAT subject test now while the information is fresh.

## MAY - JUNE

Give finals week support. Make sure your child eats well, gets enough rest, and studies!  
 Summer homework: Read, read, read! Encourage your teen to read every day over break.  
 Help your teen get a feel for college life by researching a few colleges online.

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