

2 GETTING READY

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PREPARING FOR YOUR SENIOR YEAR

For more information and to view the **glossary**, check out our websites:

GETTING READY: ALL ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL

High school is a time to build your skills and explore your interests to prepare you for life after high school. In order to graduate there are requirements you must meet and it's important to become familiar with them.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL?

Earn required credits – Students in Washington State must complete a **minimum of 24 credits** to graduate from high school. However, your high school may have slightly different credit requirements.

Every class you take in high school counts towards graduation.
Talk with your counselor to get a list of your school's requirements.

Meet standard on state assessments – You must take and pass **state assessments** in English language arts, math and science or take and meet standard through one of a variety of state-approved alternatives.

Complete your High School and Beyond Plan – Starting in 7th or 8th grade you will create a plan to help you think about your future and choose classes that prepare you for your goals after high school.

TIPS:

- * **What you do in high school can influence your future**
- * **Pay attention in class and keep track of your grades**
- * **Use a planner to stay organized** and write down assignments, due dates and other responsibilities
- * **Don't be afraid to ask for help.** Be an advocate for yourself and ask for support from your counselors, teachers, family members and mentors.

SOME SCHOOLS HAVE ADDITIONAL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Check with your school counselor to see if you have any other requirements to earn your **diploma**.

Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) – The College Bound Scholarship and some school districts require at least a 2.0 GPA to graduate. The higher your **GPA**, the more college and scholarship options you will have available.

Service learning – You may need to complete service learning hours, where you give back to the community and reflect on your experience.

SEPT: GRADE 9 and 10



2 GETTING READY: PICKING THE RIGHT HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES

WHAT CLASSES SHOULD I TAKE?

The classes you take in high school prepare you for your post high school plans. Whether you choose to pursue an **apprenticeship** or a **technical, 2-year, 4-year college**, or military academy, you will want to learn their admission requirements.

THINGS TO KNOW:

- Your high school graduation requirements **may not** be the same as college admission requirements.
- 4-year colleges have the most selective requirements.
- Technical and 2-year colleges have less selective requirements.

MATH IS IMPORTANT:

- Most college programs, apprenticeships, and military options require you to take math. Taking more math in high school may mean taking less math in college and opening more post-high school options.
- Over 50% of high school graduates are not ready for college-level classes.
- Taking four years of high school math will help you get ready for college and can help you save on tuition costs!

REMINDER:

Make sure to look at the academic and class requirements for the colleges (2-year, 4-year, or technical) you are interested in attending.

WHAT ARE COLLEGES LOOKING FOR?

- A challenging class schedule, including courses where you can earn college credit. Examples include, **Advanced Placement (AP)**, **International Baccalaureate (IB)**, **Cambridge International**, College in the High School, Running Start or **CTE Dual Credit** (formerly Tech Prep) that can lead to a career credential or associate's degree.
- Electives that match your career and college interests including career and technical education programs of study.
- Some colleges may have additional entrance or admission requirements such as taking the **SAT** or **ACT**.
- Consider taking academic classes for your elective requirements such as foreign language and/or multiple lab sciences.

JAN: GRADE 9 and 10



GETTING READY: BUILDING YOUR COLLEGE PROFILE

Colleges don't only consider your grades.

They want applicants who contribute to the **campus** and/or the community. Specific activities can make you a more competitive applicant and help you build your work resumé. They should also be documented in your High School and Beyond Plan that is required for high school graduation.

WHAT IS AN ACTIVITIES LOG/ RESUMÉ

Some applications require an activities log/resumé. This list of your **extracurricular activities** provides a sense of your involvement in and outside of school. You should also include a short description of your involvement for each activity.

WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES SHOULD I PURSUE?

- Athletics
- College access programs
- Community service
- Faith-based/religious programs
- Family responsibilities
- Jobs or internships
- Music, drama and arts
- Summer programs
- School clubs
- Student government

start to keep track...

<input type="radio"/>	Robotics club

	_____ president
<input type="radio"/>	mechanic internship

	_____ from Jan to March '17
<input type="radio"/>	_____
	_____ woods club leader
<input type="radio"/>	_____

Keep in mind: Your activities log/resumé can also be useful when you apply for **scholarships** and jobs.

GOOD TO KNOW:

The level of **commitment and leadership** in your activities **matter more** in the admission review process **than the number of activities.**



NO TIME?

Colleges understand that many students have work, family and other responsibilities. Many applications include a section where you can **write about yourself or your circumstances.** For example, many students need to work multiple jobs to support their family. This is considered leadership.

Share your experience!

DEC: GRADE 9 and 10



2 GETTING READY: PREPARING FOR YOUR SENIOR YEAR

Congratulations! You've almost made it to your last year of high school. Now is **not** the time to get senioritis. You still need to do a number of things to graduate from high school and prepare for college.

WHAT SHOULD I DO THIS SUMMER?

- Register for **SAT or ACT tests**. Check with your counselor to see if either test is offered at your school.
- Visit **colleges** or attend **college fairs** and talk to college **admissions counselors**.
- Make a **calendar** for important dates and deadlines.
- Develop a **list** of several college choices (technical, 2-year, 4-year, apprenticeships).
 - Identify your top college choices and request information.
- Search for and apply to **scholarships**.
- Save **money** for college expenses.

WHAT SHOULD I DO MY SENIOR YEAR?

To Do:

- Schedule an **advising appointment** with your counselor or college-access mentor.
- If you are enrolled in dual credit courses, **talk to your teacher and counselor** about taking **AP, IB, or Cambridge exams** to earn college credit.
- Take the **SAT or ACT**.
- Complete the **FAFSA or WASFA** starting on October 1st of your senior year.
- Discuss a **college budget** with your family
- Work to maintain or **increase your GPA** with senior year grades. Colleges and scholarships require you to send fall AND spring **official transcripts**.

AM I ON TRACK TO GRADUATE?

- * **Make sure** you have all the credits needed to graduate.
- * **Check in regularly** with your teachers about your grades.
- * **Continue completing other graduation requirements**, such as your High School and Beyond Plan.

APR: GRADE 11

DON'T FREAK OUT!

If you have questions, make sure to talk to a **counselor, teacher, mentor, peer or family member** who can help you prepare or refer you to someone who can help.

