

# 9th Grade: College Checklist

IT'S A PLAN

Start high school strong and discover what you can do to get ready for college now.

## ACHIEVE

### Do well in school.

Academics are the most important factor in getting into and graduating college. Build good habits now that will help you be successful.

- Go to all of your classes. Attendance matters!
- Turn in all assignments.
- Discover how you learn best. Adopt strategies to support your learning preferences.
- Learn how to take notes, make outlines, and do research.
- Find a system that works for you to keep track of class material.
- Use a paper or digital planner to keep track of assignments and deadlines.
- Ask for help from teachers, parents, counselors, and friends.

### Take the right classes.

Make sure you have the classes you need to graduate from high school and apply to college.

- Take a full schedule of classes, including math, a second language and electives that interest you.
- Challenge yourself with honors or advanced classes, if available at your school.

## ENGAGE

### Get involved.

Extracurricular activities give you the chance to explore your interests and make friends. Colleges like to see how you are involved in your school and community.

- Participate in school and community activities. Try something new!
- Volunteer for an organization or cause you care about.
- Make a plan for summer.

### Spend time with good people.

Who you hang out with matters. Get a support system of people who want to see you succeed.

- Choose friends that share positive goals and interests.
- Find a mentor – a teacher, counselor, coach, other trusted adult or older student that you can talk to.

### Make good choices.

Practice healthy, safe, and kind behaviors.

- Take care of your physical and mental health. Exercise, eat healthy and get enough sleep.
- Be safe online and on your phone.
- Avoid risky behaviors like drinking, doing drugs, and having sex.
- Be kind; treat others with respect.



## EXPLORE

### Explore college and career options.

You can go to college. There are countless possibilities when it comes to both college and career. Keep your options open as your goals, interests, and preferences change.

- Explore careers that match your interests. Learn what type of education you will need.
- Get to know colleges. Take a virtual tour or if possible, visit a college campus.
- Think about what is most important to you in a college.

### Learn about paying for college.

You can afford college. Learn about the costs and how to pay for college.

- Learn about financial aid and other ways to pay for college.
- Set up and regularly contribute to a college savings account.
- Make a list of scholarships and apply to any available to you now.

### Get organized and get help.

Knowing how to get to college can be confusing. Get help in reaching your goals.

- Use Oregon Goes To College's templates and resources to help you stay organized.
- Create a file of important documents and a list of activities that you participate in.
- Connect with a counselor, teacher, mentor or program in your school or community.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

### Oregon Goes To College

[oregongoestocollege.org](http://oregongoestocollege.org)

Oregon's go-to resource for information about getting ready for education beyond high school. Learn how to prepare, explore, apply, pay and go to college.

### OSAC

[oregonstudentaid.gov](http://oregonstudentaid.gov)

Learn about Oregon's state financial aid programs including the Oregon Opportunity Grant, Oregon Promise, and OSAC scholarships.

### BigFuture

[bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org)

Discover how to prepare for college. Find the right college for you — search by location, major, and other criteria.

### College Scorecard

[collegescorecard.ed.gov](http://collegescorecard.ed.gov)

Search and compare colleges across the country with data on cost, graduation rate, and more.

