

College Prep for High School Students

Extracurricular Activities: Valuable Experience

How can your activities affect your future?

Scholarships: Sponsors often ask for a list of jobs, volunteer and extracurricular activities. Gained skills and accomplishments can set you apart from other scholarship applicants.

Colleges: Show an admissions office how your participation in activities has enriched life at your high school, and by extension, how you can enrich your prospective college's campus.

Essays: Quality participation in activities is a great topic for college and scholarship essays.

What can you do now to enhance the activities you're already involved in?

- * Identify your strengths and preferences with hands-on experience.
- * Keep hard copies of materials from events or projects you help to organize.
- * Maintain a personal record of tasks, responsibilities and achievements.
- * Get more deeply involved with fewer organizations instead of just showing up to many. Use those organizations to develop leadership skills.

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Standardized Tests: Changes for 2005

SAT: New Version

The New SAT debuts March 12, 2005. What's new?

Sections:

Writing Section

- Multiple choice questions on grammar and usage.
- A student-written essay has been added.

Critical Reading Section (previously "Verbal")

- No analogies.
- Shorter reading passages added.

Math

- Expanded to include third-year college-prep material.
- No quantitative comparisons.

Scoring:

Each section will still use a 200 to 800 scale. Since there are three sections, a perfect score will be 2400.

ACT: New Writing Section

The ACT is adding a writing section. However, this portion of the test **may not be required** by your prospective colleges. Check with those colleges to find out if the ACT Writing Test is required.

Both new tests will affect those students starting college in the fall of 2006 (and all following students).

Standardized Test Dates

New SAT:	ACT :
March 12, 2005	February 12, 2005
May 7, 2005	April 9, 2005
June 4, 2005	June 11, 2005

Prepare and Plan: Use High School Resources

Meet with your counselor early. Plan your high school curriculum to be sure you're covered for college requirements.

Take more rigorous classes. Course difficulty is as important as grades. If you think you can meet the challenge, opt for an academically rigorous course over an easy "A."

Master the basics. Strengthen your reading, writing, math and vocabulary skills for college and scholarship essays, as well as standardized tests.

Do your best in your classes. Remember: class rank and GPA are still key factors in college admissions.

Explore your interests through your classes. Take classes in a variety of subjects to find out what interests you.

Perform community service or get a part-time job. Show that you're a well-rounded person who knows how to manage your time.

Participate in a summer program. A quality hands-on program can help you decide if a certain career path is right for you.

Make and maintain connections with teachers. You may have to ask a teacher to write a recommendation down the road.