

TIPS AND TRICKS

High School Course Planning Edition

- **Freshman Year:**

- Foundation Year: Build strong academic habits and explore
- Take Core Classes: English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Language
- Choose one elective that excites you (art, music, business, tech)
- Focus on adjusting to high school rigor before overloading
- Join as many school clubs as possible to see where your interests fall

- **Sophomore Year:**

- Exploration Year + Early Rigor
- Continue with core academics
- Add 1-2 Honors/AP Courses from the previous year, ONLY if you feel ready
- Start electives that align with possible passions (ex: AP Computer Science if tech-minded, AP Art if creative, Business/Marketing if entrepreneurial)
- Narrow down your club list on extracurriculars you think you can commit to long-term

- **Junior Year:**

- Pivot Year: Most important year for college admissions
- Prioritize rigor: take multiple AP/Honors/IB courses in subjects you're strong in
- Pick electives tied to your career interests (finance, law, medicine, engineering, etc.)
- Take the SAT/ACT and prepare seriously

- Stick with a few key extracurriculars & apply for leadership positions: depth > breadth
- Consider dual enrollment, independent studies, internships, or research opportunities
- **Senior Year:**
 - Maintain rigor: register for AP/IB/dual enrollment connected to your intended major.
 - Consider capstone experiences: internships, passion projects, or leadership positions
 - Use free periods strategically (college apps, independent study, or mentorship).
 - Polish extracurricular commitments — show leadership & impact
- **Final Tips:**
 - Partner with clubs, nonprofits, or teachers for credibility + reach
 - Turn your project into an article, website, or guide so others can benefit
 - Share your journey online (LinkedIn, school newsletter, local press)
 - Always ask: *“What did I learn? What impact did I create?”*
- **Final Tips:**
 - Balance GPA + Rigor: It’s better to get an A in Honors than a C in AP
 - Tell a Story: Align electives with passions (ex: Law → AP Gov, Speech & Debate, STEM → AP Physics, Comp Sci)
 - Plan Ahead: Some courses have prerequisites, so map out early (e.g., to take AP Calc, start advanced math early)
 - Stay Flexible: Your interests may change, and that’s okay! Adjust as needed
 - Keep Records: Track grades, awards, and activities for resumes and applications