

TIPS AND TRICKS

Sophomore Year Guide

- **Sophomore Year**

- Sophomore year is all about growth and positioning yourself for future opportunities. This year, it's time to deepen your involvement, strengthen your academic habits, and start exploring leadership.

- **Academics**

- Coursework: Challenge yourself with honors/AP/dual-credit classes in core subjects that you feel comfortable in; strong grades matter a lot for GPA trend
- Study Habits: Utilize past study habits that worked for you and keep expanding/refining on them: flashcards, group study, note-taking
- Help: Use office hours, tutoring, or your own classmates for help; don't be scared, and take the initiative to make your learning easier
- Teacher Connections: Make sure to start building relationships with your teachers, as they might write your recommendations in the future; do this by asking questions, participating actively, and showcasing curiosity

- **Extracurriculars:**

- Clubs: Stick with the clubs you committed to at the end of your freshman year, but start deepening your role (whether that means talking to the executive board on small positions you can hold or helping organize activities)

- Make sure to get a good connection with both the students in the club, as well as the sponsors, for when you are applying for a higher leadership position
 - If you're unsure about whether or not to apply for a leadership position, always apply!! Don't regret it, and you never know!
- Exploration: If you didn't love the clubs last year, still explore; it's never too late to join a club
- Passion Projects: Consider starting a small project (blog, business idea, art portfolio, coding project); these can grow into something bigger by junior year
- **Leadership Development:**
 - Apply for entry-level leadership roles (committee member, outreach lead, event coordinator)
 - Shadow or learn from upperclassmen in leadership roles, always ask them questions about the application to clear up any confusion
 - Volunteer for small responsibilities to build credibility for bigger ones later
- **Organize and Time Management:**
 - Start using a planner: It can be either physical or digital, but it will allow you to keep all your homework, tests, and long-term projects on track
 - Balance: Don't overload yourself with too many APs and honors along with multiple clubs; see what works for you, your health, and your schedule when making those decisions
- **Planning Ahead:**
 - Focus on where your interests lie
 - Ask yourself: Do I learn more towards arts, education, business, STEM, or politics?

- Keep track of your achievements: Save awards, volunteer hours, and activities in a document to reference it back in the future
- **Summer Opportunities:**
 - Look for pre-college programs, internships, volunteering, or camps in areas you enjoy
 - A lot of them have applications that open up in December/January and are due in the next few months, so start looking early
 - If formal programs aren't possible, create your own project: research something, start a small initiative, or volunteer locally
- **Planning Ahead:**
 - Don't Compare: Everyone grows at different speeds. Focus more on your own progress
 - Embrace Failure: Learn from your mistakes to adapt to bounce back
 - Enjoy High School: This is a new chapter of your life, have fun with it