

7 TIPS FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS IN HIGH SCHOOL

Home / Blog / 7 Tips for Academic Success in High School

So, you are a high school student. Great! No matter what stereotypes you may have heard, high school is a magical time when students have the opportunity to learn, grow, and make mistakes to work on creating the academic habits they will carry with them to college and a career.

However, for high-achieving students, high school can also feel overwhelming. Academic success seems mandatory to get accepted into the right colleges and universities and pave the way toward a bright future.

Fortunately, the way to enjoy academic success in high school does not have to be a mystery. Here are seven tips for high school students to keep in mind as they strive for academic excellence during these formative years:

1. Explore and Find Your Passions

As a high school student, one of the most important ways to prepare yourself for a successful future is to do a lot of exploring so you can discover the areas of study and extracurricular activities that you're passionate about.

A common misconception might lead students to believe that colleges and universities, even future employers, find a wide array of activities most impressive. In fact, leaders are actually often impressed by individuals who find their few passions and pursue them whole-heartedly.

Pursuing too many different activities at once in high school could lead to an overwhelming experience. Sometimes, selecting a few activities you care most

Source: <https://www.nshss.org/blog/7-tips-for-academic-success-in-high-school/>

about will lead to more success in those areas than if you attempt to get involved in every possible way throughout high school.

As Cassandra Allen, recent Wellesley graduate, notes in **College Admission—How to Get Into Your Dream School: Real Students, Real Stories** by James Lewis, *“You don’t have to do everything; it’s okay to pick one or two clubs and be passionate about them.”* Students like Allen learned the hard way that overfilling a high school schedule is not always the best strategy.

Remember, you are only human. Take time to explore the world and all possibilities of study while in high school—and then really delve into the subjects and activities you love the most.

2. Learn for Growth, Not Just Your GPA

Speaking of passions, learn to be passionate about the act of learning itself. Though the prospect of getting into the right college or university to eventually land the dream job might tempt you to focus on achieving the highest GPA possible, high school should also be a time when you fall in love with the process of learning.

The more fun you have while learning in high school, the more fun you will learn to have throughout your life, since life is a constant journey filled with new discoveries and lessons. If you can master the art of enjoying school now, imagine how much more fulfilling your entire high school and college experience will be later.

Focusing solely on grades and on-paper achievements will lead to a pressure-filled high school experience. Remember to take stock of where you are, who you are with, and what you are learning as you soak in your high school years. So many students would likely go back and do so if they could, so learn from those students now and enjoy learning for the fun of it! Why not, right?

3. Work On Time Management Skills

While time management does not sound like the fun you might want to have while learning, discovering how to use your time wisely will certainly help you enjoy high school more. You can accomplish time management in whatever ways work best for you, but some tried and true methods include the following:

- **Keep a calendar, whether digital or on paper.** Calendars have a way of reminding you of the tasks you once thought were important, and you can even color-code them to reveal where you are spending most of your time--whether on studying, social time, extracurriculars, etc.
- **Schedule study sessions for classes before the week of the test.** Studying over time is a much better plan for success on tests than cramming the week or night before. Give your brain time to digest information, and you'll be surprised how much better you know the material--not just for the test, but for a lifetime of knowledge.
- **Prioritize the most important tasks.** Determine which tasks every day are most important to you, and add them first on your list. For example, if you know you have a major project due in a week, you might want to prioritize brainstorming for that project and save the easier homework for later.
- **Create good habits, like reviewing notes each night before bed.** Looking over information before bed can help the content solidify in your mind, so make it a habit to review notes for your hardest classes before you go to sleep. Any small, doable habit like this is a good idea--especially when you can form that habit at such a young age.
- **Strive to be on time.** In every stage of your life, you'll find that people respect those who are prompt. And when you are on time, you show others you respect their time as well as your own. The earlier you can learn to be on time, the better, since this skill will always serve you well.

Learning how to manage your time in high school will inevitably make the transition to college and your professional life much easier. Best of all, the more adept you become at time management, the more time you will hopefully create

Source: <https://www.nshss.org/blog/7-tips-for-academic-success-in-high-school/>

in your schedule to have some fun with friends, as well as studying and enjoying extracurriculars.

4. Get Involved in Your Community

The life of a high school student can sometimes feel like living in a bubble. However, you will become more engaged in your own life the more you engage with your surrounding community.

Not only does volunteerism add to a resume, but it also has a way of creating much happier students. Volunteering within your local and global community has been found to have major **health benefits** like lower blood pressure and a longer overall life—not to mention the good volunteers do for their fellow community members.

Moreover, by getting involved in your community, you will have more opportunities to explore your interests, thus providing you with a better idea of which area(s) of study you might want to pursue in college and in a future career.

You might even find that you start to get more interested in your classes, since you see the evidence of those lessons in your community and can apply academics to the world around you.

5. Utilize Your Resources

As with most accomplishments in life, succeeding in high school cannot be done without help. In high school, you have access to a wealth of resources, and you can usually find sources of help you hadn't even thought about.

Of course, your parents, teachers, family members, and friends should all be there to help you; but you have other resources at your fingertips as well.

Source: <https://www.nshss.org/blog/7-tips-for-academic-success-in-high-school/>

High School Counselors

Get to know your high school counselors, as these individuals will not only be able to help you manage coursework and life throughout your early high school years but will also become invaluable resources as you plan for life after high school--in college and beyond.

High School Honor Societies

As a high school student, you also have access to high school honor societies like the National Society of High School Scholars (**NSHSS**), where you can **apply for scholarships**, gain leadership experience, and learn tips and tricks from other scholars and educators--as well as plug into a network.

Becoming a member of a high school honor society will also give you the resources you need to create both short- and long-term academic goals.

College Students

If you plan to apply for college, you should also consider consulting students you know who are currently in college, like family members or friends, who went through the years you are about to experience.

Ask them what advice they would give you, what you should prepare for now, and how they were able to achieve academic success in high school. Though every person is different, gathering as much information as possible will only help you understand the process of preparing for your future and what you should expect.

Books and Online Publications

Source: <https://www.nshss.org/blog/7-tips-for-academic-success-in-high-school/>

Of course, you also have access to books and online publications about high school academic success, preparing for college, and planning for the future you want.

Books like **College Admission—How to Get Into Your Dream School: Real Students, Real Stories**, for example, contain stories and tips from real college students on topics from formulating good study habits to learning how to relax when school gets overwhelming.

Always think critically about where you get your information and check your sources; but with the digital world so full of resources, you can usually find plenty of answers to any question you might have.

6. Prioritize Your Health

You cannot have academic success in high school if you are not healthy enough to experience it fully, so make sure you always prioritize your health.

Tip #3 will help with this, but make time to exercise, eat balanced, nutritious meals, drink plenty of water, and sleep. Take a rest when you really need it, carve out time for mindfulness in your day, and spend time with friends and family.

Your body and mind work best when you take good care of them, so do not sacrifice your health for the sake of a good grade. You know when you can work harder and when you should take a break, so listen to yourself and learn your own signals.

7. Create Your Own List of Success Tips

Finally, realize that you are a unique individual and will be able to create your own list of success tips as you go through high school.

Source: <https://www.nshss.org/blog/7-tips-for-academic-success-in-high-school/>

Every student and adult could tell you personal lessons they've learned, but only you can get to know yourself well enough to craft your own list.

By recognizing your individual power, you will also begin to learn that only you can be the best version of yourself. Know your value by prioritizing your academic success in high school, learn which classes and activities you are most passionate about, and enjoy learning while you have a safe and supportive place to do so--you will thank yourself in the future!

About NSHSS

With **NSHSS**, students and educators can take advantage of scholarship and grant opportunities to help reach their academic potential and pay for college, study abroad opportunities, summer programs, and even graduate school. NSHSS and its **partners** offer more than \$2,000,000 in scholarships each year. The spectrum of high school and college-level **scholarships** available with NSHSS are designed for students in the areas of academic excellence, entrepreneurship, **leadership**, literature, medicine, music, STEM, sustainability, visual arts, and more. Learn more **about NSHSS** or **NSHSS scholarships** open for application.