



11th Grade

TRIO

Student Guidebook

Dear TRIO 11th Graders,

The finish line is within sight! And not just the finish line, but all of the big changes that come after high school: new challenges, new opportunities, more freedom, and new responsibilities.

Whether this makes you feel excited, anxious, or a little of both, it's important to keep making good choices and to stay on the path to success. Spend this year getting good grades, and talking to the people who can help you with your college and career plans.

Remember, the better you do academically, the more options you'll have after high school. Let's make this a great year!

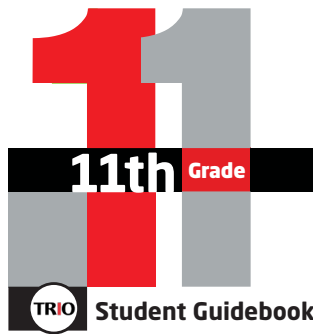


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are you on track?

Graduation is right around the corner, and you need to make sure that you're on track to graduate. You also want to make sure that you're taking the courses you need to achieve your college and career goals.



Get ready to graduate

Take a few minutes to review your school's graduation requirements. If you think you might be short on credits or missing a required course, see your counselor.

Take college prep courses

Meet with your counselor to make sure you're taking the courses you need for the kind of college and/or program you're considering. Also talk to your counselor and your TRIO teacher about your college plans and get any questions you have about college answered.

Review your high school record

What you don't want to do is simply hope that you're on track to graduate and that you have the recommended courses for college. *You need to make sure.* Reviewing your high school record now gives you time to add any courses you might still need.



*The stronger your high school record,
the more college options you will have.
For tips on how to build an impressive
high school record, watch this short video.*

stay motivated

We all get stuck sometimes. To keep yourself going when things get hard, you need to keep a positive attitude and find ways to stay motivated. Here are some tips for staying motivated and engaged.

Surround yourself with positive people

In life, we come across all kinds of people. Some are positive influences in our lives and some are not. Try to be around people who support and encourage you. These are the people who will help you achieve your goals and realize your dreams.



Set goals

Goals give you direction and purpose. They help you decide where you want to go and what you need to do. Have a list of both short-term goals (get a B on Monday's biology test) and long-term goals (graduate with a 3.0 GPA).

Turn failures into successes

When something doesn't go well, it's natural to get discouraged and want to give up. Instead, learn from the experience, and use that knowledge to do better next time.

Use motivating "self-notes"

Write motivating words, ideas, and/or quotes on sticky notes. Put these notes anywhere you're likely to see them.

Figure out what motivates you

Turn what competes with your schoolwork into a motivator. For example, reward yourself with social media or video game time once your homework is done.

read to learn

As you advance in high school, the material you read will be longer and more complex. To help you comprehend and retain more of what you read, follow these three steps:

1) SURVEY 2) READ 3) REVIEW

Survey

Surveying gives you a quick overview of what you'll be reading. To survey an assignment, read the title, section headings, and everything in bold and italic print. Look at the pictures, graphs, and charts. Read the introduction, summary, and review questions.

Read

To get the most out of your reading, use all of the learning tools your textbook provides. Using these tools will help you understand and remember more of what you read.

headings and subtitles – introduce main ideas

bold and italic print – highlight key terms

pictures and graphs – help you visualize information

vocabulary lists – introduce and define new terms

chapter summaries – give you an overview

review questions – test your comprehension



Review

After you've finished reading an assignment, take a few minutes to review. *It will make a huge difference in what you're able to remember.*

To review, go through the same process you did when you surveyed the text (read the introduction, summary, headings, and the words in **bold** and *italic print*), but this time, think about what you've learned.

Review is the key to learning and remembering information!

take good notes

Because tests usually cover material that's been presented in class, having good notes to study from will improve your test grades. Here are some tips to help you take good class notes—and get better grades.



Format your notes

- ▶ Start a new page for each day and class. At the top of the page, write the name of the class, the date, page number, and the topic of your notes.
- ▶ Use only one side of the paper and skip lines between ideas/topics. This will give you space if you want to add something later.
- ▶ Leave a wide margin on the left side of each page for key words (people, places, topics, events).

Be an active listener

When you're actively listening in class, you aren't just hearing the words; you're also thinking about and trying to understand the information that's being presented. You must be an active listener in order to take good notes.

Recognize important information

To take good notes, you must be able to identify the information that's most important. If you listen carefully, you'll find that teachers often give verbal clues telling you what information they believe to be the most important.

To help you recognize important information, listen for the following: louder or slower speech, information that's repeated, and phrases such as "the main point."

your college to-do list

There's a lot you need to do this year to get ready for college. This college to-do list will help make sure that you get everything done on time.

Set up a calendar for the year

Use this calendar to record test dates, college fairs, college visitation days, and events at your high school (programs, meetings, college representatives visiting your school).

Create a college file

Use this file to keep college brochures, notes on college visits, and copies of test scores.

Make a testing plan

Learn about college tests (PSAT/NMSQT, ACT, SAT). Decide if and when you will take them, and put the registration dates on your calendar.

If you're an athlete...

If you hope to play a sport in college, talk to your counselor to make sure that you're taking all of the courses you need. Also, register online with the NCAA Eligibility Center. Visit eligibilitycenter.org.

Work hard to get the best grades possible

When you fill out college applications in the fall of your senior year, a copy of your transcript will be submitted along with your application. Because your junior grades will likely be the last grades on your transcript, it's important that you do as well as possible your junior year. *Colleges like to see improvement, so if your grades aren't as good as they should be, now is the time to bring them up.*

Develop your interests

Participate in activities in and out of school, take on leadership roles when possible, and do some volunteer work.

Colleges are looking for students who have something that makes them stand out. If you have an interest, talent, or passion, take time this year to develop it.



Explore your options

Think about what you're looking for in a college and learn about the schools you want to consider. Talk to your parents and your counselor about your college options.

Think about a major

All four-year college students choose a major. This is the subject you will study in-depth. Think about your abilities, talents, and interests in terms of a possible major. For help in choosing a major, visit bigfuture.collegeboard.org.

Make college visits

Visiting different colleges is the best way to find out what kind of college will be the best fit for you. Talk to your parents to determine which colleges you will visit, and make a plan. Check college websites for visitation days and open houses.

Have a conversation about college costs

Talk to your parents about how your education will be paid for. Will you need financial aid? Will you apply for scholarships? To get an estimate of what your financial aid might be, use the Federal Student Aid Estimator at studentaid.gov.

For a quick review of what you should do this year to plan and prepare for college, watch this short video.



VIDEO

choosing a college

To find a college that's a good fit for you, consider each of the following.



Type of college

Four-year colleges offer a wide variety of majors and programs. Two-year colleges offer affordable one- and two-year career programs that prepare students for a specific career. Students can also start at a two-year college and then transfer to a four-year college to earn their bachelor's degree.

Campus size

Larger colleges offer lots of majors, programs, and activities. Smaller colleges usually have smaller classes and a more personal feel.

Location

Some students go out of state to college, but most students choose to attend a college in their home state to take advantage of the lower in-state tuition.

Major (area of study)

All college students must choose a major or program. This is the subject they will spend most of their time studying.

Admission requirements

To increase your chances of admission, it's best to look for colleges that accept students with academic records similar to yours.

Cost

College can be expensive, but financial aid is available and there are many ways to cut college costs. *If you need help paying for college, watch this short video.*



college visits

Making a college visit is the best way to find out if a college is going to be a good fit for you.

Plan your visit

- ▶ Decide when to make your visit. The spring of your junior year is generally a good time to visit a college.
- ▶ Schedule your visits online or by phone. Check college websites for open houses and visitation days.

Learn all you can

- ▶ A group tour is a great way to see a campus. Ask your tour guide questions like, *What are the strongest majors?*
- ▶ Be sure to check out the nearby city or town.



Talk to people

- ▶ Schedule appointments with people who can answer your questions, such as admissions counselors, financial aid counselors, and program directors.
- ▶ Talk to students. Ask them what they like and don't like about the college and what they do on weekends.

Make notes and take pictures

- ▶ As you explore the campus, make a note of your impressions and what you like and don't like about a college.
- ▶ Visualize yourself as a student there. Do you feel comfortable? Does the college feel like a good fit?

Meet with someone in the admissions office so the college knows that you've made the effort to visit their campus. Demonstrated interest can be a factor in the admissions decision.

college admission tests

Your junior year is when you need to determine what tests you should take. Talk to your counselor for information and advice.

The PSAT/NMSQT

This test is given in October, primarily to juniors. It's good practice for the SAT, and students find out how their skills compare to the skills of other college-bound students. Exceptionally high scores can lead to scholarship opportunities.

The ACT and SAT

Some four-year colleges no longer require ACT/SAT scores as part of the application process; but many colleges do. Unless you're certain that you will not need to submit test scores, you should plan to take the ACT or SAT.

What do the tests cover? The ACT consists of four multiple-choice tests: English, reading, math, and science. The SAT has three sections: reading, writing and language, and math.

When should you take these tests? It's best to take one of these tests in the spring of your junior year. If you want to improve your scores, you can then retake the test in the fall of your senior year.

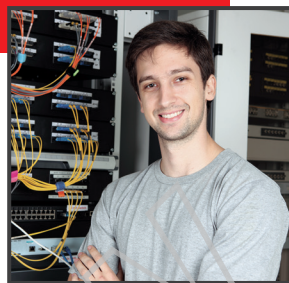
Should you take the ACT, SAT, or both? Many experts recommend that you take a full-length practice test for each, determine which one you're likely to do better on, and then devote all of your time and energy to preparing for that test.

How should you prepare?

The best way to prepare for the ACT or SAT is to take a full-length practice test. Time yourself and go over the questions you answered incorrectly. For ACT and SAT practice tests and other test prep materials, visit act.org and collegeboard.org.

college majors

Now is a good time to start thinking about what you might like to study in college, and what you would like to major in.



What is a major?

A major is the subject that students attending a four-year college study in-depth. Almost half of the courses a student takes at a four-year college will be in their major—so it's very important that students choose a subject area they like.

Most colleges have popular majors like business and education, but if you have something specific you want to study, you need to look for colleges that offer that major.

Do two-year college students choose a major?

Instead of choosing a major, two-year college students choose the program they want their degree to be in, such as dental hygiene, fire science, or engineering technology.

Students who want to transfer to a four-year college sign up for a transfer program. They then take courses they know the four-year college they plan to attend will accept, like English, science, and math.

How do I choose a major?

Your major should be in a subject you enjoy and will succeed in—and one that will help you achieve your career goals. Think about your favorite classes in high school and search online for majors related to those subjects.

How do I prepare for my major?

Choose your high school courses wisely. For example, students who plan to major in nursing should take a lot of science and math. Also look for volunteer and part-time job opportunities in your fields of interest.

be smart about **money**



As a junior, you might have a job and some money of your own. Learning how to be smart with money will help you make wise financial choices and decisions today, and in the future.

Know the ways to pay

Many people still use cash to pay for things (especially for small in-person purchases), but nowadays, debit cards, credit cards, and electronic/mobile payments are more common.

Debit cards automatically deduct money from your checking account whenever you make a purchase or withdraw money from an ATM. There are some definite advantages to using a debit card. There is no interest charge and no end-of-the-month bill to pay. However, debit cards do not help you build good credit.

Credit cards allow you to borrow money from a bank or business to make purchases. You are then given a period of time (usually a month) to repay the balance. If you don't pay the balance within the designated time period, you're charged interest on the unpaid amount. Most young people use a debit card because of the credit card restrictions for anyone under the age of 21.

Mobile payments refer to the transfer of money using a mobile app, email, or online account. Mobile payments are also called digital wallets, mobile money, and peer (P2P) payments. Examples of mobile payments include PayPal, Venmo, Zelle, Apple Pay, and Google Pay. Mobile payments are fast and convenient, but they often include fees.

build a support network

The better your education, the more choices and opportunities you will have in life. But to achieve your education goals and reach your potential, you need to have a support network.



How your support network can help you

- ▶ **Advice and guidance.** The people in your support system can offer advice on choosing a college and a major. They can also help you find the answers to any questions you may have.
- ▶ **Goal-setting.** Your network of supporters can help you set academic and personal goals—and hold you accountable for achieving them.
- ▶ **Emotional support.** Planning and preparing for college can be stressful, and it's important to have people you can share your concerns and problems with.
- ▶ **Networking.** Who you know can often be just as important as what you know. Having people in your corner expands your potential college and career opportunities.

Build your support network

There are lots of people who would be happy to help and support you as you plan and prepare for college. These people, however, may not know that you want or need their support.

This is why it's important for you to identify the people in your life who you can turn to for help. Consider your counselor, TRIO teacher, coaches, family members, relatives, and anyone else you'd feel comfortable going to for help and advice. Tell these people that you want to attend college and ask them for their support.

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This booklet is filled with helpful tips and expert advice on how you can have an amazing junior year!

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