

How to Not Be Stupid

High school

General Tips for High School pt. 1

- ★ Keep in touch with counselors regularly
 - They can nominate you for certain opportunities/scholarships
- ★ Always check for opportunities advertised by your school
- ★ Talk to your teachers! Ask questions! Develop relationships
 - They can potentially round up your grade and write LoR for you when you apply to college
- ★ Colleges care more about how long you're involved in an extracurricular than how many you have (apparently)
- ★ Focus on what you love! Be completely honest about what you see yourself doing in the future and pursue it shamelessly
- ★ Adults don't know everything
- ★ People with careers in education are severely underpaid, which can affect their work ethic

General Tips for High School pt. 2

- ★ TAKE THE ACT/SAT AFTER YOU TAKE ALGEBRA 2!
- ★ Visit colleges whenever you can- the most important factor in picking a college is how you feel when you're on campus
- ★ Take BOTH the SAT and the ACT- people tend to do far better on one test over the other
 - The ACT is known for being more straightforward while the SAT aims to trick students with over-complicated wording
- ★ AP credit is an amazing thing! The UCs accept any score from 3-5, but private schools will only accept certain AP classes with certain scores, usually only 5s.
- ★ If you had a rough year or two (or three), don't worry. Colleges love to see resiliency! Just make sure you are trying to improve and showing this!

Freshman Year

- ★ Have fun!
- ★ Explore your interests
- ★ Start your college search (if you want)!

Sophomore Year

- ★ If you're taking Algebra 2 this year, take your standardized tests in the spring
 - <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register> (SAT)
 - <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/registration.html> (ACT)
- ★ Start your college search!
 - <https://www.niche.com> (Niche)
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search> (CollegeBoard Big Future)
 - <https://www.collegeconfidential.com> (College Confidential)
 - If you have majors in mind, look for colleges known for this major program
 - Location matters!
- ★ You can take the PSAT (but it doesn't really predict your SAT score)

Junior Year

- ★ If you're taking Algebra 2, take standardized tests in the spring
- ★ This is the year you're expected to take the SAT/ACT
 - If you plan on transferring to a UC or CSU, you don't need to take these tests!
 - If you think you might want to transfer to a **school not in the UC or CSU system**, especially if it's **private and/or out-of-state**, you will **need to submit SAT/ACT scores**
 - There are tons of free test-taking practice resources online:
 - <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat> (SAT)
 - <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/practice/full-length-practice-tests> (SAT)
 - <https://uniontestprep.com/act> (ACT)
 -
- ★ Try visiting colleges this year! If a school is right for you, you will know. If you're not sure if it feels “right”, it doesn't.

The SAT and ACT

- ★ “The tests themselves have a long history of favoring **white, middle-class students** by testing bodies of knowledge that are fundamentally white and middle-class; therefore, the tests reinforce the idea that white identity is the default American identity.” (Teen Vogue) <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/the-history-of-the-sat-is-mired-in-racism-and-elitism>
- ★ “In essence, questions for future tests were deemed “**good questions**” if they replicated the outcomes of previous exams; specifically, tests **where black and Latinx students scored lower than their white peers.**” (Teen Vogue)
- ★ “With regard to income, a 2015 analysis found that students with family income less than \$20,000 scored **lowest** on the test, and those with family income above \$200,000 scored **highest.**” (Forbes)
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kimelsesser/2019/12/11/lawsuit-claims-sat-and-act-are-biased-heres-what-research-says/#2270b8573c42>
- ★ “In 1923, Carl Brigham, one of the men **who developed these intelligence tests**, published *A Study of American Intelligence*. In it, he used data gathered from these IQ tests to argue the following: “The decline of American intelligence will be more rapid than the decline of the intelligence of European national groups, **owing to the presence here of the negro.**” (Teen Vogue)
- ★ Another good article: <https://www.sacbee.com/opinion/op-ed/soapbox/article16154981.html>

Senior Year

- ★ If you want to attend a four-year university straight out of high school, you need to take the **SAT/ACT by December**
- ★ Fill out the FAFSA for the first time (**due by March 2nd**)!
- ★ If you apply to **private and/or out-of-state schools**, you will have to (probably) fill out another financial aid form called the **CSS Profile**
- ★ Senioritis will hit HARD, especially during your second semester (so right now, but you're here on a Saturday in the early morning so FANTASTIC)
- ★ Maintain your grades because acceptances can be **rescinded** if your grades/GPA drops too much
- ★ Cherish every moment because the year goes by so fast!
- ★ What you wear to graduation doesn't even matter because your gown will cover most of it, so focus on your hair and your shoes (if you care)

When Applying to College

- ★ Make sure you'd be willing to go to **every single school** you apply to
- ★ Don't wait until the last minute for applications because most due dates align with the end of the semester, so you'll be filling them out while trying to cram for finals
- ★ You **HAVE** to pick safety schools
- ★ Colleges will dress themselves up to attract applicants- **know that no college is as glamorous as they appear**
- ★ If you live close enough to a university, you can literally sit in on a class unnoticed and experience the classroom environment
- ★ If you don't get in, and you LOVE the school, **PETITION!**
- ★ Take the spot on the waitlist!
- ★ Fill out the FAFSA (putting **"Off Campus"** on your FAFSA will get you more money)
- ★ A college's stats don't matter! Many colleges **falsely report them**

College Application Process

- ★ COLLEGE ADMISSIONS IS A SHITSHOW
- ★ Annie Phun (my friend at Princeton)!
- ★ There are dumb people EVERYWHERE
- ★ Harvard and UCLA and CSUN and community college are all the same, and have all the same students
- ★ Again I cannot emphasize how random it is
- ★ IT'S CORRUPT TOO! PEOPLE PAY TO GET IN!
- ★ The time of day can even affect your decision- you're more likely to get in if the people on the admissions board ate before reviewing your application and more likely to reject you if they have not

LINKS ABOUT THE CORRUPTION OF COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

- ★ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/03/19/college-admissions-are-corrupt-because-universities-are-heres-how-fix-them/>
- ★ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/roncarucci/2019/03/18/a-15-year-study-reveals-why-the-college-admissions-scandal-was-inevitable/#407ed9eb5af0>
- ★ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/01/us/harvard-admissions-lawsuit.html>
- ★ <https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/23/us/university-oklahoma-best-colleges-ranking/index.html>
- ★ https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/does-it-matter-that-an-elite-university-lied-to-college-rankers-for-years/2012/08/22/e89b39d2-ec68-11e1-aca7-272630dfd152_blog.html
- ★ https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/does-it-matter-that-an-elite-university-lied-to-college-rankers-for-years/2012/08/22/e89b39d2-ec68-11e1-aca7-272630dfd152_blog.html
- ★ <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2019/03/14/colleges-caught-up-in-admissions-corruption-are-elite-already/>



What to put on your application!

- ★ Your major that you declare on your application can affect your admission, especially if it's an impacted program (you can change it later!)
- ★ Be as honest and genuine as possible- it is so easy to tell when people aren't and it is unbelievably annoying
- ★ Try to be memorable! If you're funny, be funny! Pinpoint what makes you really unique and touch on these to make you stand out from thousands of other applicants
- ★ Schools don't just want the grades- they want people who are likely to succeed, and GPA is not the only indicator of this
- ★ Remember that admissions boards won't actually meet you- they have to make their decision based on a sheet of paper, so make it interesting

Community College

Why I Love Community College!

- ★ You're able to explore all your interests and can take whatever class you want
- ★ The first year is free!
- ★ A year of tuition for a full-time student is less than \$2,000, so you save SO much money
- ★ Transfer students have proportionately higher rates of success than traditional students and are more likely to graduate
 - <https://www.communitycollegereview.com/blog/how-well-do-community-college-students-perform-after-transfering>
 - <https://www.communitycollegereview.com/blog/how-well-do-community-college-students-perform-after-transfering>
- ★ Your schedule is more flexible, and allows room for jobs and other activities
- ★ Transfer students have higher acceptance rates than traditional students in the UC system
- ★ You are not tied down to one school- if another community college has a class you want, you can enroll in that school simultaneously!
- ★ Once you transfer, you can focus on taking classes for your major, and don't have to be bombarded by GEs
- ★ High school students can take classes at community college!

Tips for Community College

- ★ Constantly check your classes with multiple counselors, because some counselors might forget to inform you about a transfer requirement or special rule
- ★ Before you transfer, you have to get your IGETC certified
- ★ You can also earn AAs in community college (without intentionally trying as well)!
- ★ You have to pick a major before you transfer in order to know and then take the classes required by your desired colleges for admissions
 - <https://www.assist.org> (for UCs and CSUs)
- ★ Schools not in the UC or CSU system have different rules and will accept different courses for credit, so you need to check with them
- ★ There are scholarships specifically for transfer students
- ★ UCLA has a strong transfer community
- ★ Again, always meet with multiple counselors to check your progress towards transferring!
- ★ AP credit can help you transfer early!

Traveling/Studying Abroad

Traveling/Studying Abroad

- ★ It's easier and more affordable than you think (depending on the country)!
- ★ So many countries are trying to promote tourism, so there are government-funded services to help people visit their country
 - <https://gogohanguk.com/en/> (South Korea)
 - <https://gogonihon.com/en/> (Japan)
 - <https://gogoespana.com/en/> (Spain)
 - <https://studytrip.com>
- ★ Learn many new perspectives on the world
- ★ Have many significant and meaningful experiences
- ★ Make great friends and memories
- ★ Can be expensive if you are studying abroad through specific programs
- ★ You can do this in college, even in some community colleges, but it is usually very expensive
- ★ Go to university in another country

Transferring to a 4-year college/university

Post-Transfer Experience

- ★ Some people suffer from “imposter syndrome”
- ★ UCLA has a vibrant transfer community and so many resources for transfers alone
- ★ High school was harder than UCLA
- ★ I am surrounded by incredible people
- ★ There are millions of things to get involved in
- ★ UCLA is home!

Thank you so much for taking this class! I definitely complained about a lot of the college application process, but this was not meant to ruin anyone's hope! My goal was simply to help you all understand that getting into college, while it seems like it, isn't personal, so if you get rejected from every school in the world, don't take it too hard. And same goes to the SAT/ACT- if you don't do so hot, oh well!

Have so much fun in the rest of your time in high school, and if you absolutely hate it, it gets so much better, there is no way to fully convey this to you- you just have to experience it!

**FEEL FREE TO EMAIL ME AT ANY TIME
ABOUT ANYTHING!**

gracesgibbons@gmail.com