Ten tips for making the most of May 2026



1 PREPARE FOR YOUR AP EXAMS. If you are taking an AP or IB course, review and prepare well for your exam. If you do well enough, you may be placed out of your freshman intro course in that subject and/or receive college credit!

2 PLAN YOUR SUMMER. Consider a career-related college course, community service or volunteer work. Get creative! Get your required or recommended reading list for the summer. Seniors: plan to attend any summer orientation activities for incoming freshmen.

HS JUNIORS:

3 CREATE A COMMON APP ACCOUNT. Go to www.commonapp.org. This is where you will apply to colleges. Start filling out your basic information and your account will roll over when the new app opens in August.

4 START YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY. Read the Common App essay prompts here: **Planning Your College Essay** and get started. *Platinum members*, send your first draft to Jan@collegechannel.net or set up an appointment to brainstorm your essay.

HS JUNIORS AND YOUNGER:

5 PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR'S COURSES. What are your favorite classes? Which ones are you doing well in? What areas do you want to continue pushing yourself in? What are your graduation requirements? We recommend that you take the most challenging courses you can handle.

6 VISIT COLLEGES. Register for an information session and campus tour. Or visit college websites and take their virtual tours and register for online events. Go to the **Colleges** tab in **Naviance**, **Find Your Fit**, then look for listings of **College Events**.

7 START TO CONSIDER A FUTURE CAREER. The best way to start exploring in this area is to go to the **Self-Discovery** tab in **Naviance** and complete the ***Career Interest Profiler***. Then read about the careers that match your interests and save possible careers in your plan. Check out the interview videos in the **Careers** tab under ***Roadtrip Nation*** to learn about different careers.

8 CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR COLLEGES THAT INTEREST YOU. Begin thinking about what is important to you in college. Then log into **Naviance** and go to the **Colleges** tab. Use the ***SuperMatch College Search*** to find colleges that meet your criteria. Save the colleges you like by going to ***Colleges I'm Thinking About***. Contact Jan@collegechannel.net to discuss colleges that may be a good match for you.

9 PREPARE WELL FOR YOUR SAT AND ACT EXAMS! Although many colleges will be test optional again this year, you should be preparing now for the upcoming ACT and SAT exams. A high score can make the difference in admissions and help you stand out. It may also help you get a valuable scholarship! Contact us if you are looking for a tutor or would like to take a practice SAT or ACT.

10 KEEP TRACK OF YOUR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES. Start building your ***Resume*** or continue adding to it in the *About Me* section of **Naviance**. We have also included the ***Common App Activities List Template*** with guidelines that will be helpful when you fill out your college applications.

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