

“The Morelli Family Heritage Foundation”

“Presents the Education Information Package”

High School—Trade School—Community College—College

High School

Trade School

Community College

College

Scholarships Are the Answer

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“Presents the Education Information Package”

High School—Trade School—Community College—College

College:

College Planning and Student Loans

How is College Different from High School

What to Expect in College & Nine Steps to Success

Fifteen Things to Know Before You Leave for College

COLLEGE PLANNING AND STUDENT LOANS

COLLEGE PLANNING: Shrinking the cost of College

How do you make college affordable? I know that you and your parents are agonizing over this one. The good news is that there are some simple ways to shrink those costs. Here are eight excellent strategies to get them started.

1. **Learn how to use net price calculators (NPC).** Colleges and universities have net price calculators installed on their websites. A family that uses a school's calculator will receive a personalized estimate of what a school will cost them after projected scholarships and grants are subtracted.
2. **Apply for financial aid.** Plenty of parents who earn six-figure incomes assume that they have no chance for financial aid. This assumption is a shame because it can leave serious money on the table when a child is applying to a university. The information that the universities generally ask for are the Family's adjusted gross income, Student income, Home equity, cash on hand, Taxable income, Number of children in college and younger children.
3. **Don't pay attention to price tags.** Price tags are meaningless. Most college students do not end up paying full price. Chances of getting a price break will increase at schools where everyone or nearly everyone receives scholarship or grants. At private college and universities, for instance, 88 percent of students pocket grants or scholarship money. At private schools and state schools it is approximately 50% for students of all income levels.
4. **Investigate a college's graduation rate.** Parents and students are usually stunned when they learn how difficult it is to graduate in four years. Only about 35 percent of students graduate from college in the traditional eight semesters. You can find the four, five- and six- year grad rates of any school by going on their website.
5. **Inquire about how divorce is handled.** When a student's parents are divorced, the financial aid question can get a lot more complicated. In fact, the net price calculators often don't work for these families. However divorced families can enjoy a financial benefit that intact couples can't. Most schools only require the Free Application for Federal student Aid (FAFSA) and this application only asks for the financial information of the custodial parent.

6. **Look in different time zones.** Thirty-five percent of students attend colleges that are no more than 50 miles from their homes and more than half end up at colleges within 100 miles. Colleges that are located in other geographic areas are eager to offer scholarships to distant students to lure them to their campus. These price cuts can make going to a distant school cost less than an in state school.
7. **Be smart about borrowing.** Students who need to borrow can reduce their college costs by relying on the best college websites and loans. Be sure to spend the required time and effort to research and seek out the information on as many schools as you can.
8. **Be Rich.** Okay, I realize this isn't easy, but being rich helps.

STUDENT LOANS: Many Borrowers Clueless About Student Loans.

When it comes to student loans experts say students and parents both should start their research and understanding of student loans in the student's freshman year of high school.

Here's one of the most important reasons: One-in-five student loan holders do not even know the terms of their loans or how their monthly payments were determined. More than half did not calculate what they might owe before taking out the loans, and almost half said their afraid they can't pay off their loans.

Heres four important tips to make sure your student loan bill doesn't haunt you long after college:

- 1- **Pick your college carefully** with an eye toward affordability, and understanding the difference between the sticker price and what you'll really pay.
- 2- **Calculate before taking out a loan** how much your monthly payment will be after your graduation, and most importantly, how long it will take you to pay the loans off. Use common sense; one rule of thumb is that your total loans should not exceed your first year expected salary. So if you're going into a career with a lower salary levels, don't load up at the loan buffet.
- 3- **Before you sign for a loan,** make sure you know whether it is a government or private bank loan. Understand whether the interest rate is fixed or variable. Keep a running total of your loans, so you know at all times what your balance really is. And when you graduate, choose your repayment plan well, and keep current on payments.
- 4- **Minimize your need for loans** by using cheaper state universities and community college whenever possible. Living at home or going to school part-time while working can be good cost saving options.

How Is College Different from High School

FOLLOWING THE RULES IN HIGH SCHOOL	CHOOSING RESPONSIBLY IN COLLEGE
* High school is <i>mandatory</i> and usually <i>free</i> .	* College is <i>voluntary</i> and <i>expensive</i> .
* Your time is structured by others.	* You manage your own time.
* You need permission to participate in extracurricular activities	* You must decide whether to participate in co-curricular activities.
* You can count on parents and teachers to remind you of your responsibilities and to guide you in setting priorities.	* <i>You</i> must balance your responsibilities and set priorities. You will face moral and ethical decisions you have never faced before.
* Each day you proceed from one class directly to another, spending 6 hours each day--30 hours a week--in class.	* You often have hours between classes; class times vary throughout the day and evening and you spend only 12 to 16 hours each week in class
* Most of your classes are arranged for you.	* You arrange your own schedule in consultation with your adviser. Schedules tend to look lighter than they really are.
* You are not responsible for knowing what it takes to graduate.	* Graduation requirements are complex, and differ from year to year. You are expected to know those that apply to you.
* Guiding principle: You will usually be told what to do and corrected if your behavior is out of line.	* Guiding principle: You are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions.

GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES	SUCCEEDING IN COLLEGE CLASSES
* The school year is 36 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters and some don't.	* The academic year is divided into two separate 15-week semesters, plus a week after each semester for exams.
* Classes generally have no more than 35 students.	* Classes may number 100 students or more.
* You may study outside class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation.	* You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.
* You seldom need to read anything more than once, and sometimes listening in class is enough.	* You need to review class notes and text material regularly.
* You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	* You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class.
* Guiding principle: You will usually be told in class what you need to learn from assigned readings.	* Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that you've already done so.
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS	COLLEGE PROFESSORS
* Teachers check your completed homework.	* Professors may not always check completed homework, but they will assume you can perform the same tasks on tests.
* Teachers remind you of your incomplete work.	* Professors may not remind you of incomplete work.

* Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.	* Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.
* Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class.	* Professors expect and want you to attend their scheduled office hours.
* Teachers have been trained in teaching methods to assist in imparting knowledge to students.	* Professors have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research.
* Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent.	* Professors expect you to get from classmates any notes from classes you missed.
* Teachers present material to help you understand the material in the textbook.	* Professors may not follow the textbook. Instead, to amplify the text, they may give illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. Or they may expect <i>you</i> to relate the classes to the textbook readings.
* Teachers often write information on the board to be copied in your notes.	* Professors may lecture nonstop, expecting you to identify the important points in your notes. When professors write on the board, it may be to amplify the lecture, not to summarize it. Good notes are a must.
* Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections and leading you through the thinking process.	* Professors expect you to think about and synthesize seemingly unrelated topics.
* Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.	* Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.
* Teachers carefully monitor class attendance.	* Professors may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended.
* Guiding principle: High school is a teaching environment in which you acquire facts and skills.	* Guiding principle: College is a learning environment in which you take responsibility for thinking through and applying what you have learned.

TESTS IN HIGH SCHOOL	TESTS IN COLLEGE
* Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.	* Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. You, not the professor, need to organize the material to prepare for the test. A particular course may have only 2 or 3 tests in a semester.
* Makeup tests are often available.	* Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them.
* Teachers frequently rearrange test dates to avoid conflict with school events.	* Professors in different courses usually schedule tests without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities.
* Teachers frequently conduct review sessions, pointing out the most important concepts.	* Professors rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect you to be an active participant, one who comes prepared with questions.
* Guiding principle: Mastery is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what you were taught in the form in which it was presented to you, or to solve the kinds of problems you were shown how to solve.	* Guiding principle: Mastery is often seen as the ability to apply what you've learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.

GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL	GRADES IN COLLEGE
* Grades are given for most assigned work.	* Grades may not be provided for all assigned work.
* Consistently good homework grades may raise your overall grade when test grades are low.	* Grades on tests and major papers usually provide most of the course grade.
* Extra credit projects are often available to help you raise your grade.	* Extra credit projects cannot, generally speaking, be used to raise a grade in a college course.
* Initial test grades, especially when they are low, may not have an adverse effect on your final grade.	* Watch out for your <i>first</i> tests. These are usually "wake-up calls" to let you know what is expected--but they also may account for a substantial part of your course grade. You may be shocked when you get your grades.
* You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses with a grade of D or higher.	* You may graduate only if your average in classes meets the departmental standard--typically a 2.0 or C.
* Guiding principle: <i>Effort counts.</i> Courses are usually structured to reward a "good-faith effort."	* Guiding principle: <i>Results count.</i> Though "good-faith effort" is important in regard to the professor's willingness to help you <i>achieve</i> good results, it will <i>not substitute</i> for results in the grading process.

HOW TO MAKE THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

- Take control of your own education: think of yourself as a scholar.
- Get to know your professors; they are your single greatest resource.
- Create your own support systems and seek help when you realize you may need it.
- Take advantage of the A-LEC; go to a workshop, enroll in Reading and Learning Strategies & work with a tutor.
- Take control of your time. Plan ahead to satisfy academic obligations and make room for everything else.
- Stretch yourself: enroll in at least one course that really challenges you.
- Make thoughtful decisions: don't take a course just to satisfy a requirement, and don't drop any course too quickly.
- Think beyond the moment: set goals for the semester, the year, your college career.

What to Expect in College

We want you to be successful! Read the information carefully to learn researched-based academic strategies that will help you be a prepared student.

- Steps to Success
- Step One: Attend Every Class
- Step Two: Be Organized
- Step Three: Manage Your Time Well
- Step Four: Be Successful in the Classroom
- Step Five: Take Good Notes
- Step Six: How to Read a Textbook
- Step Seven: Study Smart
- Step Eight: Use Test-Taking Strategies
- Step Nine: Reduce Test Anxiety

Steps to Success...What you need to know!

In most instances, people experience greater success when they know what to expect. In college, expect to find the following:

- **Varying Class Sizes**
Class size varies depending on the course. While most classes have fewer than 40 students, larger introductory classes may have anywhere from 15-400 students. Intro classes tend to have large class sizes while upper-division classes are smaller.
- **The Need for Critical Thinking Skills**
In college you will be expected to understand and remember what you read. You will also be asked to draw conclusions, form opinions, and evaluate the ideas of others.
- **Strong Emphasis on Tests and Less Busywork**
Students who succeed do their assignments and keep up with their reading.

- **The Personal Responsibility Need for**

In college, you have a tremendous amount of freedom. No one is monitoring your progress. You are responsible for your own academic progress.

- **Consequences**

Colleges have standards that students must meet in order to stay enrolled. Students may be placed on academic probation if their grades fall below a certain point. Students on probation must bring their grades up by a specified time. If they don't, they are withdrawn from the university.

- **Less Time in Class and More Emphasis on Independent Study**

In college, you are expected to do most of your learning on your own. The general rule is: *For every one hour you spend in class, you should spend two hours out of class reading, studying, and completing assignments.*

STEPS TO SUCCESS

STEP ONE: ATTEND EVERY CLASS

If you want to succeed and become a more active learner, you must attend every class - not almost every class, EVERY class.

The importance of regular class attendance cannot be emphasized enough. When you miss classes, you miss lectures, notes, class discussions, homework explanations, and assignments. You may also miss in-class quizzes and even tests.

It can be tempting to cut a class now and then, but don't kid yourself into thinking that missing a class won't make a difference, or that missing a class is okay as long as you get copies of the notes. Getting copies of someone's notes is not the same as going to class, and it's usually more of a hassle. You cannot make up what you miss, and you cannot get it from someone else.

STEP TWO: BE ORGANIZED

Use an agenda or planner.

Take your assignment notebook to every class and record each assignment. When you're given a large assignment, use your notebook to break down the assignment into smaller parts. For example, if a research paper is assigned on Feb. 1 and it's due Feb. 21, give yourself deadlines like the ones listed below. Writing these deadlines in your assignment notebook will help keep you on track. It will also ensure that you do your big assignments over a period of time, not at the last minute.

- Feb. 5-- Complete research

- Feb. 9--Finish outline
- Feb. 15--Have a rough draft done
- Feb. 21-- Turn in final draft

Instructors will give students a course syllabus listing all of their assignments and their due dates. Having a syllabus is very helpful because you can see exactly what is expected of you for the entire quarter. Whenever you're given a syllabus, immediately copy the assignments into your assignment notebook or planner. Also, make note of all major exams (mid-terms, finals) and note time and location.

Use three-ring binders for class notes.

Three-ring binders work well because you can easily insert handouts, and if you ever miss a class, you can copy someone else's notes and insert them where they belong. Purchase a small three-hole puncher so that you can insert handouts into your binder as soon as you get them. Keep important information (your instructor's office hours, the course syllabus, etc.) in the front of your notebook.

Keep returned papers, quizzes, and tests.

Keep all of your returned papers, quizzes, and tests in the same binder with your lecture notes. Old quizzes and tests can help you study for future tests; they can also come in handy if there is ever a question about your grade. Keep a record of all your grades for each class. Keeping a record of your grades eliminates surprises at the end of the term. If you are ever unsure as to how you are doing in a class, talk to your instructor.

Record phone numbers.

Make sure that you have a phone number or e-mail address of at least one person in each class. If you are absent, you will have someone you can contact to find out what you missed. Phone numbers and e-mail addresses are also helpful when you have a question about an assignment or an upcoming test.

Maintain a neat and organized study space.

Set up a desk or study area so that it has everything you need. Keep this area neat and organized so that materials can be easily located.

Before you go to bed, gather everything you'll need for the following day, and put everything else back in its place. If there's anything you need to remember to do, write yourself a note so you won't forget.

STEP THREE: MANAGE YOUR TIME WELL

Time management is important for all college students. It is, however, particularly important for students who have other commitments (a job, sports, etc.).

Do not overextend yourself.

The first step in time management is to look at your life in order to make sure that you're not overextended. If you feel that you are doing more than you can handle, look for ways to make your life more manageable, and try to make some changes.

Plan ahead.

Take a look at what you need to do, think about how you can get it done most efficiently, and then write out a plan. (Don't plan out more than three days at a time). Revise your plans as needed, and check things off as you accomplish them.

Be organized.

Being organized is a tremendous time saver. When you're organized, you know what you have to do, and you have the information and materials that you need.

Make efficient use of your time.

Consciously make choices about how you will use your time. For example, decide to limit yourself to one hour of TV or socializing on weeknights. Also look for ways to streamline and combine tasks (studying while you're doing your laundry, get your exercise by jogging to the library, etc.).

STEP FOUR: BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE CLASSROOM

You'll be more happy and successful in college if you follow these tips.

Learn how to adapt to different instructors.

One instructor may encourage discussions and the open exchange of ideas; another instructor may expect students to listen to the lecture and to take notes. Part of your education is to learn how to adapt to different personalities, teaching styles, and expectations.

Be prepared for each class.

You'll get much more out of your classes if you have your assignments completed before you go to class. Lectures will be easier to follow; you'll be able to understand class discussions, etc. As soon as each class begins, focus on the presentation or lecture. Of course, to be physically and mentally alert, you need to eat right, exercise, and get enough sleep.

Sit in the front of class whenever possible.

It's easier to pay attention when you sit in the front of classrooms. With the rest of the class behind you, there are fewer distractions and it's easier to hear the instructor. It's also easier to ask questions and easier to see the board, television, and overheads. If you can choose your seat, sit up front. If you've been assigned a seat in the back of the classroom, ask your instructor if it would be possible for you to move to the front.

Communicate with your instructors.

Most instructors will give you their phone numbers, e-mail address, and/or office hours at the beginning of the quarter. Do not hesitate to contact an instructor whenever you have a concern, problem, or question. For example, if you have a paper to write and you're having a difficult time determining how to approach the subject, talk to your instructor. While most instructors will be happy to help you, you must initiate the contact. You should, of course, respect your instructors' privacy and personal time; talk to them after class, call or see them during their office hours, or send an e-mail.

Be on time to class.

Whenever possible, arrive early to class. You'll be more relaxed, and you can use the time to look over your notes, and/or speak with your instructor. When you are late to a class, you miss announcements and introductory remarks. Your tardiness also tells your instructor that being on time to his/her class is not a priority for you.

Instructors often summarize the lecture and/or discuss assignments during the last 5-10 minutes of class. It is therefore important not to leave class early. If you must leave early, tell your instructor before class starts.

Participate in class.

Whenever there are discussions, projects, or labs, it is important to be an active and willing participant. The class will be more enjoyable and you'll learn more. When you participate in class, you show your instructor that you know the material and that you're interested in the course.

Be a good group member.

The number one reason people get fired from their jobs is because they cannot get along with their coworkers. It is therefore not surprising that businesses and industries encourage educators to teach students how to work together in small groups. Here are a few things to remember when you have to do a group project:

- Do your share of the work and do it well.
- Accept that everyone is different and be open to new ideas.
- Have a positive attitude, and support the other group members.

STEP FIVE: TAKE GOOD NOTES

Tests usually cover material that the instructor has presented in class. It is therefore important to have good classroom notes from which to study.

Be an active listener.

In order to take good notes you must be an active listener. When you are actively listening in class, you don't just hear the words the instructor is saying, you are also thinking about and trying to understand the information that is being presented.

Take notes to help you pay attention.

You can think faster than anyone can talk. This is one of the reasons that your mind sometimes wanders when you're listening to lectures. When you take notes, however, your mind has something to focus on, and you don't have time to think about anything else. Taking notes therefore helps you pay attention and to stay focused.

Recognize important information.

You often hear a change in your instructor's voice when s/he says something that is important for you to know. Instructors often speak louder, speak slower, or they give verbal cues like "the most significant outcome," "the main point," "the most important reason," "the three causes," etc.

Anything your instructor takes the time to write on the board or overhead should be considered very important. Double-underline or put a star beside this information (or any information that's very important) so that you'll know to give it special attention when you're studying later.

Go over your notes as soon as possible.

While the information is still fresh in your mind, go over your notes. Clarify anything that was confusing, and make sure that you have key words written in the margins of your notes. You might also want to highlight important points. Of course, while you are going over your notes, you are also fixing this information in your memory.

If you are serious about learning, completely rewrite your notes. Eliminate unimportant information, and rewrite the rest of your notes using your words. Your notes will be clearer, and as you rewrite them, you will also be learning the material. This is time consuming, but it pays off.

Get the lecture notes if you are absent.

When you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. Be sure to get copies of the class notes and handouts as soon as possible.

The Cornell Note-Taking System

Developed forty years ago at Cornell University, this system will keep your notes neat, complete, and well-organized, especially in math and sciences. It will also save you time when studying for exams.

1. Draw a vertical line down the paper to divide the left hand CUE column (2 ½ inches), and the right hand LECTURE NOTES.
2. Save the bottom 2 inches of the paper for SUMMARY space.
3. During class record information only in the LECTURE NOTES area, and only on the front side of the paper.
4. Leave blank areas where you are unsure. Ask questions in class or get clarification during instructors' office hours.
5. Within 24 hours review and recite from the notes. Use the CUE column to write study questions, key terms, or theorems, etc.
6. In the SUMMARY space, reduce your page of notes into a one or two sentence summary or mnemonic trick.
7. Quiz yourself during weekly review. Remove notepapers from binder and spread them on a table in sequential order. Line them up so you can see only the CUE columns. Check answers in LECTURE NOTES.

STEP SIX: HOW TO READ A TEXTBOOK

When you know how to read a textbook, you are able to comprehend and remember what you read.

Textbook authors have already done a lot of your work for you. They've inserted boldface subtitles that tell you exactly what you are going to be reading. They've put all of the important words in **bold** or *italic* print, and they've added pictures, charts, graphs, lists of vocabulary words, summaries, and review questions. The textbook authors have done all of this to make it easier for you to learn and retain information.

In this section, you will discover how to use these "learning tools". You will also learn how to 1) *Scan*, 2) *Read*, and 3) *Review*. Once you understand how to scan, read, and review, you'll be able to comprehend and remember what you read in a textbook the first time through.

Scan

Scanning gives you a quick overview of the materials you're going to read. To scan, read the title, the subtitles, and everything in bold and italic print. Look at all of the pictures, graphs, charts, and read the introduction, the review questions, and the summary.

Scanning provides you with a great deal of information in a very short amount of time. In addition to providing you with an excellent overview of the text, scanning also provides you with a kind of "information framework". Having this framework of main ideas, vocabulary words, etc. makes it easier for you to read and understand the more detailed information.

Read

When your reading has a purpose, your comprehension improves, it's easier to stay focused, and you can identify important information. To give your reading a purpose, try turning each boldface subtitle into a question. Keep your question in mind as you continue to read. At the end of each section, see if you can answer it. Your question gives you something specific to look for, and helps keep your mind from wandering. Therefore, you can remember more of what you read.

Before you start to read a section, look to see if there are any vocabulary words, names, places, or events in bold or italic print, and then ask yourself, "Why is this word, person, place, or event important?" You should, of course, have an answer to that question when you finish reading the section.

Review

Most students, after having scanned and read the material, will say, "I'm done," and then they will close their book. Taking a few extra minutes for review, however, will make a huge difference in what you are able to remember later. When you review, you lock the information into your brain before it has a chance to evaporate.

To review, go back to the beginning and go through the same process you did when you scanned the material. This time, as you read the boldface subtitles, briefly restate

the purpose of the point of the section to yourself using your own words. As you look at the vocabulary word and the words in bold or italic print, think about what they mean and why they are significant. If you really want to lock the information into your brain, review everything again a day or two later. When you sit down to study for the test, you'll be amazed at how well you already know the material.

While it may take a little practice to get the scan, read, review process down, you'll soon realize that this process does not mean more work. It just means better comprehension, better retention, and academic success.

STEP SEVEN: STUDY SMART

Students who "study smart" find that they spend less time studying and get better grades.

Find a good place to study

Although it's usually best to have one place to study regularly, it doesn't matter where you study as long as the area is well-lit and comfortable and there's a surface for writing. Before you start to study, figure out how to avoid or eliminate anything that could interrupt your concentration (loud music, telephone calls, the TV, etc.)

Some students need silence when they study; others can study with music playing. If you like to listen to music when you study, consider listening to classical music. Research has shown that classical music can actually improve your concentration.

Get Started

The hardest part about studying is getting started. Don't put your studying off until later, don't make excuses, and don't wait until you're "in the mood". Begin with something simple or a subject that you like, and just get started. We all learn differently. Think about how you learn and adjust how you study accordingly.

As a general rule, the more senses you involve and the wider variety of methods you use while studying, the more you remember.

William Glasser, author and expert in the field of education, says that, *"Students learn 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they see and hear, 70% of what is discussed with others, 80% of what they experience personally, and 95% of what they teach to someone else."*

Organize your study time

- Before you start to study, make a plan. Decide exactly what you want to get done and the order in which you'll do it. Make sure that your plan is realistic.
- If you have a lot to do, prioritize your work to make sure you have enough time for the things that are most important.
- If you have something to memorize, work on that first, and then go over it again at the end of your study session.
- Always allow more time than you think you'll need.

- When you give a presentation or speech, pretend that you are telling your best friend something really important.
- Effective speakers make eye contact with those in their audience. If you find this difficult to do, look at their foreheads instead.

Additional Study Resources

STEP EIGHT: USE TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

In order to do well on any test or exam, you must study hard and be prepared. Having done that, you can further improve your test performance by using these test-taking strategies.

Get off to a good start

Arrive early for a test. Bring all of the necessary supplies. As soon as you get the exam, write anything you want to remember in light pencil at the top of your paper. Read or listen to all instructions carefully.

Develop a plan

Before you begin, look over the entire test and develop a plan. For example, if the test has 25 multiple choice questions and 2 essay questions, you might plan 15 minutes for the multiple-choice section and 15 minutes for each essay question. Allow yourself time to go over the test.

Mark questions that you want to review

After you have gone through all of the questions, go back to the ones you've marked and try them again. When you're not sure about an answer, go with your first instinct. Don't panic if you don't know the answers to the first few questions. Sometimes it takes a few minutes for your brain to get in gear. Chances are you'll know the answers when you come back to them.

Increase your odds on multiple-choice questions

- When you're reading a multiple-choice question, try to come up with the answer in your head before you look at the choices.
- Read all of the choices. There will probably be a couple that sound like they could be correct; don't be tempted to mark the first one that sounds good.
- If you're not sure, eliminate the choices you know are incorrect. Then make an educated guess.
- If two of the choices are similar or opposite, probably one of them is the correct answer.

Know how to approach essay questions

- Read each essay question and then start with the easiest one. This will help you gain confidence, and it will give you time to think about how to answer the harder question. Be sure to note how many points each essay is worth and adjust the time you allot to each question accordingly.

- Right before you go to sleep, go over any information that you want to remember. Your brain will process this information and commit it to memory while you sleep.
- Use acronyms to help you memorize.
- Use the first letter of words you want to remember. For example, HOMES can help you remember the Great Lakes (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior).
- Look for a logical or an easy connection. For example, to help yourself remember that Homer wrote the Odyssey, just think to yourself, "Homer is an *odd* name."
- Use silly associations and ridiculous visual images to help trigger your memory.
- Review often. When you are reviewing, you move information from your short-term memory into your long-term memory. Review is the key to learning anything.
- Teaching to others the material you are learning, is an extremely effective method of retaining information.

Know how to write a paper

The key to writing a paper is to have enough time to plan, write, and revise it. Writing a paper should be a process, not a one-time event. Writing tutors are available at various colleges, as well as at the Learning Center.

If you have a choice, choose a topic that you want to learn more about, a topic that is not too broad, and one that you already know something about. Once you have your topic, gather information, brainstorm, and when appropriate, take a position. Make an outline, and then write a rough draft. Rewrite your paper until you have it just the way you want it, and then write the final draft.

It's important that you put your paper away once or twice during this process. When you take it out and reread it, you'll see and hear things that you didn't notice earlier; it will seem like you're reading it for the first time. Before you write your final draft, have someone else read your paper to make corrections or suggestions.

To write a good paper, you need to:

1. Follow the directions exactly.
2. Make sure there are no spelling or grammatical errors.
1. Have someone else proofread your paper.
2. Turn in a neat and clean final draft.
3. Turn it in on time.

If you have difficulty writing papers, go to your college's writing tutor.

Use tricks when making a presentation or speech

- Use props whenever possible. Props, such as posters, pictures, books, or sorting equipment, give you something to look at and something to do with your hands. You can also put notes on the back of them.

- Study your least favorite subject first to get it out of the way.
- Alternate types of assignments (read English, do math, etc.).
- Know when and how to take breaks. Research has shown that students learn most during the first 20 minutes and 10 minutes of any study session. Try studying for 20 minutes then taking a short break (get a drink, get up to stretch, etc.).

Know how to study for tests

- From the beginning of the term, study a little everyday. Cramming is very stressful.
- Know what the test is going to cover. Test questions most often come from material that was presented in class; therefore, it is important to study your class notes as well as the text.
- For essay tests, it's more important to understand the big picture and to know the main points and key facts. For fill-in-the-blank and multiple-choice tests, you need to know more detailed information.
- Pay particularly close attention during the class before a test. Instructors often use this time to go over information that's going to be on the test.
- Ask questions when you don't understand something in class or in section.
- Take notes and refer to them often. It saves time and increases your understanding.
- If an instructor gives you a review sheet or study guide, study it until you know everything on it; then use it to come up with questions that you think will be on the test.
- Have all the required readings done before you start to study for the test. If your textbook has review questions at the end of the chapters, go over them and be sure that you know the answers.
- Try teaching the material to yourself or someone else.
- Form a study group, take turns leading a review of the important concepts, ideas, formulas, etc. Ask each other questions, share notes, and/or go over difficult material.
- When studying for an exam, go over old tests and quizzes.

Know how to remember information

- Use flash cards to memorize vocabulary words, facts, and lists.
- Write down what you want to memorize and concentrate on it. Close your eyes and try to see it in your mind. Say it, and then look at it again.
- Use as many senses as possible. For example, if you write out what you want to remember, and at the same time, say it out loud, you are simultaneously hearing it, seeing it, and physically involved in the writing of it.
- Look for ways to recognize information. Draw diagrams, graphs, and pictures; make outlines, lists, and charts.

- Before you do any writing, brainstorm. Jot down key words, ideas, and the points that you want to cover in your answer. If you have time, organize these ideas/points into a simple outline, if not, just number them in the order you want to present them.
- Begin writing, making sure that you answer the question that's been asked. Write legibly, and use clear, concise, complete sentences. In your opening paragraph, introduce your topic and tell the reader what s/he can expect to learn from your essay. In the middle paragraphs, present examples, details, evidence, and facts to support the points you are making. In the final paragraph, summarize the main points, your analysis, etc. Finally, reread your answer and make necessary corrections.
- If you don't know the answer to an essay question, take a couple of minutes to write what you can about the subject. You might hit on something and get partial credit. If you run out of time, write a note explaining that you ran out of time and list key points that you would have covered.

Be prepared for open book tests

During an open book test, you must be able to locate information quickly. Put self-stick notes or bookmarks in your textbook to help you find specific information. Go through your notes and highlight important information. Also write down all of the information you know you'll need on one sheet of paper.

Improve your math test scores

- As soon as you get your test write down formulas, equations, etc., that you might need to remember or use.
- Before you start solving a problem, try to estimate what the answer will be.
- Try drawing a picture or diagram.
- Don't spend too much time on one problem; come back to it if necessary.
- Show all of your work. Show every step.

Check your answers

Check all of your answers, even the ones you know are correct. You may have read the question wrong or made a careless mistake. If you're unsure, don't change your answer. Use all of your testing time to answer questions and to check your responses.

Review returned tests

When your test is returned to you, go over each question you missed and, if possible, write in the correct answer. You may see one or more of these types of questions on your final exam. Also check to make sure your test was graded correctly (mistakes happen). Keep a record of your test scores, and keep all of your returned tests in a file or folder.

STEP NINE: REDUCE TEST ANXIETY

While a little anxiety before a test improves concentration and alertness, excessive worry, or test anxiety, will lower one's scores.

It's possible for students with test anxiety to get themselves so worked up that they can't think clearly. The brain is like a computer in that it contains a great deal of information. This information is useless, however, if you're not able to access it when you need it. Having test anxiety is like having the password to your computer. The information is there, but you can't access it.

To reduce test anxiety, study enough to feel confident that you know the material. Then try to replace the worry and negative thinking with thoughts that are positive and relaxing. Some of the following suggestions will help you.

- Start studying early. The night before a test, review the material and get a good night's sleep. Cramming increases anxiety.
- Mentally practice going through the test taking experience. Close your eyes and see yourself walking confidently into the test, answering the questions correctly, and receiving the grade you want.
- Walk into the test with your head high and your shoulders back. How you walk can affect how you feel, and if you act confident, you just may feel more confident.

Try these common relaxation techniques:

- Take a deep breath, hold it, and then slowly release your breath along with the tension.
- Start at the top of your head, flexing and then relaxing each part of your body.
- Close your eyes and visualize warm sunshine washing over you, melting away all the tension and relaxing all of your muscles.
- Close your eyes and let your arms hang down at your sides. As you relax, visualize the tension from your head, neck, and shoulders flowing down your arms and out your fingertips.
- Think of where you feel very relaxed and calm. Close your eyes and visualize being in that place.

▪ **Time Management**

▪ **Planning Suggestions**

▪ **Schedule Fixed Blocks of Time**

Start with class time and work time, for instance. These time periods are usually determined in advance and other activities may be scheduled around them. Then schedule essential activities like sleeping and eating. Be realistic about the time you need for these essential functions.

- **Include Time for Errands**

The time we spend buying toothpaste, paying bills, and doing laundry can be easily ignored when planning your schedule. Overlooking these time consuming activities can destroy a tight schedule and make you feel rushed and hurried all week. Plan for them.

- **Schedule Time for Fun!**

Fun is important. It is important to rest your brain and let it digest all the information you process in college. Einstein went sailing or played the violin. Take time to do the things you enjoy.

- **Set Realistic Goals**

Don't set yourself up for failure by telling yourself you can do a four-hour job in two hours.

- **Allow Flexibility in Your Schedule**

Recognize that unexpected things will happen and don't schedule every hour. Give yourself time to get between places, etc.

- **Befriending Professors** *Here is some advice for developing strong relationships with your professors:*

- **Introduce Yourself!!!**

- **Go to office hours!** Don't be shy! They set aside time for their students to come talk to them and they do not like spending that time alone at their desks.

- A good time to make contact with your professor is right before or right after a paper or problem set is due in a course. You'll have specific questions to ask and a topic to discuss at this time. It is also fine to just pop in and say hi! A one on one conversation will help your professor learn your name early on in the quarter. It will also help you get a sense for your professor's personality and interests.

- **Be inquisitive**

Professors love to interact with involved and engaged students.

- **Take Advantage of E-mail**

You can write to a professor at one in the morning and not worry about disturbing him/her outside of their office hours.

- **Letters of Recommendation**

If a professor knows you by name and remembers you favorably, you can expect an excellent letter of recommendation. Ask for the letter in person. It is a great compliment to a professor to hear a student say, "I really enjoyed your course. Would you please write a letter for me?". Make sure to send a thank you card soon after your request. It is common courtesy and will also remind the professor to write the letter.

15 Things You Need to Know Before You Go TO College...

Here is a list of 15 things to learn before you leave home to make the transition easier.

1. Laundry. Does it go in cold water or hot water? What gets bleach? How do you get a stain out? What colors wash well together and what don't? Hang dry, line dry or lay flat to dry? If you want to keep your clothes, learn this before your whites turn pink.

2. How to cook. Unless you love Ramen Noodles or fast food, learn to cook at least basic meals. Pasta is cheap and easy to make. You can even take some of your mom's special sauce and freeze it, so all you have to do is cook the pasta.

3. Share. Chances are you won't live alone. Often you will share a room or an apartment with someone. Here are two examples of how things can get out of hand: First, the dishes war. My brother was used to the dishes being done and couldn't understand why his roommate didn't feel the same way. So, my brother put the dirty dishes on his roommate's bed. Second, the air conditioning war. I liked it cold, she liked it hot. She turned it way up when I wasn't there, and to balance it out, I turned it way down when she wasn't there. By fluctuating it, we ended up paying way more than we would have if we have just learned to share.

4. Balance a checkbook. This doesn't mean letting the online report do it for you. Gas stations especially won't pop up on those reports for weeks, and in the meantime, you'll overdraw your account. I did it five times before the warning letter from the bank made its way to me by snail mail.

5. Credit cards. They don't mean you're rich. The interest on those cards is about 20 percent. That means that if you buy something for \$100, but can't pay for it when the bill comes, you will end up spending \$120 on it. If you keep doing this, you could ruin yourself financially for many years. To help yourself, get a debit card instead. Then, get a credit card with your name on it, but let your parents use it. If they can pay it off on time, you'll receive a good credit score while staying out of debt trouble.

6. Group work. This is one of the worst things about college, but almost every teacher does it. Your grade will actually depend on what someone else does. Learn to be patient, work around someone else's schedule and be a good motivator. I've learned that students don't work harder if I get upset with them.

7. Use a planner. A normal class load is 15 credit hours, which is five classes. Unlike high school, your math teacher and English teacher won't collaborate and make sure your tests aren't on the same day. They also won't remind you that you have a test. This is really hard when you have online classes and don't see the teacher at all. I never took a mid-term because I was being dependent on a reminder e-mail that never came.

8. Take notes. Sadly, you will spend about \$700 a semester on books, most of which you will never open. Teachers think their information is better than what's found in the book. Therefore, the tests will usually be based on the lectures. Knowing how to take notes is imperative to a successful college experience.

9. Become a directional pro. The first year of college, I got lost approximately every time I cranked my engine. I was in a new town and didn't know if I was travelling north or east. It's a good idea to learn how to read a map and navigate to the best of your ability. Then, make sure you always have a cell phone for when you get lost.

10. Be responsible. In your general education classes, teachers don't really care whether you attend class or not. Most of them won't give homework because they don't want to grade 800 papers. They don't have time to let you know that you are failing or ask if you need help (which is interesting, because

they're not grading papers!). Their office hours are increasingly dwindling. So, this is all your responsibility. Attendance really is the key. I had a teacher that would ask what his sister's name is for a test question just to separate those who attend class from those who don't.

11. Grammar. In high school, it was English teachers who took off two points for comma splices or misspelled words. Now, it's every teacher. Yes, chemistry teachers care that you know the difference between "their," "there," and "they're." I have a tourism teacher right now that gives me a 100 percent on every assignment because I can make a complete sentence. It pays to know the English language.

12. Mental math. I don't mean the hard math, just the simple nine times six or 12 plus 15. Math teachers assume you can do steps in your head. They also take away the calculator a lot to keep students from storing formulas in them. There are also math teachers that get 12 plus 15 wrong, and it's important that you correct them before they get too far into the problem.

13. You might not be the best. This is a hard one to mentally prepare for. In high school, I was an outstanding writer. However, when I got into my journalism classes and was seated with 20 other outstanding writers, my writing looked "so-so" all of a sudden. It's the same in any subject. No matter how hard I studied, someone studied more. Set goals for yourself and be proud of your accomplishments without comparing yourself to a complete stranger

. 14 Stand strong in your morals. The first six months of college usually defines who you are going to be throughout college. Take time to find the friends you really want. This is a chance for a fresh start if you need it.

15. Learn to have fun. High school, whether you think so or not, is usually the easiest time of a life. Sure, everything seems like the end of the world, but it's not. You have teachers begging for assignments and giving you every opportunity for extra credit. College will seem hard too, but when you graduate, you're going to wish you had it back. So enjoy it while you're there. Make memories, make friends, but through it all, make sure you graduate!