



Make High School COUNT!

ACT[®]

Think about it!

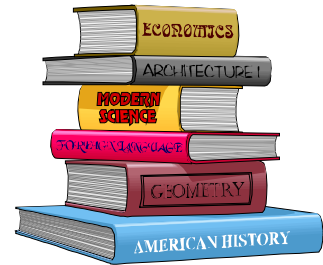
You have to go to high school anyway, so you might as well... **MAKE IT COUNT!**



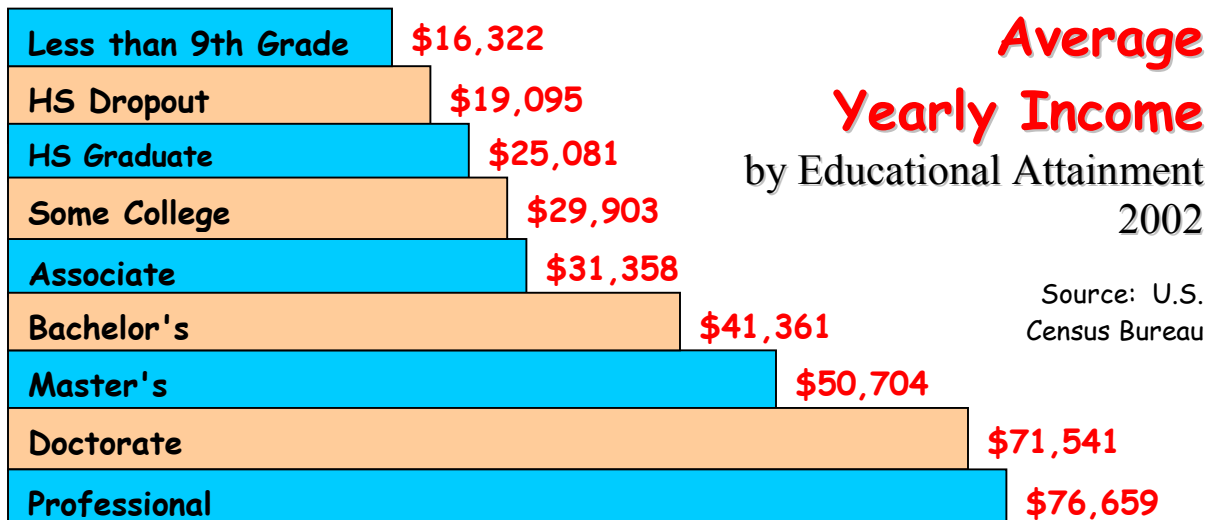
And...your high school years may be the most **exciting** and **important** ones you'll spend in school!

For the first time you'll have **lots of choices** to make about what you study. It's important to know that the choices you make for 9th grade--as well as 10th, 11th and 12th--will affect the choices you'll have for the rest of your life.

No matter what you dream of doing with your life, preparing yourself for more education beyond high school is your wisest plan right now. Post-high school education can provide valuable experiences that contribute to a better quality of life for you. Whether or not you go on to a college or university or career or technical school, the information and skills you learn in your high school classes will always be useful in the world of work.



Remember! Everyone, in every kind of job, needs to be able to write and speak clearly, listen carefully, understand what is written and spoken, and use math effectively.

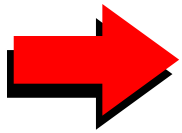




Keep your options open!

Right now you may not know what you want to do with your **future** -- or exactly how to get ready for it.

That's okay! You have plenty of time to figure out what interests you, what you're good at, and how those things add up to a career. The most important thing to do right now is make sure you keep your options open.



Don't let a "MAYBE" keep you from preparing for future options!

Some students shut themselves out of wonderful opportunities because of maybes:

- *Maybe* future education is too expensive.
- *Maybe* future study is too hard.
- *Maybe* I won't fit in.
- *Maybe* my family has other plans for me.

Don't assume. Find out the **ANSWERS** before you decide something is not an option for you!

When you have questions...

Your school counselor, teachers, or principal will have the **answers** (or know someone who does) to many questions about high school and education after high school. Your family and friends often have good information, too. Do not hesitate to ask as many questions as necessary to obtain all the information you need!



TIPS

for Making Your Classes Count!



- Sit close to the front of the classroom when possible.
- Join in class discussions.
- Ask questions! If you don't understand something, chances are others in the class don't understand either.
- Keep up with class assignments. Finish them before they're due.
- Ask for help in any class in which you find yourself falling behind. Remember, your teachers want to help you succeed!
- Look for ways to sharpen your basic skills in each class. You can practice your writing skills in history, your algebra skills in science, and your math and science skills in vocational education classes.
- Learn keyboarding skills so you can type your own schoolwork and use a computer.
- Learn to take good class notes. You'll be taking lots of notes throughout the rest of your life.
- Learn to proofread, correct, and rewrite your written work.
- Develop test-taking skills. Your counselor and teachers can show you how to get started.

Now for some BASICS

to Remember about Class Scheduling...

- Become thoroughly familiar with all the required courses and graduation requirements of your high school.
- You should take an English or literature class each year of high school. These classes will strengthen your reading, writing, and speaking skills.
- A series of mathematics courses is very important as you prepare for the careers of the future. Three or four years of high school math, including algebra and geometry, are necessary to many occupations. Math will be even more important in the future.
- Make sure you take enough social studies courses to get a good understanding of American history and our government. Three years of study are required by many colleges and universities.
- Science is important. Schedule two or more years, including at least one laboratory course.
- Schedule one year of visual and performing arts from the areas of visual arts, music, dance, and theater.
- Elective courses allow you to explore your special interests. These courses are considered very important. Seriously consider taking a foreign language. Some colleges expect two years of foreign language study, and your understanding of the world can be improved by knowing another language.
- You might consider combining your last two years of high school with two years of community college education, by exploring the "Tech Prep Education" (2+2) offerings. This can lead to an associate degree or two-year certificate in the mechanical, industrial, or practical arts; agriculture; health; family and consumer sciences; or business. Remember, though, that these programs build upon knowledge gained in math, science, and communications courses.
- Some specific applied academic courses that use hands-on approaches to learning have been approved as meeting the core curriculum requirements. For more information, see your counselor.
- You will need to be computer literate.



Planning for High School...

High School Courses ACT Recommends for All Students*

Courses	ACT Recommends
English	Four years
Mathematics	Three years (algebra and above)
Natural Science	Three years with laboratory experience
Social Science	Three years
Foreign Language	Two years of the same language
Other	Visual arts, music, theatre, drama, dance, computer science, etc.

*Specific high school course requirements vary from college to college, and some majors may have additional requirements. ACT's recommendations provide a general framework to follow for all colleges, but check with the schools you're interested in to see what they require or recommend.

Survival Words!

The following terms are important to know when planning for high school!

Class Rank A rating which compares your cumulative grade point average to other members of your class. Class rank is often used as a basis for college admission and scholarship determination.

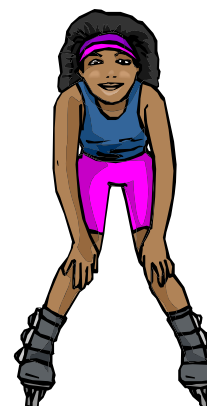
Elective A course you may choose to enroll in, but is not required.

Graduation Requirements Established by your local school.

Prerequisite A course which must be taken before you enroll in another related course. (Example: French 1 is a prerequisite for French 2.)

Required Elective A course you may select to meet a graduation requirement. (Example: You may choose to enroll in College Prep English or Business English to meet an English requirement.)

Unit of Credit Granted upon successful completion of a 36-week (2-semester) course, which meets at least 7,830 minutes a year. Half-and quarter-units of credit may be earned for courses meeting proportionately fewer minutes.



High School Course Planning Chart

This chart can be used to plan your classes for the next four years!

First plan your 9th-grade classes and then pencil in the classes you expect to take in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. These choices may change later, depending upon your interests and career plans. Check with your counselor to make sure your schedule meets your high school's graduation requirements. Be sure to plan for any additional requirements for admission to a four-year public college or university you wish to attend or a Tech Prep educational program at a two-year community college.



English--Language Arts (4 years)	9	10	11	12
Writing, reading, listening, and speaking.				



Mathematics (3 years)	9	10	11	12
First-year algebra, geometry, second-year algebra, trigonometry, precalculus, calculus.				



Natural Sciences (3 years, including lab experience)	9	10	11	12
Biology, Chemistry, Physics.				



Social Sciences (3 years)	9	10	11	12
History, sociology, psychology.				



Foreign Language (second language) (3 years)	9	10	11	12
Two years of the same language.				



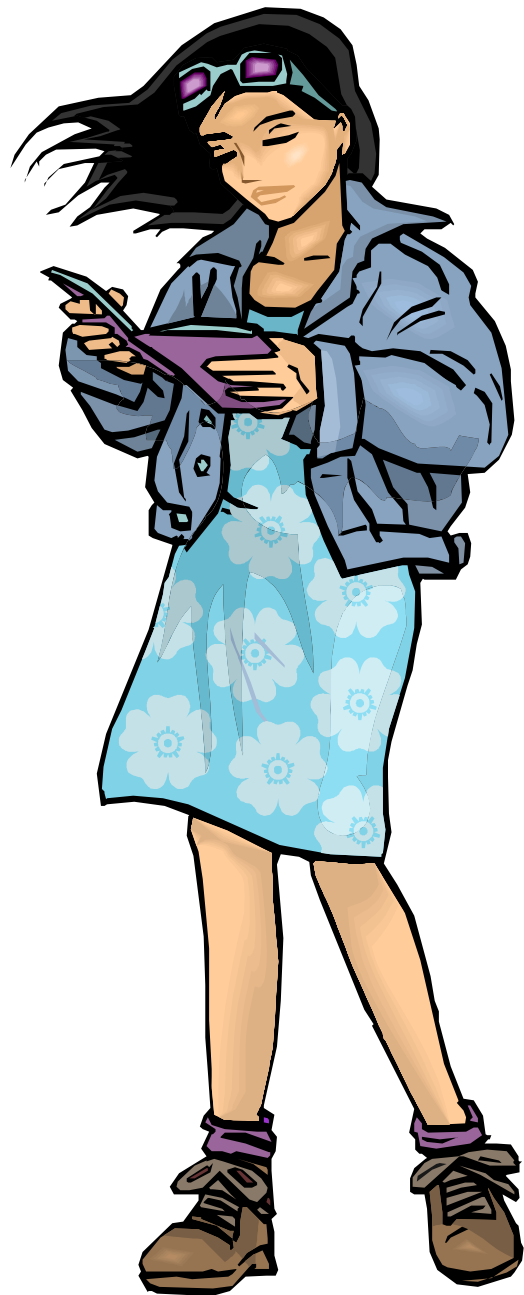
Other: Visual arts, music, theatre, drama, dance, computer science	9	10	11	12



Physical Education (state requirements vary)	9	10	11	12

What you do outside of school counts, too!

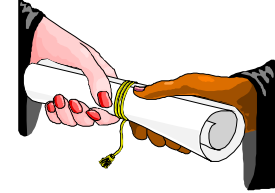
- Develop habits now that will help you succeed in high school, in education after high school, and in the world of work.
- Find a quiet place to study where you won't be interrupted. Is it just too noisy at home? Ask your family or a teacher to help you find a place to study.
- Plan a daily homework schedule and stick to it. Do more than is required.
- Ask your family or friends to read your written work. And ask them for help if you're having trouble at school.
- Use your local library. If you don't have a library card now, ask the librarian for one. They're free.
- Read newspapers and magazines. Talk with your family and friends about what you read.
- Look up words you don't know in the dictionary. Then use your new words in writing and talking.
- Talk with your family about career plans and what you want to do in the future.



It's not too soon to start thinking about

YOUR FUTURE!

If you are considering attending a four-year college, university, vocational/technical school, or two-year college after high school, you will find it helpful to:



- Make a **list of the schools** that interest you.
- **Gather information** from each school and study it.
- **Register to take the ACT** before December of your senior year; spring of your junior year is recommended. (U.S. colleges and universities accept ACT scores.)
- **Visit the campus** of each school you are seriously considering.
- **Apply early for admission and housing.**
- **Apply early for financial assistance.** Pay attention to deadlines listed in the financial aid information you receive from your counselor and the school(s) you are interested in attending.
- **Find out about** local, state, federal, and private student financial assistance programs.
- **Make your decision.** Take time to review all information carefully and weigh your options.

If you are considering serving in the Armed Forces after high school, you will find it helpful to:



- **Visit with friends, neighbors, and relatives** who have served in various branches of the Armed Forces.
- **Study the military literature** available in your counseling office.
- **Evaluate any physical limitations** that might prevent you from serving in the Armed Forces.
- **Compare military training opportunities** with possible civilian occupations.
- Arrange with your counselor to **visit with various military recruiters** during your junior and senior years of high school.
- **Compare benefits, tours of duty, training, and promotion opportunities** of military programs.

If you are considering direct employment after high school, you'll find it helpful to:



- **Explore your special abilities and interests** with your school counselor.
- Collect and study materials about **writing resumes** and letters of application.
- Consider **whether you want to move away** from your home region after high school.
- **Visit with individuals** working in various occupations that may be of interest to you.
- **Become familiar with major employers** in the areas where you are interested in working.
- Be knowledgeable about the **vocational/technical program offerings** available in your high school.

Great News!

There is a lot of financial help if you want to take the **BIG STEP** toward more education after high school.

Many students hesitate to consider additional education because of tuition costs. If you think you can't afford more education after high school, you need to know that many students receive financial help from

- their state
- the federal government
- the school they attend after high school
- private financial assistance programs



There are different types of financial assistance available:

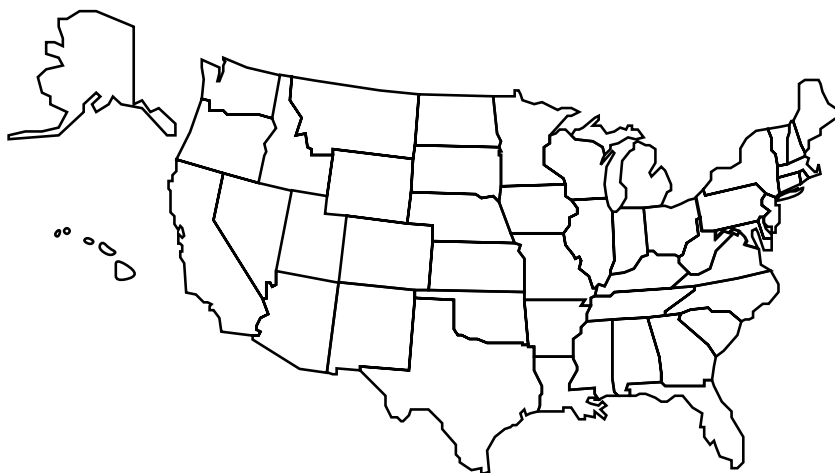
- scholarships which are usually based on good high school grades, good test scores (like the ACT), or exceptional ability (like athletic talent).
- grants which are usually based on financial need.
- loans which will need to be repaid eventually.
- work programs which allow students to earn money for educational costs and living expenses.

Your school counselor and the financial aid office at the schools you're considering can give you information about how to apply for financial assistance.

You can also use free Internet scholarship searches (try www.fastweb.com) or the local library to search for private funds.

Military programs can provide financial assistance and additional training. Apprenticeships and on-the-job training are other ways to continue your education.

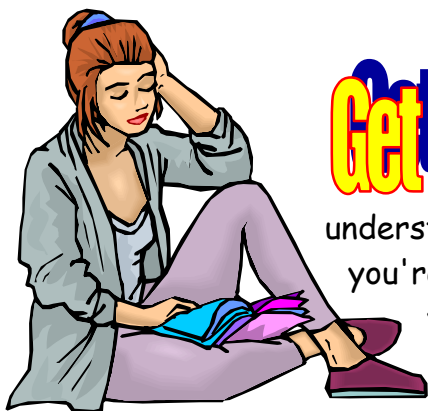




Your state may offer a variety of financial assistance programs targeted for specific groups of students. Ask your counselor for the Web addresses and phone numbers of aid sources in your state and elsewhere.

Take this booklet home

and share the information with your family. Share your ideas, too, about high school and the years ahead. You may want to refer to some of the information later. It's a good idea to check as you proceed to be sure you're making high school count.



Get set!

Just by reading through this booklet and understanding the importance of planning classes carefully, you're getting set for high school. The planning you're doing right now is going to help you **make each year count!**

For more information about planning for success in high school and preparing for life after high school, visit ACT's website at www.actstudent.org.