



Central Arkansas Christian

College Preparation

9th Grade



**Adapted from the College Board's College Planning Resources.*

Students and parents often ask: "How early we should we start planning for college?" The answer is it's never too early. There are steps you can take in ninth grade that can help get you started on the right track.

- Create a four-year high school plan. Think about what you'd like to accomplish in the next four years.
- Make sure you know which high school courses are required by colleges, and that you're taking the right classes as early as the ninth grade. You can ask your counselor about what those "right" classes are.
- Get to know the levels of courses offered by your school.



- Start thinking about your life after school, including the types of jobs that might interest you. Of course, these will change – often – but it’s good to start thinking about the possibilities. [Explore Career Finder!](#)
 - Identify your interests – likes and dislikes – not just in classes but also in every area. This will help you focus on your goals.
 - Talk to other people, such as your school counselor, teachers, recent college graduates who are working, professionals in the community, etc., about careers you might find interesting.

 - Meet with your high school counselor. Your counselor knows how to help you get the most out of high school. Be sure to take some time during the school year to discuss post-high-school plans with him or her.

 - Participate in extracurricular activities. Academics aren’t everything. Explore your interest in a sport, school club, music or drama group, or community volunteer activity. Remember that colleges would rather see real involvement in one activity instead of a loose connection to several.

 - If you’re interested in playing sports in college, research the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) eligibility requirements. The NCAA requires completion of certain core courses; you can find the specifics at the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#).

 - Save for college. It’s not too late to put money aside for college. Every little bit helps! Learning about [financial aid](#) early on can also help you down the road. Look at all of the information on the CAC Counseling webpage (coming soon).

 - Explore summer opportunities. Look for a job, internship, or [volunteer](#) position that will help you learn about a field of interest.

 - Get familiar with the PSAT-related assessments and the ACT. Most four-year colleges consider applicants’ scores on college admission tests. Practice resources can be found on the CAC Counseling webpage.
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