

# How To Get To College

## You Can Make It Happen!

A college degree can help you reach your dreams of being a teacher, an astronaut, a doctor or nurse, an athlete, an actress, or whatever you want to be. Plan early and follow the steps in each grade level.

## What Classes Do I Need to Take? (9th through 12th Grades)

The California State University requires the following college preparatory pattern of classes (referred to as the "a-g" courses) for admission:

- English: 4 years of college preparatory English composition and literature (take one each year)
- Math: 3 years (4 years are recommended), including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or higher mathematics (take one each year)
- History and Social Science: 2 years, including 1 year of U.S. history (or 1 semester of U.S. history and 1 semester of civics or American government) and 1 year of social science
- Laboratory Science: 2 years with a lab class

- Language (other than English): 2 years of the same language (American Sign Language is applicable)
- Visual and Performing Arts: 1 year of dance, drama or theater, music, or visual arts
- College Preparatory Elective: 1 year of any college preparatory subject

*Note: More than 6,500 high school career/technical classes are accepted as fulfilling one of the a-g course requirements. See "a-g Course Lists" at [www.ucop.edu/doorways](http://www.ucop.edu/doorways) to find out which ones qualify.*

Go to:  
[www.calstate.edu](http://www.calstate.edu)



## How Will I Pay for College?

- CSU fees are approximately \$3,800 a year, among the lowest in the nation for a four-year public university.
- You may qualify for financial aid ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)).
- If you earn good grades in high school, meet financial need requirements and are a California resident, you are guaranteed a Cal Grant ([www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov)) — money for college that does not need to be repaid.

## How Families Can Help Students Succeed

- Help your child with homework and meet with teachers and counselors to discuss coursework that will prepare your child for college.
- Talk to your children about careers that interest them and what college they would like to attend.
- Research financial aid, scholarships and Cal Grants. Consider opening a college savings account at ScholarShare ([www.scholarshare.com](http://www.scholarshare.com)).
- Contact the CSU campuses you are interested in to schedule a tour and get information about programs, admission requirements and financial aid.

## How Important Are Grades?

- If your GPA in college preparatory courses taken in 10th through 12th grades is 3.0 or above, you automatically meet the minimum eligibility requirements for most programs and campuses of the CSU.
- If your GPA is between 2.0 and 3.0, your eligibility also depends on your ACT (American College Test) or SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) results in combination with your GPA. More information: [www.csumentor.edu](http://www.csumentor.edu).

*Note: Some CSU campuses require higher GPAs and test scores for admission because the number of eligible applicants is greater than the campus can enroll. More information: [www.csumentor.edu](http://www.csumentor.edu).*

Follow the steps in each grade level to learn how to get to college.

## 6th & 7th Grades

- Talk to your school counselor about courses that will prepare you for college.
- Complete a college prep English course.
- Take mathematics, such as pre-Algebra.



## 8th Grade

- Take Algebra I.
- Take a language other than English.
- Take the ACT EXPLORE.
- Begin your Student Planner at [www.csumentor.edu](http://www.csumentor.edu).

## 9th Grade

- Take required courses to meet the CSU's admission standards: Algebra I or Geometry, college prep English, and a foreign language.
- Take elective courses that meet the CSU's admission standards: history, English, math, science, visual and performing arts, and a foreign language.
- Take the ACT EXPLORE.
- Begin or update your Student Planner at [www.csumentor.edu](http://www.csumentor.edu). The planner has information on courses and grades required for CSU admission.

## 10th Grade

- Take Geometry or Algebra II.
- Take college prep English.
- Take ACT's PLAN, which helps you prepare for the ACT.
- Take part in enrichment programs and summer workshops at CSU campuses in subjects like music, science, engineering, writing, filmmaking, and others.

## 11th Grade

- Review with your school counselor the classes you need to take for CSU admission, including Algebra II or advanced math and English with emphasis on writing and critical reading.
- Take the CSU's Early Assessment Program (EAP) exam ([www.calstate.edu/eap](http://www.calstate.edu/eap)) to determine if you are ready for college-level mathematics and English courses.
- Students taking Advanced Placement (AP) classes: Register to take the AP exams in the spring. You can earn college credit for AP courses if you score well on the test(s).



The CSU has 23 campuses to choose from!

[www.calstate.edu](http://www.calstate.edu)

## What Will Help Me Succeed?



CSUMentor — [www.csumentor.edu](http://www.csumentor.edu)  
CSUMentor has information on admission, financial aid, majors, campus virtual tours, a student planner and more.

## 12th Grade

- Take English and other courses required for CSU admission. Advanced math courses such as Trigonometry or Analytic Geometry/Calculus are also recommended.
- If you were "Not Ready for College Level Mathematics Courses" or "Ready for College Level Mathematics Courses - Conditional" on the 11th grade Early Assessment Program (EAP) exam, you are required to take a 12th grade mathematics course with a prerequisite of Algebra II (or Algebra I) to improve your math skills. This may increase your chances of passing the CSU's placement test.
- If you were "Not Ready for College Level English Courses" on the Early Assessment Program (EAP) exam, visit [www.csuenglishsuccess.org](http://www.csuenglishsuccess.org) to practice your English skills.

## Early Assessment Program (EAP) — [www.calstate.edu/eap](http://www.calstate.edu/eap)

- The EAP helps high school students meet college readiness standards in English and mathematics.
- EAP tests are optional and are given in the spring of the 11th grade as part of the required California Standards Tests (CSTs). Eleventh graders will be notified of testing dates in early spring.
- Students who take the EAP may be able to:
  - Skip the otherwise required CSU English and/or mathematics placement tests
  - Identify the need for additional preparation in English and math to succeed at the CSU while still enrolled in high school
  - Adjust senior-year coursework to prepare for the CSU
  - Avoid spending time and money in college remediation courses that do not count toward a bachelor's degree

## Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project (MDTP) — [mdtp.ucsd.edu](http://mdtp.ucsd.edu)

The MDTP is an assessment test that determines readiness for mathematics courses such as Algebra, Geometry and Calculus. Find out if your school participates.



## You Can Do It!

- This may increase your chances of passing the CSU's placement test.
  - Select a 12th grade English course that includes critical reading and the development of writing skills.
- **Early September:** Register for the October ACT ([www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)) or SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test).
- **October-November:** Apply to the CSU ([www.csumentor.edu](http://www.csumentor.edu)). If you regularly updated your "Student Planner," your course information will be automatically transferred to your application. Application deadline is November 30, unless otherwise noted.
- Apply for scholarships. Check with your counselor or career center for information.
- **Early November:** Register for the December ACT or SAT (Scholastic

Assessment Test) if you are retaking the exam.

- **January-March:** Apply for financial aid ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)). The deadline is March 2.
- **March-May:** Register for the CSU's placement exam (unless you are exempt), which is required prior to enrollment in the CSU.
- **Late Spring:** Students taking Advanced Placement (AP) classes should take the AP exams. You can earn college credit for AP courses if you score well on the test(s).



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