



JUNIOR YEAR

Your College Prep Timeline



Your Junior Year

You've hit your stride in high school now. It's an important time to take key steps toward reaching your future goals. The Princeton Review has compiled this **step-by-step timeline** so you know what you need to do and when you need to do it to **reach your goals** with the confidence that you are doing all the right things for your future.



Junior Year Checklist



Take the PSAT® in October.

Your junior year PSAT scores can qualify you for scholarship programs such as the National Merit® Scholarship, which can help cover the cost of tuition and get you into a great college. It's also good practice for the SAT.



Prep for the SAT® and ACT®.

The amount of time needed will depend on your starting scores and the average scores of your top-choice colleges. Our prep courses and private tutors can help you reach the score you want. Not sure where you stand? Register for a free practice test at [PrincetonReview.com/FreePracticeTest](https://www.princetonreview.com/free-practice-test).



State tests.

Many high schools require you to pass state assessment tests to advance to the next grade or to graduate. Your school counselor knows all the details, and we have many state-specific books and resources to help you prepare.



Look into financial aid.

With the cost of higher education soaring, financial aid really helps. Cast a wide net in your search for grants and scholarships. Check out our comprehensive guide at [PrincetonReview.com/CollegeFinance](https://www.princetonreview.com/college-finance).



Good grades count—put in extra effort.

When colleges review your transcripts, they look closely at your sophomore and junior year grades. It pays off to work hard this year. Let us help you raise your GPA with Homework Help powered by Tutor.com at [PrincetonReview.com/HomeworkHelp](https://www.princetonreview.com/homework-help).



Think about what you want in your prospective college.

Research is a must. Talk to your school counselor and then check out our book *The Best 381 Colleges* for advice from real students. You'll find ranking lists for everything from best professors to best food at [PrincetonReview.com](https://www.princetonreview.com). For personalized guidance, work with one of our expert Admission Counselors. We'll help you polish your application, make a list of target schools and more. Learn more at [PrincetonReview.com/Admissions](https://www.princetonreview.com/admissions).



Sign up for the SAT or ACT.

Once you're a junior, you can take the SAT as early as October and the ACT as early as September. You can take the tests more than once—colleges will look at your highest score. Check out all of the upcoming SAT test dates at [PrincetonReview.com/TestDates](https://www.princetonreview.com/test-dates). Our expert SAT and ACT instructors can help you get a better score, guaranteed.† Find a course near you at [PrincetonReview.com](https://www.princetonreview.com).



Seek out new experiences and opportunities in the summer.

Some students enroll in university programs to start getting college credits. Others dive into outdoor activities or find a summer job. Whatever you do, the summer after junior year will factor into your college application.



Start working on your college essay.

The essay is an important part of your college application, so give yourself plenty of time to write, edit and rewrite! Our Admission Counselors can help you write, polish and perfect your essay. Learn more about it at [PrincetonReview.com/Admissions](https://www.princetonreview.com/admissions).

Junior Year Testing Timeline Recommended versus Traditional

Recommended Timeline

Who should follow this: You're a high achiever and had time to prep for exams over the previous summer. You anticipate being extremely busy during the school year. You want to try for National Merit status and/or may apply as an early decision candidate.



October:

Take the PSAT and the SAT or ACT

November:

Take the SAT

December:

Take the SAT or ACT



Winter:

Brush up on your SAT and ACT prep

January/February/March/April:

A third crack at the SAT or ACT, if necessary, or try the other test, if you only took one



May:

Take the AP tests and SAT Subject Tests*



June:

Take the SAT Subject Tests*

*There are many possible combinations of Subject Tests, and you can only take three at a time. If you have questions about your testing plan, call us at 1-800-2Review (800-273-8439).

You have many choices to make your junior year, especially when it comes to a timeline for test taking. Here are two options you can pursue based on your personal goals and schedule.

Traditional Timeline

Who should follow this: You have followed the standard college prep route freshman and sophomore years. You're not sure where you want to go to school, but you want to have options.



September/October:

Light prep for PSAT



October:

Take the PSAT



Fall/Winter:

Intensive prep for SAT or ACT (can do extended prep starting in November or beginning in January)



May/June:

Try a second attempt at the SAT or ACT (or take the SAT Subject Tests, if necessary!)



Find out if the ACT or SAT is right for you with a free practice test. Get started at [PrincetonReview.com/FreePracticeTest](https://www.PrincetonReview.com/FreePracticeTest).

Answers to Your **FAQs**

Should I take the SAT/ACT tests this year?

Yes. Ideally, you should finish the tests before the end of your junior year. You've likely already learned everything you'll see on the exams, and you can avoid unnecessary stress during your senior year.

Which test should I take?

It's completely up to you. Neither test is easier, and schools accept both equally. Start with a free practice test at [PrincetonReview.com/FreePracticeTest](https://www.princetonreview.com/free-practice-test). See how you score and which test is the right fit for you.

How many times should I take it?

Ideally, you should take the test twice, but you can take it up to three times. Once you get the score you want, there's no reason to take it again.

What about AP® tests and SAT Subject Tests™?

High scores on the AP exams can help you graduate college early and save you money on tuition. SAT Subject Test scores can help boost your chances of admission by showing your strengths in specific academic areas.

What about the PSAT?

Some scholarships, such as the National Merit Scholarship, use the PSAT for qualification, but don't stress out about it.

How can The Princeton Review help me best right now?

During junior year, it's important to get great test scores and great grades. We can help with both. Our ACT and SAT prep courses and private tutors will help you get ready for the exam(s) by teaching you the content and strategies you need. If you need help maintaining your GPA, an expert tutor is only a click away with our 24/7 Homework Help service. Get started at [PrincetonReview.com/HomeworkHelp](https://www.princetonreview.com/homework-help).

Go to [PrincetonReview.com](https://www.princetonreview.com) to start researching colleges and building your dream school list.



Tip for **Juniors**

Summer counts! Whether you enroll in a university program or work as a camp counselor, your experience can make your college application stand out from those of your peers and be great material for your college essay.

The Princeton Review

Can Help You Reach Your Goals

For more than 30 years, students and their families have trusted The Princeton Review to help them get into their dream schools.

We help students succeed in high school and beyond by giving them resources for better grades, better test scores and stronger college applications. Our proven methodology gives you test-taking strategies and a guaranteed better score.[†] With a range of options, including one-on-one private tutoring, semi-private and traditional classes, and online prep, The Princeton Review offers the flexibility to fit your schedule and learning style.



Test Prep Courses



Private Tutoring



On-Demand Homework Help



Admission Counseling



Best-Fit College



Visit PrincetonReview.com or call **800-2Review (800-273-8439)** to learn more or find a course.

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