

HIGH SCHOOL CHECKLIST FOR COLLEGE READINESS: BY SKILL



Created by College Success @ Perkins

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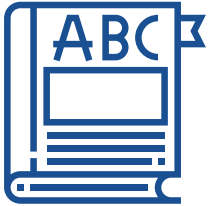
As students proceed through high school, they are challenged to cover many areas of learning, from academic subjects, to increasingly complex blindness skills. Growth toward independence in all of these areas is complex, and takes a lot of practice and time. Often, it is hard to keep an eye on just what the needs are for a student to be really independent and ready to tackle the demands of college-level work without the support inherent in a high school setting.

Consider using this checklist as a tool to raise awareness of the range of skills students need to be confident in, and truly independent in, to be successful in college-level work. Introducing these tasks to students as early as possible will allow more time to engage, develop the fluency necessary to tackle college-level work independently, and to plan for and request the classes needed to achieve these critical milestones.

These skills will not only prepare your student for more effective transition to college, but for workplace readiness as well. Availability of services to learn these skills after high school graduation is limited; colleges assume competency in many of these skills.

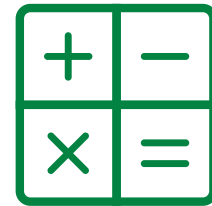


Beyond the skills explored below, students should be advised to enroll in challenging courses that demand persistence, critical reading and thinking. A standard, college-prep curriculum over four years should include the following:



Four years of English
at the college-prep level or above

Three years of math
through at least Algebra II, but preferably
through Statistics or PreCalc



Two years of lab science
(Biology and Chemistry or Physics)

Two years of social studies
at the college-prep level or above
(World History and US History are minimum)



Two years of World Language

Managing four to five college-prep courses per year, independently, begins to prepare students for the demands of college. Nearly all colleges demand reading levels at Grade 12 or higher and approximately 100 pages per week of reading, independently, so scaffolding independence in the first two years of high school is essential to strengthening these skills.



High school checklist for college readiness by skill

Rating criteria:

1 = No exposure

2 = **Beginning:** I have just started learning this skill.

3 = **Developing:** I can do some of this skill without any assistance.

4 = **Approaching proficiency:** I can do most of this skill most of the time without any assistance but sometimes need help or reminders.

5 = **Proficient:** I can do this skill with little help or reminders.

6 = **Advanced:** I can independently* do this skill without any support or reminders with consistency and can problem-solve independently.

*Independently: Can accomplish task without any additional assistance at all. Not to set up, not to turn on, not to point to a starting point.

Self-advocacy/self-determination skills

- ___ I am aware of my strengths, challenges, interests, values and goals.
- ___ I regularly practice the skills I need to develop to achieve my personal goals.
- ___ I can effectively communicate these strengths, weaknesses, interests and values, orally and in writing.
- ___ I know when to ask for help or decline assistance with tasks of daily living, academics, technology or otherwise.
- ___ I can persist in tasks, assignments and advocacy even when I feel frustrated; I have strategies for effectively keeping my focus.
- ___ I can identify my visual impairment using medical and layman's terms as well as the causes, social/academic implications, and stability of my condition.
- ___ I can identify additional disabilities (if applicable) and their implications.
- ___ I can describe my own Academic Profile for presentation to Office of Disability Services, including preferred formats for reading and other accommodations including notetakers, extended time, etc.
- ___ I can effectively communicate academic and personal needs, wants, opinions, and preferences in a timely manner, to serve my own best interests.
- ___ I am able to follow up on identified academic and personal needs with relevant sources of support including, individuals, campus offices, state agencies, etc.

Technology skills

- ___ I can independently create, edit, and incorporate feedback for a document and form in a variety of formats such as MS Word, Google Docs, Google Sheets, Excel, PDF, etc.
- ___ I can independently check and respond to my personal and professional emails in a timely manner, including document management.
- ___ I can use a variety of tools to access and read print including documents, forms and textbooks.
- ___ I can identify the best tool for each academic task, depending on the length of the assignment, demands for note taking and efficiency of each tool.
- ___ I can use the Internet to research and manage information related to my personal life and my academic life.
- ___ I know how to independently cite and document research; I know plagiarism rules.
- ___ I can type 60 WPM or more.
- ___ I can care for and manage my technology, including troubleshooting, when necessary.
- ___ I use an online calendar, planner or other task management tool to plan, set reminders and manage my events and obligations including academic assignments, work and meetings.
- ___ I manage passwords, login information and documents so that I can efficiently access information when I need it, without outside support.
- ___ I manage online platforms for classes.
- ___ I have a method of organizing and naming documents so I can search for items efficiently.
- ___ I can use a screen reader and/or magnification software on my devices across tasks (academic and personal), times and settings to maximize my efficiency.

Orientation and mobility skills

- ___ I can independently plan logistics to get to my destination independently on time.
- ___ I can understand my transportation options and know how to use them.
- ___ I understand appropriate clothing and impacts for weather and night time travel.
- ___ I understand and effectively manage travel impacts of environmental changes such as weather, time of day, lighting, construction and factors out of your control.
- ___ I use problem solving skills for unforeseen circumstances.
- ___ I assess risk at street crossings, independently.
- ___ I keep my items and body safe when traveling in public.
- ___ I request/decline assistance in a courteous manner.
- ___ I know how and when to use my mobility tools such as my cane, monocular and phone.
- ___ I can independently request training for additional mobility support as needed, from the appropriate agency.



Academic skills

- ___ I advocate for and secure academic accommodations and material access to meet my individual needs, in a timely fashion, independently.
- ___ I am used to managing between 10 and 15 hours of homework at minimum, independently, per week.
- ___ I can utilize study skills and strategies for test taking of all formats.
- ___ I can independently research appropriate post-secondary programs including college to meet my future educational goals.
- ___ I can identify the most effective reading media for me, for a range of academic tasks, including reading textbooks, articles, online materials and visually based materials including graphs, charts, pictures and other visual material.
- ___ I can effectively read college-level materials, and take notes efficiently, using my preferred reading and writing media, up to 100-150 pages per week.
- ___ I produce academic materials that demonstrate strong writing skills, excellent grammar and meet the requirements of college level writing and formatting.
- ___ I can objectively analyze and evaluate complex subjects, concepts and situations.
- ___ I arrive to class on time, prepared with appropriate tools, including technology. I am consistent in on-time assignment completion.

Executive functioning skills

- ___ I can routinely and independently set and follow a daily schedule of activities that moves me forward toward my academic and personal goals.
- ___ I can complete tasks and multi step assignments, without modifications, within the times assigned to those tasks.
- ___ I adjust to changes in plans and priorities appropriately and in a timely manner.
- ___ I set long and short term goals and respond to changes in priorities.
- ___ I devise methods for effectively and efficiently managing my written and electronic communications.
- ___ I recall facts, dates and details via notes for critical assignments.
- ___ I can complete academic and personal tasks on time, without external reminders other than those I create, including those tasks I do not enjoy doing, or have never done before.
- ___ I devise methods to ensure I remember critical information.
- ___ I can recognize when I need additional support on an assignment, in a timely manner, to allow for that support to be meaningful and helpful.



Independent living skills

- ___ I can prepare small meals for myself using a variety of available appliances.
- ___ I conduct my own shopping for groceries and personal items.
- ___ I complete all aspects of my personal laundry care.
- ___ I clean my room in a residential setting when given tools with which I am familiar.
- ___ I can identify the differences between credit cards and debit cards and discuss the pros and cons of each.
- ___ I personally manage and access my own personal money in cash and card formats and handle day to day financial transactions.
- ___ I can identify the organization and labeling strategies which work best for me.
- ___ I can distinguish between safe and unsafe methods of using chemicals and demonstrate the use of common household cleaning products.
- ___ I can identify common sources of adaptive/accessible recreational opportunities within a college setting and how to seek them out.
- ___ I identify effective methods of responding to common personal safety situations and identify what support services are available for handling common emergencies.
- ___ I identify, organize and store important documents.
- ___ I manage all aspects of my personal medications including: contacting my doctor, contacting pharmacist for medicine related advice, administering medications, describing medication purpose, identifying when refills are needed and ordering refills from in and out of state.
- ___ I can dress myself appropriately, for a variety of settings and responsibilities.

Residential living skills

- ___ I manage appropriate behavior and habits of community living.
- ___ I take initiative to participate in and plan social activities.
- ___ I proactively address conflicts with those with whom I share a living space.
- ___ I attend all meetings and updates facilitated by residential life in an appropriate and respectful manner.
- ___ I can independently identify and attend various enrichment activities and obligations on my campus.



Vocational skills

- ___ I have a finished resume that follows standard guidelines for content, formatting and professional language.
- ___ I have a growing understanding of my interests, my skills and talents, and how they translate into possible academic areas in college, as well as possible careers. I understand that these might change.
- ___ I have prepared and practiced a 30-second Elevator Pitch.
- ___ I can identify five professional strengths and a minimum of three areas for growth.
- ___ I can dress appropriately in professional settings.
- ___ I have completed a written abilities statement that outlines necessary workplace accommodations.
- ___ I have an understanding of the purpose and relevance of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- ___ I write professional emails with respect to content, tone, formatting and language.
- ___ I have a professional email address.
- ___ I possess the ability to understand the impact of my timeliness, as a sign of respect and professional courtesy for those with whom I work.
- ___ I have practiced responding effectively to common interview questions.
- ___ I am aware of my own proper body language.
- ___ I can demonstrate an awareness of, and ability to respond appropriately to, workplace norms.

Social and emotional skills

- ___ I can successfully negotiate and resolve interpersonal conflicts in a socially acceptable manner.
- ___ I can manage my emotions independently and problem solve when faced with unexpected or unpleasant circumstances.
- ___ I can display college appropriate social skills and can identify socially appropriate and inappropriate behavior within public and private settings.
- ___ I can demonstrate the ability to delay gratification.
- ___ I understand how personal actions affect others and behave in a manner that is respectful and mindful of the feelings of others.
- ___ I can receive and incorporate feedback from peers and role models without defensiveness.
- ___ I can identify resources for emotional support.





Questions? We are here to help!

Do you know a student who might benefit from College Success @ Perkins, a program designed for college-bound high school students and current college students looking to strengthen their critical academic and blindness skills needed to reach their full, college-ready potential? Get in touch!

Contact Leslie Thatcher, College Success program director, at **617-972-7728** or **Leslie.Thatcher@Perkins.org** for additional information.



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