

FRESHMAN COUNTDOWN TO COLLEGE CALENDAR

ICAN[®]

Succeed. In Education. In Career. In Life.

PRESENTED BY  THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA



August

- Schedule a **FREE** planning session with an ICAN Student Success Advisor. Visit ICANSucceed.org/apt or call (877) 272-4692.
- Start off on the right foot with your grades. Freshman grades matter. Colleges look at your overall GPA through all four years of high school.
- Extracurricular activities are a great way to meet new people and scholarship organizations consider a student's involvement in school and community activities.
- Earn scholarship money for classes you take, activities you are involved in, and events you attend. Visit Raise.Me, create a free account and start earning scholarship money from day one of freshman year.

September

- Ask your parents and other adults what they like and dislike about their careers. Find out what type of training or education is required for each job.
- Work with your school counselor and select courses that are recommended for optimum college preparation. Optimum preparation includes four years of English, math, science, social studies, and foreign language; and two years of electives.
- Discover different college options and learn about academics, admissions, major rankings, and more. Visit CollegeRaptor.com to explore four-year options. Visit curricunet.com/iowa_doe to learn about Iowa's technical and two-year programs.
- Stay organized with a planner or planning app.

October

- Develop an activities resume to keep track of your participation in extracurricular activities. This will be a great resource when it's time to fill out scholarship and college admission applications.
- Saving money is the best way to prepare for the cost of a college education. Check out ICANSucceed.org/payforcollege.
- Think about what you like to do, what you're good at and what you value most. Talk to your counselor about assessments to help you identify a potential career. Visit ICANSucceed.org/interests.
- Prepare for college with the ICAN Tip of the Week; sign up at ICANSucceed.org/signup.
- Talk to your parents about a college savings plan to help cover college costs.

November

- Compare college costs throughout the country by visiting Chegg.com.
- Talk to your parents about your plans for the future. Discuss your personal and academic strengths and your plan to reach your goals.
- Take an assessment test to determine which career paths best suit you. Visit ACTprofile.org.
- Read in your free time to develop a strong vocabulary, which is an important component in college entrance exams.

December

- Volunteer in your community. Some scholarships are awarded based on community service.
- How are your computer skills? Become proficient in common computer applications such as Word, Excel[®] and PowerPoint[®] and learn how to use the Internet as a research tool.
- Is there a college you've always dreamed of attending? Research colleges online and create a list of what you like most and least about each school. Visit ICANSucceed.org/colleges.

January

- Become familiar with the types of financial aid available for college. Financial aid includes grants, scholarships, work-study, and loans. Grants and scholarships don't have to be paid back. Work-study enables students to earn money by working on campus. Loans must be repaid. Visit ICANSucceed.org/payforcollege to learn more.
- What subjects do you like in school? ACTprofile.org is an online program that can help you search for careers related to those subjects.

February

- A majority of the fastest-growing jobs require some type of postsecondary education or training. Research careers to learn more about your options. Which jobs are in demand? What type of education or training is required?
- If you're an athlete hoping to play sports in college, plan ahead. Find the academic requirements at NCAAClearinghouse.net.
- Your grades are important, but most colleges prefer students who challenge themselves with tougher courses over students who take easier courses to boost GPAs.

March

- Update or create your plan with ICAN. Call (877) 272-4692 or visit ICANSucceed.org/apt to schedule.
- Meet with your school counselor to select your classes for 10th grade. Choose your courses wisely to stay on track to meet college admission requirements.
- Continue to research jobs related to your interests. Learn more at ICANSucceed.org/interests.
- Make the most of your summer. Search for summer camps in your area of interest (e.g., sports, band, drama, or academics). Check with teachers, counselors, and coaches for recommendations.

April

- Explore the colleges you're interested in attending. Do your classes align with the school's admission requirements and academic profile? If not, what GPA do you need to achieve? Which classes should you take to prepare for college?
- Do you have friends or family who are high school seniors? Talk to them about their plans for next year. Ask them how they made their decisions and what was involved in the process.
- Attend a game, play, concert or other cultural experience on a local college campus to get exposure to the campus environment.

May

- Check with your school counselor to see if you can attend a summer camp or program to catch up or to get ahead academically.
- Learn about the world of work through job shadowing, volunteering, or interning this summer.
- Build relationships with teachers, counselors, coaches, and community members. Some could write letters of recommendation when it's time to submit scholarship and/or college applications.

June

- Start a summer reading list.
- Will you be attending summer camp on a college campus? If so, while you're there, think about whether you'd like to attend the school.
- Update your Raise.Me account to earn additional scholarship dollars.
- Talk to your family members, friends, teachers, school counselors, and coaches about their college experiences.

July

- Review your career assessment results and make a list of colleges you're interested in researching based on your results. Visit ICANSucceed.org/colleges.
- This summer, participate in hobbies and activities related to your career interests.
- Don't be afraid to alter your career goals as you learn more about yourself and the world of work, but remember to keep your goals attainable.

Visit www.ICANSucceed.org/apt or call (877) 272-4692 to schedule an appointment to create a plan for college and career, as well as financial aid.

SOPHOMORE COUNTDOWN TO COLLEGE CALENDAR

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August

- Visit an ICAN Center and work on your career and college plan with a Student Success Advisor. Call (877) 272-4692 or visit ICANSucceed.org/apt.
- Earn scholarship money for classes you take, activities you are involved in, and events you attend. Visit Raise.Me, create or update your account and earn scholarship money.
- Prepare for college and career with the ICAN Tip of the Week; sign up at ICANSucceed.org/signup.
- Find a mentor that can assist you through high school and the college process, such as a teacher, parent, family member, or family friend.

September

- Attend the Golden Circle College & Career Fair — Iowa's largest — at the Center for Higher Education in Des Moines the last Sunday in September. Talk with Iowa employers, colleges & universities from across the country, and attend breakout sessions. Visit ICANSucceed.org/goldencircle for details.
- Consider taking the PLAN[®] (a pre-ACT[®] test) or the PSAT/NMSQT[®] (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) as practice for the actual college entrance exams.
- Check out the ICAN Career & College Corner blog for some real advice from ICAN Advisors. Subscribe ican-collegeplanning.blogspot.com.

October

- Talk with your parents about your college and career goals and how to attain them, including a plan to cover college costs. Start analyzing your Return on College Investment at iowastudentloan.org/ROCItool, a tool that helps compare careers and costs.
- Have you attended a college fair yet? Visit ICANSucceed.org/collegefairs.
- Visit ACTprofile.org and take or update your career assessment. Use the results to help plan your high school courses and activities.
- Get involved! Find an activity at your school or in your community that you enjoy.

November

- Visit ICANSucceed.org/payforcollege for information on tuition and other fees at colleges and universities in Iowa.
- Talk to family members, friends, teachers, counselors, and coaches about their college experiences.
- Keep a record of your extracurricular involvement in an activities resume — a concise summary of your achievements, talents and interests.
- What subjects do you like in school? To search for careers related to those subjects, visit ACTprofile.org.
- Take advantage and meet with college representatives visiting your high school.

December

- College can be affordable! Don't let the "sticker price" scare you. With financial aid and planning you can help ensure your out-of-pocket costs are manageable. Visit with an ICAN advisor and evaluate your college list to see what fits your goals and is affordable for you. Use a budget calculator or download the in-school budget worksheet from ICANSucceed.org/resourcezone.
- Talk to your school counselor about college admission requirements and make sure you take the right classes.
- Education after high school doesn't have to include a four-year degree. Find out more about apprenticeships, certificate programs, two-year degrees, and other programs through the Career Clusters at ACTprofile.org.

January

- Schedule an advising session at your local ICAN Center by visiting ICANSucceed.org/apt. Talk with a Student Success Advisor about your future and develop a plan for success.
- Become familiar with the types of financial aid available for college. Financial aid includes grants, scholarships, work-study and loans. Grants and scholarships don't have to be paid back. Work-study enables students to earn money by working. Loans must be repaid.
- Review your financial plan for college and make sure it aligns with your career assessment and salary options. Visit ACTprofile.org.
- Update your Raise.Me account to earn additional scholarship dollars.

February

- Begin thinking about college majors. Which majors match your skills and interests? ACT Profile is an online tool that can help you research college majors. Visit ACTprofile.org.
- Saving money is the best way to prepare for the cost of a college education. Check out ICANSucceed.org/payforcollege for information on paying for college.
- Attend an ICAN career and college planning night this spring. Visit ICANSucceed.org/calendar for events at your school or near you.

March

- Visit ICANSucceed.org/collegefairs for information on Iowa college fairs.
- Do you know people who work in a job related to your career interest? Interview them about the educational requirements and what they like most about their work.
- Check the status of your College Savings Plans and keep putting money away for college.
- If your family is planning a summer vacation, try to visit a few college campuses along the way.

April

- Meet with your school counselor to ensure your junior classes meet college admission requirements.
- Get a taste of a future career through job shadowing, volunteer work, or an internship.
- If you have specific majors in mind, talk with an ICAN advisor to explore which schools offer those programs.
- If you're an athlete hoping to play sports in college, plan ahead. Find the academic requirements at NCAAClearinghouse.net.

May

- Check with your school counselor to see if AP[®] (Advanced Placement) classes will fit into your schedule. Challenging courses in high school can better prepare you for college.
- Ask your school counselor if there are any summer camp programs you could attend to help get you ahead.
- Look for a summer job that's related to your interests. Be sure to save some of your summer earnings for college.

June

- Compare several careers. Consider the required education or training, tasks that have to be performed, starting salary, and the characteristics that appeal to you most. Visit ICANSucceed.org/careers for links to career research tools.
- Start a summer reading list. Try reading books that will help increase your vocabulary.
- Participate in hobbies and activities that enable you to explore your career interests.

July

- Are you attending summer camp on a college campus? If so, take a look around to see if you could imagine attending the school.
- Talk to your parents about college expenses and make a plan to cover them.
- Stay in touch with teachers, school counselors, coaches, and community members. Later you may ask them to write letters of recommendation for scholarship and/or college admission applications.

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