

How to Adjust to School as a Transfer Student

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Attending school can be a challenge for many students. But, if you or your child are transfer students, you may struggle with the transition. Fortunately, most challenges of transferring your child to a new school can be solved by communicating with your child. If you're feeling anxious about starting a new school yourself, keeping an open mind and positive attitude can help you adjust to life as a transfer student.

Method 1

Method 1 of 3: Adjusting Academically



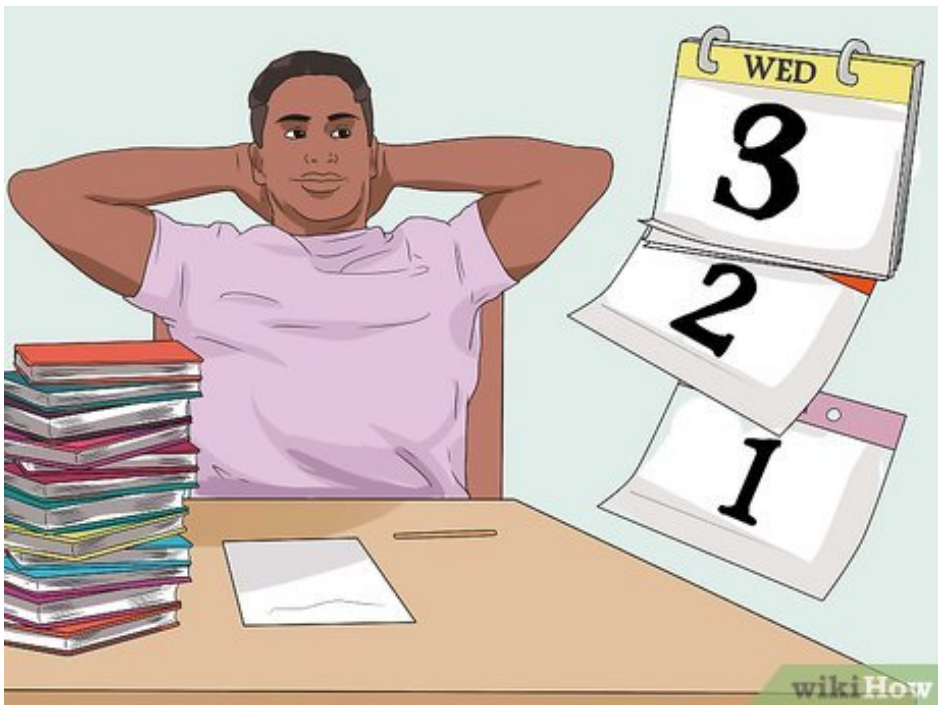
1 Decide when to transfer. If you're able to determine when you transfer schools, try to begin classes at the start of the school year. This way, everyone is adjusting to the new school year and classes at the same time you are. If you can't start at the beginning of the year, at least try to start when a new term or period begins.

- If you have no control over when you start and you have to start during the school year, try to meet with your instructors. This way, you can find out their requirements and whether you need to catch up on what the classes have already covered.



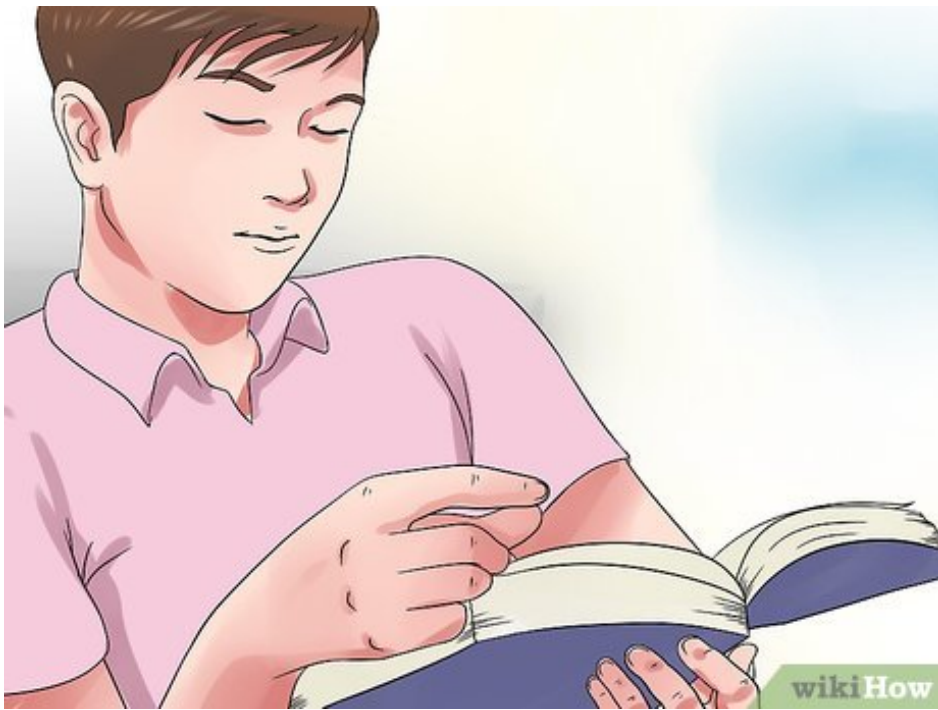
2 Attend orientation. If you're a transfer student, it's incredibly important that you visit orientation. Orientation is your chance to meet representatives from the school, instructors, and some fellow students. The goal of orientation is to **reduce your anxiety**, make you feel welcome, and answer questions you have about making the switch to the school.

- Schools may have separate orientations for new students and for transfer students. This way, you're getting information specific to your academic situation.^[1]



3 Consider your goals. You're probably transferring some academic credits from your old school. Check your new school's academic requirements so you can fulfill credits without repeating courses. Decide what areas of study you'd like to focus on and try to enroll in classes that you'd really enjoy.^[2]

- You may want to make a timeline of goals, especially if you'd like to graduate within a specific time frame. This can be helpful when scheduling classes that have prerequisites.



4 Read the handbook. Your school will give you a handbook when you sign up for classes. Take the time to read it so you understand the schools policies on anything from attendance, tardiness, grading scales, to graduation requirements. If you're unsure about anything in the handbook or still have questions, talk to a guidance counselor or school administrator.

- The handbook will also list important dates for the school year (like holidays, exams, and teacher meetings).



5 Prepare to succeed. Once you know what classes you'll be taking, you should find out materials you'll need before starting class. Ask the instructor what supplies you'll need for the class. For example, you may need a textbook, supplemental readings, art supplies, or math supplies.

- If you won't be able to see the instructor before starting the class, try to email the instructor in advance. This way, they can tell you what supplies you'll need immediately.



- 1 Create a support network.** Your support network can be made of anyone you can go and talk to when you feel stressed. This can include old friends, family, new classmates, and even guidance counselors. Knowing that you have people to turn to can reduce the stress of transferring schools.^[3]
 - It may be harder to maintain existing relationships once you change schools, especially if the new school is far away. Let friends and family know that you'll be going through an adjustment period with all the new changes in your life.



2 Be active in clubs and activities. Take full advantage of your new school's resources and opportunities. Find out if there are clubs, organizations, or athletics that you'd like to become involved in. This is a good way to make friends and feel like you're a part of the school community.^[4]

- You'll need to introduce yourself in classes or clubs. Keep it brief, but include something interesting about yourself. You might mention where you transferred from and what you're currently studying.



3 Live on campus if your school has housing. If you have the option of living on campus, this is a great way to quickly meet people. Many schools that offer student housing have housing options specifically for transfer students. For example, you might be assigned to live with another transfer student in a dorm.^[5]

- Even if you don't have the same classes or interests as your roommate, you'll feel more involved in the school and you'll still share common concerns as transfer students.



4 Meet with your guidance counselor. Most schools will assign a mentor, guidance counselor or academic advisor to you when you begin classes. This person may or may not be one of your teachers. Take advantage of meeting with your counselor frequently. Talk if you're struggling to fit in, need advice, or just want to talk about your life or career goals.^[6]

- Your counselor is your ally. They'll be able to help you plan classes, tell you about activities offered through the school, and write letters of recommendation for you.

Method 3 of 3: Adjusting Your Mindset



1 Have a positive outlook. Although you may not be excited about transferring, try to have a positive attitude about the change. Focus on the positive aspects of changing schools. Over time, you'll stop thinking about it so much and will just enjoy being at the new school.^[7]

- As soon as you find yourself thinking something negative, change it to a positive statement. For example, instead of saying, "This is never going to work," say, "I think I need to approach this differently."



2 Avoid making comparisons. If you're unhappy about having to transfer schools, it can be easy to only see the negatives of your new school. Try not to compare your new school to your old school. Remind yourself that you're in a new place and need a new start with new opportunities. Comparing the schools will only hold you back.^[8]

- Realize that your school experience will be unique to you. One school or set of experiences isn't better than any other.



3 Give yourself time. Just as it took you time to adjust to your old school, you'll also need to give yourself time to adjust to the new school. To help with some of the little things, try to walk through the school or campus before classes start. This way, you can figure out where your classes are ahead of time.

- It can also be useful to know how meal plans work, where you can park (if you drive to school), and where the main offices are (for guidance, financial, and academic advising).



4 Get help. If you're still struggling to find your place in a new school or you feel lonely or isolated, there are resources for you. Visit your school's guidance counselor or transfer support center. Trained professionals can talk with you about your concerns and help you adapt to life in a new school.

- Your school can also put you in touch with other transfer students or peer mentors who are going through similar situations as you.



Expert Q&A

Question

How can I feel more comfortable as a transfer student?



Alicia Oglesby
Professional School Counselor
Expert Answer

Check whether the school offers an orientation specifically for transfer students, and take advantage of that if they do. As far as making friends, it's important to try to be a little more outgoing so you can meet people. To do that, join clubs, be friendly when you work on group projects, and participate in different school events.

Helpful 0 Not Helpful 2

References

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5. ↑ <http://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/2011/09/15/4-tips-to-make-transferring-colleges-easier>
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About This Article



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★★★★★
2 votes - 100%

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