

How to Choose the Right Subjects at School

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Choosing subjects well is very important to your success at school, and even your success in your future career. Nervous you won't make the right choices? Never fear! Follow the tips and tricks in this article to kickstart your life right.

Steps



1 Take a moment to look at your future goals. If you don't have any, decide what they will be. Don't just do a course because your friends are, or your brother is. You are your own individual.^[1]

- What career do you want to pursue? It's a good idea to take classes that are relevant to the job you hope to have in the future. For example, if you want to be a doctor, biology, science, and math are courses you might want to take. Especially if you are in high school or college, your career choice is a huge deciding factor.
- Think about what you want to have on your resume. Are there any "extra" classes that maybe aren't relevant to your career choice, but are subjects you are particularly interested in or teach you a valuable life skill? Things like band, art, or a language fall into this category. These things are good to put on your resume in the future because it makes you stand out more when applying for jobs.



2 Choose subjects you enjoy. These classes make your life less stressful, but they may be recommended subjects that you need to fulfill for your education goals.^[2] ^[3]

- When you enjoy subjects, you will often listen more, work harder, and overall do better. All subjects are worthwhile, and even if a few subjects you choose aren't all that relevant to the future you want to have, that doesn't really matter. What matters most is that you enjoy what you are learning and are following a career path you are excited about. Motivation plays a key role in your success as a student.



3 Choose subjects that offer a (reasonable) challenge. ^[4]

- If subjects are too easy for you, you will easily get bored and will lack motivation. If they are too hard, you will get frustrated and likely not understand the material well enough to succeed. Take classes that offer you a challenge you are willing to take.^[5]
- Look at how well you've done in past classes to help determine what level you are at. If you were struggling at math last year, for example, you probably shouldn't be taking the advanced math course. If you were excelling in math, however, the advanced math course may be a good choice. Biting off more than you can chew or taking the easy road does not make you look cool; be honest with yourself when judging your abilities and picking classes.



4 Choose classes that you are required to take. [6]

- Don't get too excited picking subjects that you forget the ones that are required for you to take! Pick out your required subjects first so that you know how many other choices you can still make.



5 Make a list of all the subjects you want to do, and narrow it down.

- If you need to choose, say, five subjects, make sure you include a couple backups on your list. You probably won't be able to take every class you really want to take; accept that before you start.
- If you end up with way more subjects on your list than you are allowed to take, cut the ones you would least enjoy, or any subjects that have overlapping topics. Keep narrowing it down until you have enough classes, plus 1-3 backups.
- Avoid loading too many science or math courses at the same time since they can be more difficult.^[7]



6 Consult your parents. [8]

- You get the final say, but you should make sure your parents approve of your selected classes and career path. If they question any of the classes you'd like to take, calmly discuss the matter. Screaming and yelling at each other won't help you keep your classes.
- Your parents can help point out any classes they think you'd like or that they think you should take. Remember that you get the final say, but you should seriously consider different possibilities. Who knows? Maybe a class you thought looked lame could turn out to be fun!



Community Q&A

Question

What school subjects do I need?



Community Answer

It depends on what grade you're in, what is required by your school, and what you're interested in. Most schools require math, English, and science as the core subjects.

Helpful 40 Not Helpful 5

Question

How do I choose the right subjects if I am in elementary school and already know I want to be a doctor?



Community Answer

Focus on taking as many science classes as you can: biology, chemistry, anatomy, etc. Take as many AP and college-prep courses as are available, and consider volunteering at a hospital in your area once you're old enough; it will look good on your college application, as well as providing you with behind-the-scenes experience as to how a medical facility operates.

Helpful 22 Not Helpful 3

Question

What should I keep in mind while trying to choose the subjects I will take in tenth grade?



Community Answer

Choose what you like and what interests you, try new subject that seems interesting to you. However, if you don't like it after the first two weeks, then drop it straight away because it will be hard to change after a while. Keep in mind that this is year 10, so you can completely change what you want in years 11 and 12, try new things in year 10 because after year 10 you don't have much time left to change. Bottom line is: try new things and do things that are easy for you and interest you.

Helpful 18 Not Helpful 3

Question

Which subjects should I choose specifically if I want to be a pilot?



Community Answer

Most major airlines require passes in English, mathematics, and physics. Any aerospace and/or aviation subjects should benefit you too.

Helpful 10 Not Helpful 1

Question

What do I need to study to become a successful business owner?



Community Answer

Accounting, marketing, economics, management, public speaking, writing and composition, computer science, and any history course.

Helpful 13 Not Helpful 2



Tips

- The hardest subjects don't always equal the best education. Remember to pick subjects that are at the right level for you, even if that means being in a different class than your friends.
- Don't choose subjects because you think they will be easy; they are often boring and you won't do as well as you could in a more challenging subject that you enjoy.

- Your parents should be included in the decision, but subjects should be chosen for **you**, not for your parents.
- Don't choose a subject only because it has a teacher you like; the teachers may change from year to year.
- Just because your friends take a certain class **does not** mean you have to take it. Don't break under peer pressure; choose what's best for yourself, not your friends.

References

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This article was co-authored by **Ted Coopersmith, MBA**. Ted Coopersmith is an Academic Tutor for Manhattan Elite Prep, a test prep and academic tutoring company based in New York City. In addition to general academic advising, Ted has expertise in preparing for the ACT, SAT, SSAT, and ASVAB tests. He also has over 30 years of financial controller advising and consulting experience. He holds a BA from the City University of New York (CUNY) and an MBA from Pace University. This article has been viewed 52,542 times.

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