

How To: Kick Butt This Junior Year

The infamous, most unforgiving year has finally arrived for yet another junior class, bringing both the privileges of an upperclassman as well as the stresses associated with standardized testing, heavy course loads, varsity teams, and the beginning of the college application process. How can you balance it all without having mental breakdown after mental breakdown? Although the occasional stress-cry is inevitable for hardworking, successful students, *The Mirador* has a few pointers to ensure that your junior year will be the best year yet!

Start SAT/ACT Studying Early: Whether you are an ACT or SAT person, we strongly recommend starting your studying earlier rather than later. Try out both tests to find which is your best bet for success, and then start the practice tests. Before you know it, you'll be knee deep in English papers and physics labs, and the thought of dedicating an hour of your precious Tuesday night to practicing the reading section of the SAT will be simply indigestible. Even though it can be time consuming, it is well worth that precious time. Most seniors trying to sneak one more score onto their college apps highly recommend start testing as soon as possible!

Take the AP Test: By the time AP testing rolls around, you may be a bit burnt out from months of standardized testing and AP courses. However, for both the parents' bank accounts and your integrity, rally for just one more test. If you are able to score above a three, those credits may transfer over for college depending on what school you attend. In addition, the peace of mind you'll have after realizing that those late nights you spent grinding, in order to remember the timeline of the civil war or understand that chemistry problem, actually did pay off is truly indescribable. Do yourself a

favor, and get acknowledgement for a year's worth of hard work.

Get Your Sleep: Although it may feel as though every single night you have a year's worth of homework and every important test is on the same day, it is crucial you get at least eight hours of sleep. Try to start your homework as early as possible, and hit the hay when you start having to reread the same sentences over and over again. If you aren't rested for the school day, you'll be so exhausted you won't be comprehending any new material, and in turn will fall behind even more than before. Sleep is much more important than that extra point on your math homework!

Maintaining a Social Life: Let's not forget high school is also a time to have fun and make memories with your friends. Make sure you ditch the books for a minimum of one enjoyable outing per weekend, not including Fridays. Even if you aren't a party-goer or a school-sport attendee, something as simple as lunch with a friend or a local run with your dog will do. Even though junior year can be stressful and overwhelming, letting your GPA dominate your life will just turn one of the best years of high school into a crummy couple of months. So grab a pal with a plan, and have yourself a night!