



Junior Year Survival Checklist

Month by month, so nothing lands as a surprise.

Junior year is the heaviest year of high school. Post this somewhere visible and check items off as the year moves.

- ☐ **September:**
Settle into the hardest course load your student can carry well; set the weekly homework rhythm now.
- ☐ **October:**
PSAT/NMSQT — the National Merit qualifier. One good night's sleep beats one cram session.
- ☐ **November:**
PSAT scores arrive; note weak areas. If SAT prep isn't finished yet, map the spring test dates.
- ☐ **December:**
Keep grades steady through finals; colleges weigh junior-year grades most.
- ☐ **January:**
Draft the first college list — a wide one. Ask the counselor which teachers to approach for recommendations.
- ☐ **February:**
Visit a campus or two over break, even locally; reactions sharpen the list.
- ☐ **March:**
Spring SAT date for students still testing; register early for a familiar test center.
- ☐ **April:**
AP exam review begins in earnest. Confirm May exam schedule and any conflicts.
- ☐ **May:**
AP exams. Nothing new this month — protect the calendar.
- ☐ **June:**
Request teacher recommendations before school ends; teachers say yes faster in June than September.
- ☐ **Summer:**
Draft the personal essay and trim the college list. Senior fall says thank you.