



GRADE-BY-GRADE CHECKLISTS

Whether you're considering a four-year college, a community college or a technical college, these grade-by-grade checklists will help you prepare to be successful after high school graduation!

WHAT IS STEPUP UTAH SCHOLARS?

StepUp Utah Scholars is a college-readiness program designed to motivate you to complete specific tasks in 8th through 12th grade to help prepare you for college. By meeting the StepUp Utah Scholars requirements, you will receive the StepUp Utah Scholars certificate and medallion when you graduate high school.

To become a StepUp Utah Scholar, you will need to complete a total of 20 tasks from the grade-by-grade checklists. We recommend spreading these tasks out over your junior high and high school years, but you can complete many of these tasks at any time.

The following grade-by-grade checklists are a condensed version of the tasks you need to complete to become a Step Up Utah Scholar. To see a more detailed list or to sign up to become a StepUp Utah Scholar, visit StepUpUtah.com. You can sign up anytime from 8th through 12th grade.



Step Up Utah
Scholars™



8TH GRADE

To see the complete and detailed grade-by-grade checklists, visit StepUpUtah.com

Start the conversation now.

- Talk to a parent or other adult about what you like to do, what you're good at, and what you want for your future.
- Sign up to be a StepUp Utah Scholar at StepUpUtah.com and learn how the program can help you be ready for college.

Learn about yourself.

- Take the Career Interest Profiler quiz at UtahFutures.org to learn what subjects suit your personality.
- Take the Reality Check at UtahFutures.org or download the American Graduate Reality Check mobile app on your phone.

Make your high school plan.

- Meet with your school counselor to discuss what classes you should take in high school.
- Learn about the Regents' Scholarship requirements and the recommended high school classes at RegentsScholarship.org.

Prepare for high school classes.

- Learn good study habits and test-taking skills. Use the resources found on StepUpUtah.com to help.
- Read on StepUpUtah.com about how GPA is calculated and why it matters for college. Look into what GPA is required for college acceptance at some colleges you are considering.

Start saving for college.

- With the help of a parent or other adult, open a college savings account to save for your future college expenses. Learn more at uesp.org.



9TH GRADE ✓

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Get involved in your school and community.

- Volunteer in your community. Find volunteer opportunities with U Serve Utah (heritage.utah.gov/userveutah) and United Way 2-1-1 (uw.org/211/volunteer).
- Sign up for at least one school club or after school program. Talk to your school counselor or a teacher about what opportunities are available.

Explore college options.

- Read through the Utah College Directory on StepUpUtah.com to discover what colleges in Utah may be right for you.
- Talk with your parents, friends and community members about their college experience, and start thinking about what you want out of yours.

Do high school right.

- If you haven't already, sign up to be a StepUp Utah Scholar.
- Meet with your school counselor and develop a four-year high school plan.
- Sign up for the monthly StepUp newsletter at StepUpUtah.com/newsletter to get college preparation tips.
- Review the Regents' Scholarship requirements on RegentsScholarship.org.

Learn about the different ways to pay for college.

- Read about the various ways to pay for college, including scholarships, grants, work-study, and student loans on StepUpUtah.com.
- Make a plan to pay for college with your parents.
- Start to build a scholarship and college admissions resume to track your achievements. Use the template found in the scholarship toolkit at StepUpUtah.com to get you started.
- With the help of an adult, open a college savings account for you. Learn more at uesp.org. If you already have a saving account, contribute what you can to it.



10TH GRADE

To see the complete and detailed grade-by-grade checklists, visit StepUpUtah.com

Stay involved and continue to explore your interests.

- Continue to be involved in school clubs, after school programs, and volunteering. Track your volunteer hours using a spreadsheet.
- Sign up for the monthly StepUp newsletter at StepUpUtah.com/newsletter to get college preparation tips and monthly scholarships.
- Use the results of your Interest Profiler quiz from UtahFutures.org to see what college majors you might be interested in on UtahMajors.org.

Look into support and mentoring programs.

- Look through the Access Network Search on StepUpUtah.com to see what support you might be eligible for in your area, like AVID, TRiO, or GearUP programs.

Think about what certificate or degree you will need for your future career.

- Read about the differences between a certificate, associate, bachelor's, and other degrees on StepUpUtah.com.
- Discover what certificates and degrees Utah colleges offer by exploring UtahMajors.org.

Take the right classes.

- Meet with your school counselor to make sure you're on track. Complete Math III no later than the end of 11th grade and ask your counselor about Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Concurrent Enrollment (CE) classes.



Start preparing for the ACT.

- Get free ACT test prep materials at [UtahFutures.org](https://utahfutures.org).
- Download the free ACT app to get daily ACT test prep questions.

Research and apply for scholarships (yes, even in 10th grade!).

- Contact a scholarship representative to make sure you're on track for the Regents' Scholarship. Details at [RegentsScholarship.org](https://regentscholarship.org).
- Look for scholarships and apply to at least one this year.
- Keep your scholarship resume updated.

Learn how much college costs.

- Use the net price calculator on [StepUpUtah.com](https://stepuputah.com) to estimate college costs.

Keep saving for college.

- Add funds to your Utah Educational Savings Plan account. If you haven't opened a UESP college savings account, do so. Learn more at uesp.org.

An overhead view of four students sitting around a circular table in a study area. They are looking at a laptop and some papers. A large green checkmark is overlaid on the right side of the image.

11TH GRADE ✓

To see the complete and detailed grade-by-grade checklists, visit StepUpUtah.com

Focus on your classes.

- Sign up for classes that stretch your mind and can earn you college credit, such as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Concurrent Enrollment (CE). Talk to your school counselor for more information.
- Verify with your counselor that you are taking classes that will help you succeed in college.

Think about what math class you'll take your senior year.

- Meet with your counselor to make sure you pick the right math class for your future. It's best to complete your college math requirements through Concurrent Enrollment while still in high school.
- Read on StepUpUtah.com/CE about what CE math class best fits with your future plans.

Take the ACT.

- Take the ACT in the spring. Get free ACT test preparation materials at UtahFutures.org, or download the free ACT App to get daily ACT test prep questions.

Consider your college options.

- Make a list of your top college choices and get ready to apply during your senior year. If you're thinking about going to a school in Utah, check out the Utah College Directory on StepUpUtah.com to learn more.

Visit college campuses.

- Go on a campus tour. Schedule one by visiting the college's website or calling.
- Attend a summer camp offered by a college near you.
- Attend a college fair to explore different colleges and universities. Ask your school counselor for information or search online.



Get organized for your final year.

- Some colleges (and scholarships) require one or more letters of recommendation. Decide which teachers might be willing to write letters of recommendation next year, and ask them now.
- Get a job over the summer to set aside money for college and gain valuable experience you can add to your resume.

Research possible careers.

- Job shadow at a business/organization that interests you. Check to see if you could do an internship, which provides you with great experience.
- Talk to professionals in the area of study you're interested in. Ask your school counselor or parents/guardians to help you find them.

Learn about the many ways to pay for college.

- Forecast how much financial aid you could qualify for by using the FAFSA4Caster at fafsa.ed.gov.

Keep applying for scholarships.

- Contact a Regent's Scholarship representative to make sure you're on track for the Regents' Scholarship. If possible, schedule a meeting to go over your classes for the next school year. Details at RegentsScholarship.org.
- Look for scholarships and apply to at least three during your junior year. See if your high school has a scholarship coordinator to help you find scholarships to apply for, but don't forget to also look in your community and search online.



12TH GRADE

To see the complete and detailed grade-by-grade checklists, visit StepUpUtah.com

Stay focused.

- Check in with your counselor about applying to colleges and scholarship opportunities.
- Ask for letters of recommendation. Connect with teachers and counselors early in the fall of your senior year and let them know you'd like a letter of recommendation.

Take math during your senior year.

- Be sure to take the right math for your future career. Use the flowchart on page 9–10 of this guide to help you figure out which math class is right for you.

Apply to college in the fall.

- Apply to colleges during the fall of your senior year. Participate in Utah College Application Week in November. Ask your counselors for more information.

*** If you're planning on serving a religious mission or joining the military, you should still complete your college applications and complete your college's FERPA form so your parents can communicate with the college on your behalf. Once you have been accepted to a college, you can defer your enrollment and most scholarships you have been offered until you return. Find out more information about the deferment process by visiting the admissions page on the college's website. ***

- If you want to improve your score, retake the ACT the fall of your senior year.

Fill out your FAFSA.

- Complete your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as early as October at fafsa.gov.
- Get help completing your FAFSA by attending a FAFSA Completion Open House during the school year. Visit StepUpUtah.com/events to find dates.
- If you are an undocumented student check to see what options might be available for you at educate-utah.org.



Continue applying for scholarships.

- Apply for the Regents' Scholarship if you're pursuing it. Check deadlines at [RegentsScholarship.org](https://regentscholarship.org).
- Research what scholarships are offered by the colleges you've been accepted to.
- Look for scholarships and apply to at least three during your senior year.

Apply for StepUp Utah Scholars recognition.

- Apply for StepUp Utah Scholars Recognition at StepUpUtah.com/UtahScholars.

Narrow it down.

- Visit the websites or call any colleges you've been accepted to and ask about First Year Experience Programs and Summer Bridge Programs.
- Send in your final high school transcripts to your college once you graduate.
- Accept any financial aid you might have received. Talk with your college's financial aid office to make sure you're good to go.

Be proud. Celebrate!

- Participate in your school's Decision Day activities to celebrate your accomplishments. Ask your school counselor for more information.