



MOON PREP

YOUR PRE-MED GAME PLAN: YEAR ONE

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Congratulations on a successful college application cycle! As you approach college and beyond, Moon Prep put together this guide to help prepare you so you can take advantage of your first year of college.

MEDICAL SCHOOL PREREQUISITES

For BS/MD and pre-med students, always check with your individual institutions and any medical school you are interested in to see the specific requirements. There is always a chance that requirements might change. Here is a [link](#) to individual medical school requirements (2025-26).

Commonly required or recommended pre-med courses:

- Behavioral Sciences
- Biochemistry
- Biology
- Chemistry (Inorganic Chemistry and Organic Chemistry)
- College English
- College Mathematics
- Physics
- Humanities
- Statistics
- Psychology
- Genetics
- Foreign Language (recommended)

MONTH-BY-MONTH GUIDE FOR YOUR FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE

Month 1: September

- Attend orientation events and get familiar with campus resources and your BS/MD cohort or fellow pre-med students.
- Meet with your academic advisor to discuss your class schedule and ensure you're on track for pre-med requirements.
- If you are on the BS/MD track, you will likely meet specifically with a BS/MD advisor as well.
- Begin attending classes and establish a study routine. It's important to answer questions and contribute to class discussions.
- Join at least one student organization related to healthcare or community service.
- Start researching volunteer opportunities and clinical experiences.
- Get to know your campus by exploring key locations, connecting with new people, and familiarizing yourself with important deadlines like add/drop periods and course registration.

Month 2: October

- Continue attending classes and actively participate in discussions.
- Explore potential research opportunities by reaching out to professors or visiting research labs.
- Attend office hours for your professors to get ahead of any academic problems and begin to form relationships with your professors and teacher assistants.
- Attend club and career fairs or information sessions to learn about opportunities on and off campus.
- Start organizing your course schedule for next semester and make sure to keep track of all course selection deadlines.

Month 3: November

- Start volunteering in a healthcare-related setting, such as a hospital or clinic.
- Participate in workshops or seminars focused on study skills and time management to strengthen these skills.
- Meet with upperclassmen or alumni to learn about their experiences and seek advice.
- Begin studying for mid-term exams and seek help from teachers, peers, tutors, or academic support services if needed.

Month 4: December

- Take mid-term exams and assess your academic progress.
- Reflect on your experiences during the first semester and set goals for the upcoming semester.
- Consider shadowing over the break to gain more experience in the medical field.
- Spend time with family and friends over the holiday break to recharge.

Month 5: January

- Work hard in your classes, form study groups, or attend office hours if needed.
- Attend informational sessions on study abroad opportunities or summer programs.
- Consider joining a research project or seeking a research assistant position.
- Continue volunteering and look for opportunities to expand your clinical experience.
- Start researching/applying to potential summer internships or research programs.

Month 6: February

- Attend pre-health advising workshops or information sessions.
- Connect with professors or advisors to discuss potential research opportunities.
- Begin networking with healthcare professionals and alumni in the field.
- Continue applying for summer program opportunities.

Month 7: March

- Take practice MCAT exams to assess your strengths and weaknesses.
- Meet with your academic advisor to discuss your progress and any concerns.
- Continue volunteering and participating in student organizations. Position yourself to have leadership positions next year if possible.
- Begin planning your courses for next year. If you're considering summer classes, consult your academic advisor, and be sure to stay on top of deadlines and prerequisites.

Month 8: April

- Finalize plans for summer activities, whether it's research, internships, or volunteer work.
- Attend pre-medical society meetings or events to network with peers and professionals.
- Start studying for final exams and seek assistance from professors or tutors as needed.

Month 9: May

- Prepare and take final exams and reflect on your accomplishments and experiences during your first year of college.
- Attend summer orientation sessions for research or internship programs.
- Continue networking and stay connected with mentors and advisors.

TIPS ON BUILDING STRONG STUDY SKILLS

All students, no matter their track or major, will need to maintain a strong GPA throughout their college career. By building healthy study habits now, you can set yourself up for success. These skills will be essential not only for undergraduate classes, but also when you are studying for the MCAT (if it's required!), medical school classes and medical licensing exams.

Understand Your Learning Style:

- Identify whether you are a visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learner. Tailor your study techniques to align with your preferred learning style.
 - Visual learners tend to learn best when taking notes, color-coding notes, using graphs or charts, drawing, making flashcards, using concept maps, and writing things down. They also tend to study best on their own.
 - Auditory learners tend to learn best when discussing the information with others in study groups or group discussions, recording and listening to the lectures, using mnemonic devices, teaching others the material, word association, or studying with music on. They tend to study best with others.
 - Kinesthetic learners tend to learn best when moving, taking notes, role-playing, studying while chewing gum, doing hands-on activities, turning learning into a game, studying in groups, using hand gestures while studying, applying their learning, keeping study sessions short, and teaching.

Create a Study Schedule:

- Establish a consistent study schedule that fits your lifestyle and commitments.
- Allocate specific time slots for each subject or topic you need to study.

Set Clear Goals:

- Define clear and achievable study goals for each session.
- Break down large goals into smaller, manageable tasks to stay motivated.

Minimize Distractions:

- Create a distraction-free study environment by turning off notifications, finding a quiet space, and eliminating clutter.
- Consider using productivity tools or apps to block distracting websites or apps during study sessions.

Utilize Active Learning Techniques:

- Engage in active learning methods such as summarizing, teaching others, or participating in discussions.
- Use mnemonic devices, flashcards, or concept maps to reinforce learning and aid in memory retention.

Variety in Study Methods:

- Incorporate a variety of study methods to keep your learning experience engaging and effective.
- Experiment with techniques like reading, writing, listening to lectures, watching videos, or practicing problems.

Take Regular Breaks:

- Schedule short breaks during study sessions to prevent burnout and maintain focus.
- To optimize productivity, use techniques like the Pomodoro Technique (25 minutes of focused work followed by a 5-minute break).

Review and Self-Assessment:

- Regularly review your notes and materials to reinforce learning and identify areas that need improvement.
- Test yourself with practice questions or quizzes to gauge your understanding and retention of the material.

Seek Help When Needed:

- Don't hesitate to reach out to professors, tutors, or classmates for clarification on difficult concepts.
- Utilize academic support services such as tutoring centers or study groups if you're struggling with specific subjects.

Stay Organized:

- Keep your study materials well-organized and easily accessible.
- Use tools like planners, calendars, or digital apps to track deadlines, assignments, and study sessions.

Healthy Lifestyle Habits:

- Prioritize sleep, exercise, and nutrition to maintain overall health and cognitive function.
- Stay hydrated and take regular breaks to stretch and relax your mind and body.

Reflect and Adapt:

- Reflect on your study habits regularly and evaluate what's working well and what needs improvement.
- Be flexible and willing to adapt your study strategies based on feedback and changing circumstances.

TIPS FOR FINDING RESEARCH AS AN UNDERGRAD

Finding research opportunities in undergrad can be daunting, but following these tips can help you.

- During your first week of science courses, introduce yourself to professors whose research interests you! This can be a quick and simple interaction after class or a follow-up email to your professor. Doing so can be quite helpful in making your professor aware of your interest, especially in large-lecture courses.
- Get involved in STEM-based clubs and organizations – this is a great way to connect with other students, research opportunities, and faculty.
- Data collection for research projects is a great way to boost your resume! Be open to exploring different research areas and projects, even if they may not align perfectly with your initial interests. This flexibility can lead to unexpected opportunities and valuable experiences.
- Determine your specific areas of interest within the medical field. This could include topics like neuroscience, biochemistry, public health, etc.
- Look into your institution's faculty members conducting research in your areas of interest. Explore their recent publications and ongoing projects.
 - Cold-email professors whose research interests you! Provide a brief, professional introduction, explaining what papers or projects interest you and why. Attach your contact information and resume to the email. Although you will likely not get a response from the majority of people you email, this is still a great way to make connections.
 - Look into nearby labs and cold-email faculty and staff there as well! Some labs prefer to have college students in their professional labs!

- Attend departmental seminars, research symposiums, and other academic events where faculty members may discuss their research.
- Utilize resources available at your university's career center, research office, or pre-med advising office. They may have information on research opportunities, funding, and application processes.
- You are much more likely to get volunteer research positions as an undergrad. Be persistent - don't be discouraged by initial rejections or lack of responses. Keep contacting different faculty members and departments until you find a suitable opportunity.
- Enhance your research skills by taking relevant coursework, such as statistics, experimental design, or laboratory techniques.
- Keep track of deadlines, application requirements, and any correspondence with potential research mentors. Stay organized to ensure you don't miss out on opportunities.
- If you're unsure about your application or research proposal, seek feedback from professors, advisors, or mentors. They can provide valuable insights to help strengthen your application.
- Once you secure a research position, stay engaged and proactive. Take initiative, ask questions, and contribute meaningfully to the research project.
- Cultivate positive relationships with faculty mentors and fellow researchers. These connections can be valuable for future letters of recommendation, networking, and career opportunities.

TIPS FOR BUILDING YOUR RESUME AS A PRE-MED

- Participate in extracurricular activities demonstrating leadership, teamwork, and commitment, such as student organizations, sports teams, or volunteer groups.
 - Make connections through STEM organizations and clubs to find research and leadership opportunities!
 - Find clubs that genuinely interest you and take leadership positions in organizations you have the time commitment to, are passionate about, and like! This will translate well on your resume and any associated club/ organizational accomplishments.
 - Not all clubs you join need to be STEM! Commitment to specific organizations is still a great detail on your resume.
 - Join professional organizations if possible! Pre-medical fraternities and selective honor societies are great ways to boost your resume while showing your excellence and commitment to medicine. They are also great ways to make connections!
 - These organizations can provide leadership experiences that allow you to undertake independent projects or initiatives related to healthcare, such as organizing health fairs, conducting health education workshops, or initiating community health campaigns.
 - If you had a particular extracurricular from high school that you excelled at, continue that in undergrad if you can! Whether it is a club sport, speech and debate, or orchestra, it is a great way to show commitment to a craft, self-care and time management methods, and additional passions you have.

- Get involved in volunteering! Whether on your own time or through organizations, it is a great way to gain volunteering hours on your resume.
- Seek opportunities for clinical exposure, such as volunteering at hospitals, shadowing physicians, or working as a medical scribe or medical assistant.
- Engage in meaningful community service activities that demonstrate your commitment to helping others and positively impacting society.
- Volunteer in healthcare-related settings, such as clinics, nursing homes, or hospices, to gain firsthand experience in patient care and healthcare delivery.
- Maintain a strong GPA, especially in science and math courses relevant to medicine.
- Apply for internships or summer programs in healthcare-related fields to gain hands-on experience and broaden your understanding of the medical profession.
- If applicable, develop proficiency in additional languages, especially those commonly spoken by patient populations in your area, to enhance your ability to communicate and connect with diverse communities.

MOON PREP WILL STILL BE THERE FOR YOU

- The journey with Moon Prep doesn't have to end here. Moon Prep counselors and mentors are available to help with:
 - Resumes
 - Summer internships
 - Advising you on extracurricular activities
 - Putting together an MCAT study plan
 - Medical school applications, including brainstorming, outlining, and editing personal statements and supplemental essays
 - Interview prep
 - Residency applications and interview support
 - And more!

We are available to help at any point in your journey. Reach out to us anytime, [Hello@MoonPrep.com](mailto>Hello@MoonPrep.com).

Good luck on your next steps towards achieving your dream of becoming a doctor! Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your journey. We are proud of you.