

# Let's Talk: College 101

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Hi, I'm Kristin. Today we're going to talk about how to prepare for college. College is such an exciting time. You'll learn new things, meet new people, and even discover more about yourself, but it's important to take the steps to be prepared.

## Research your options

The first step is picking which colleges you want to apply to. Things to consider are the size of the school, whether you want to attend classes in person or virtually, and the culture of the college. You can also consider taking your core curriculum at a community school, and then going to a four-year university if you would like to. Try to take campus tours of as many schools as you can. While you're doing that, be sure to take notes. They can start to blend together. When you're applying, ask a trusted person to proofread any application or scholarship essays, and be sure to stay on top of deadlines. Trust me, they'll sneak up on you.

## Get advice

Next up is decision time. Some things to think about are the cost of the college and if you're getting any financial aid, the distance from your work or your family, and the types of programs offered at the school. Talk to people and get their feedback, too. You can talk to people at the school to learn what life would be like as a student, and you can also talk to your family, your friends, your coworkers, or even your teachers. It's a big decision and you wanna take it seriously. I always find it helpful to make pro and con lists of each of the schools and compare. My best advice is to trust your gut.

## Identify living arrangements

Now that you've picked a college, check the student website for ideas on what to bring when you first arrive. Some schools have random roommates, some let you choose who you live with, some schools have no roommates, and sometimes you'll live off campus or stay at home. Either way, join social media groups to start connecting with your class early on. And if you do have a roommate, be sure to coordinate your shopping and planning with them. This'll help ease the process.

## **Get to know your professors**

Once classes start, be sure to take the time to get to know and befriend your professors. They are a wealth of knowledge and they really care about their students. If they can see that you're putting in the extra effort and they know your face and name, they're more likely to reciprocate that extra effort, so take advantage of office hours, introduce yourself, and remember that they're people, too.

## **Get involved**

But college isn't only about classes. Take the time to invest in activities and clubs that make you a happy and well-rounded person. It's okay to try a lot of things at first and then narrow it down once you figure out what brings you the most joy. You'll quickly learn how to prioritize, the importance of staying organized, and how to balance your time effectively. It's helpful to establish a routine and invest in a planner.

## **Make the best of it**

So enjoy your college experience. Surround yourself with good people and let yourself just take it all in. Remember that college really is what you make of it, and it can be some of the best years of your life. Thanks for talking.

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