



# CHECKLIST FOR STARTING YOUR OWN CLUB

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As the admissions landscape gets more and more competitive, it's time for you to strategize how to differentiate yourself from your peers. College admissions officers appreciate students who go out of their way to pursue leadership positions in fields of interest. While becoming the president of an existing club is commendable, starting your own club is an effective way to not only impress admissions officers, but to make an impact on your community.

You shouldn't just start any random organization. You need to think about topics that you're most passionate about and what would benefit your community the most. Moreover, starting your own club requires organization and logistics, as well as collaboration with your fellow members. To help get you started, we've created a checklist that covers all you need in order to get your ideal group out there.

## BRAINSTORMING THE TYPE OF CLUB

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Start the club early in your high school career, ideally your sophomore year or towards the beginning of junior year.

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Consider the clubs that already exist at the school. How can yours be different?

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Jot down hobbies or skills you have that you would be able to practice with others.

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Are you interested in raising awareness about a particular culture? Could you form a cultural association in a way that makes an impact?

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Consider whether you wish to add a chapter to a preexisting organization or society, such as Amnesty International or Future Business Leaders of America.

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Are you interested in social justice or striving towards change? What do you feel like your school or neighborhood community is lacking?

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Think about whether you would prefer an indoor or outdoor club. You need to consider what your location and weather would permit.

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Make a list of resources in your school that are underutilized, such as audiovisual equipment or computer lab facilities. How can you make a group that utilizes this technology better?

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# PROMOTING YOUR CLUB AND RECRUITING MEMBERS

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Ask administrators about the registration protocol for your school.

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Fill out any necessary forms or applications to start the club foundation process.

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Does your club need a faculty advisor? Find one who you're close to or somebody who understands the subject well.

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Decide how many members you're looking for.

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If other friends have helped you start the club, decide what each of your roles will be (president, vice-president, social media manager, treasurer, etc).

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Arrange for a time and place to hold auditions or tryouts.

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Decide on a time and location for an open, informational meeting.

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Print flyers to advertise your open meeting and/or auditions.

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Find creative ways to advertise than just through mass emails - you can put an ad in the school newspaper, promote through morning announcements, and more.

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Start a social media account for the club. Make sure to follow accounts run by members of other clubs so that they can help spread awareness.

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On the day of the meeting or auditions, remind your classmates that the event is taking place.

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Bring a sign-in sheet to the meeting so that you know who is interested. The form should ask for their name, grade, phone number, email address, reason for joining.

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Ask those who show up what purpose they hope the club can serve.

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# LOGISTICS

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Start a group text or email thread for the members to communicate easily.

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Decide on a regular meeting time and location.

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Once you've finalized your group of members, discuss further what you want the club to do, and how it can make an impact on the greater community.

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Use a guidebook or journal to write down everything you've discussed and make sure that the purpose and rules of the club are clear. Make a constitution if necessary.

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Discuss the budget for activities, any necessary equipment you will need, and how you hope to raise money to fund larger events.

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# MOVING FORWARD

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Keep a calendar and planner that helps you arrange events and stay organized.

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Continue to think about ways in which your activity can stand out from other clubs at your school.

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Consider what you want out of the club, and the ways in which you can improve.

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Listen to your members' voices and think about their needs.

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Stay focused on your goals and programming. Make sure the club isn't attempting to do too many things at once.

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Work with similar organizations on collaborative projects that can collectively help your community.

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Congrats! You've worked hard to start your club. Good luck on its future endeavors!

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Starting a club requires commitment and responsibility. It's a process that shouldn't be taken lightly so start with plenty of time in hand. Make sure to pay attention to the needs of your community, and hopefully, with time, your club can grow into a successful initiative.