



# Starting Your Own Activities in the 9th Grade Ideas for Highschool Freshmen



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## Ideas for Highschool Freshmen

Freshman year is full of possibilities—new classes to take, new friends to meet, new clubs to join—but all this newness can also be overwhelming! You might find yourself asking: What 9th grade activities should I participate in outside of class?

Extracurricular activities are very important, both for college applications and your personal growth. Participating in 9th grade activities can help you explore your interests, create a supportive community, and develop special talents and skills. However, you don't have to have everything figured out from the very beginning of high school! In fact, 9th grade is an important year for trying different things out and discovering what you find meaningful.

While extracurriculars are not limited to clubs at school, joining groups is a great place to start when searching for 9th grade activities. However, if you don't find a club that you are looking for, you can always start one. Starting a club, gathering funds, and expanding the membership takes some time, so 9th grade is a great time to begin working on your own club. There are many clubs that you can start, or many meaningful self-directed activities you can pursue on your own after school! The table below can help you find inspiration based on topics you are interested in:

## Club and Self-Directed Activity Ideas for Ninth Graders

### Art

- Start an art therapy club in your community
- Starting an online portfolio and sharing your work on social media
- Find a group of artists with similar interests and philosophies and work on a project together
- Start an art journal at your high - school
- Organize an exhibition
- Organize and lead a drama or musical performance
- Start a comedy troupe
- Interested in stagecraft? Start a lights and sounds club to help with school or local productions
- Start a band
- Start an a capella group
- Design the soundtrack for the drama club or film students
- Write/draw your own graphic novel

## STEM

- Start a Chemistry and Cooking club and out different recipes
- Start a chemistry, physics, math, engineering, or biology blog
- Start a STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Art Math) club
- Start a biotech club
- Become the statistician for the school's sports teams
- Organize a Math Olympiad
- Build your own app

## Business & Finance

- Start an entrepreneurship club
- Start your own nonprofit
- Start a business journal, magazine, or newspaper
- Seek a summer internship at a bank
- Do your own research on an economic topic of interest and write a research paper
- Compare and contrast different economics books such as Freakonomics and The Wealth of Nations and write a paper

## Education

- Start your own education-based YouTube channel. It could be for peers or could be for elementary or middle school kids.
- Start a tutoring club
- Become a content reviewer for Khan Academy
- Conduct your own education-based research project - it could be on racial distribution in schools in your area or how different communities value education, etc.
- Arrange a Tedx event at your school

## Journalism & Writing

- Contribute to an online site such as Huffington Post
- Intern at your local newspaper or magazine
- Start your own podcast on a niche topic of interest
- Make your own documentary
- Collect stories from your family and write a biography or essay collection
- Start your own literary magazine
- Write a novel or a poetry chapbook

## Politics

- Improve public services in your community
- Canvas for a political candidate
- Join the local youth council
- Intern at an NGO

# Ideas for Community Engagement and Volunteering

Start by paying attention to local issues and opportunities to engage with your community. Try volunteering at a few different nonprofit organizations and see what you find meaningful. Here are a few possible volunteering and community service ideas for different areas of interest:

## Art

- Help out backstage with your local theater company
- Film different community gatherings
- Start a book drive for and donate to local hospitals, prisons, or libraries

## Education

- Teach a subject of your choice to kids at the children's hospital
- Volunteer at an elementary school
- Run a study group for kids in your neighborhood
- Help your siblings and their friends with homework

## STEM

- Teach computer or smartphone skills to senior citizens
- Build a robot for your local hospital
- Volunteer at an animal shelter
- Volunteer at a hospital or shadow a doctor in your area of interest
- Help out at a local pharmacy

## Politics

- Volunteer with immigrant initiatives
- Run drives to support refugees with money, clothes, and food
- Organize bake sales to help out a cause

It is important that an activity truly matters to you, and you are gaining a meaningful experience out of it. Each time you try something new, ask yourself the following questions about your interests to help figure out the impact the activity has on you and your aspirations:

- How do I feel about this experience?
- Do I want to continue?
- Do I want to tweak this activity or take it in a new direction?
- Is this activity unique? Is it something everybody participates in?
- Will this activity shape my personality?
- Will I face any challenges in pursuing this activity? Would the challenge be related to my racial or religious background?
- What specifically about the activity could spark my interest?
- Will this be a memorable experience?
- Is there something I could do with this activity that others have not been able to?
- Asking these questions may help you realize what matters most to you or spark a new idea. Pursuing your interests often has a snowball effect that leads to more valuable opportunities, connections, and experiences, which in turn makes you a strong candidate when you apply to college.

Ultimately, there isn't a single path to participating in extracurricular activities. The best way to spend your time during freshman year is to actively explore a range of interests and activities. Your passions aren't always bright neon signs on the highway, but rather often evolve and emerge along the way. 9th-grade activities are a fun and fulfilling journey, so get ready!