

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHECKLIST

Your Path to College and Beyond!

Middle school is where your adventure begins, this is when you can start exploring your interests, setting goals and shaping a brighter future. Make sure you get the best DEAL out of your middle school experience by leveling up with this checklist! Some deals come and go but this checklist doesn't. Revisit these items as often as you need as you pivot and grow. You control your future!

DIPLOMA

- ☐ **Build Study Habits:** Make studying a routine. Set aside a specific time each day for homework and study sessions.
- ☐ **Rock Your Planner:** Get yourself a planner or use digital tools to stay on top of assignments, tests and important dates.
- ☐ **Take Elective Classes for Your Future:** Choose elective courses that contribute to your educational and career pursuits. Whether it's coding, art or science, follow your passions.
- ☐ **Honors Courses:** Don't be shy! Ask your teachers and school counselors about taking honors courses, like Algebra and other advanced classes. These will prepare you for challenging coursework in high school.
- ☐ **Embrace a Foreign Language:** Learning a foreign language opens doors to new cultures and career opportunities. Consider taking a foreign language class to expand your horizons.
- ☐ **Ask for Help:** If you're stuck on something, don't hesitate to ask your teachers for help. You can also team up with friends for study sessions.

ACADEMIC AND CAREER PLAN

- ☐ **Connect the Dots:** Understand how your education connects to your future. Collaborate with your school counselor to craft your Academic and Career Plan (ACP), a personalized roadmap for your future. Your ACP is tailored to you, your goals, and your future.
- ☐ **Charting Your Course:** Plan your high school journey. Explore the available courses and activities to become familiar with what high school offers. Use your skills and interests to guide your choices in deciding what you might want to study
- ☐ **Research College and Career Options:** Virginia provides exceptional opportunities to kickstart your academic journey after high school. Delve into colleges and career paths that align with your interests and goals. Utilize online resources, engage with professionals in various fields, or consider visiting institutions nearby.
- ☐ **Skills Check:** Develop essential skills such as teamwork and problem-solving that will serve you well in your academic and career pursuits. I'm Determined has great resources on building skills, abilities, and mindsets to help you Level Up your self-determination skills.

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- ☐ **Set SMART Goals:** Define your objectives, whether it's improving your grades, mastering a subject, or achieving a specific GPA. Ensure your goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART).
- ☐ **Money Matters:** Have you ever wondered about money and how to manage it wisely? That's what financial literacy is all about! It's like learning the secrets of handling your money, making smart choices, and planning for your future.
- ☐ **Awards & Achievements:** Keep a record of your accomplishments as you gather valuable experiences. These achievements can enhance your future resume.
- ☐ **Family Involvement:** Remember that your parents, educators, and counselors are here to support you on your educational journey.
- ☐ **Transition Plan:** Prepare for the transition from high school to your chosen path, whether it's further education or entering the workforce. Explore services and strategies that can help you succeed in the next stage of your life.
- ☐ **Stay Updated:** Recognize that your ACP is a dynamic plan that evolves as your goals and interests evolve. Regularly update it to ensure it reflects your current aspirations.

LIFESTYLE

- ☐ **Good Day Plan:** You and a teacher/parent/mentor visualize a good day and write down the steps to achieve it. Create an action plan to make your good day happen more often. Check-out I'm Determined's [Good Day Plan template](#).
- ☐ **Evaluate Your Interests:** What makes you excited? What are you passionate about? Write down your interests and let them guide your journey.
- ☐ **Understand Your Learning Style:** Take a moment to discover how you learn best – are you a visual learner, a hands-on learner, or an auditory learner? Knowing this will help you study smarter, not harder.
- ☐ **Responsibility Mode:** Be responsible for your schoolwork and tasks. Make sure you finish your homework and turn it in on time.
- ☐ **Grow Setter:** You're growing not just academically but personally. Think about balancing your time, staying organized, or boosting self-discipline.
- ☐ **Friendship Power:** Focus on creating strong, positive friendships with your pals, family, and classmates. Be a super friend and treat everyone with respect.
- ☐ **DEAL Checklist:** Re-check this list to make sure you are still getting the best DEAL out of middle school.