



ACTIVITY LOG

Prepare. Apply. Achieve!

What is a better approach?

An Activity Log. Start by listing all activities, hobbies, interests, awards, employment, summer experiences, etc. According to this list, you then might follow one of two paths. The first path is organizing an Activity Log into several categories. Students who are involved in a variety of activities should take this path. Here are some examples. Access College America suggest:

- Extracurricular Activities (including athletics) Awards and Honors
- Hobbies and Special Interests Summer Activities
- Work Experiences and Internships Community Involvement

Now, here are some other categories used by recent clients in preparation of their Activity Log:

Student A: Student B: Student C:

- Music Activities Publications School Sponsored Activities
- Academic Enrichment Activities Leadership Employment
- Work Experiences Athletics Athletic Activities
- Community Service Community Service Activities Beyond School
- Athletics Religion

PREPARING YOUR ACTIVITY LOG

1. After forming categories, place them in order of importance.
2. Then arrange a chart which includes:
 - Activity
 - Years of involvement, including number of hours per week
 - Position(s) held
 - Brief description of activity
3. Be selective in choosing activities:
 - Include only activities participated in during high school. If your high school includes grades 9-to 12, an activity that was participated in during 9th grade may also be included, especially if it was an interest built on throughout high school.
 - List activities in order of importance. If involvement in an activity was only for a short period of time, leave it out.
 - A long list, which includes several activities with minor participation, is unhelpful.

4. Preparing a description of an activity:

- Concentrate on giving an informative, succinct description of key activities. Use clear terminology that admissions counselors will understand. Use everyday vocabulary, and spell out abbreviations.
- Describe the activity briefly, unless it is something that is common knowledge. Then, write a concise description of your personal contribution to the activity, especially if you played a sport.
- Substantial role in developing or leading it. Use active verbs to describe these contributions. In addition include any awards or honors earned in the activity (you may want to include a separate category for awards/honors).
- Don't repeat your essay. Both the Activity Log and essay offer a chance to highlight accomplishments. However, try not to repeat information. If a lot of time is spent talking about activities in your essay, then there is no need to describe them deeply in the Activity List (and vice versa). It is okay to mention something in both places, but there is no need to go into great detail more than once.

What if I have very few school or community activities?

Sometimes, the need to work or family responsibilities make it difficult to become very involved in activities. Employment can be turned to a student's advantage.

What if I focused on only one main activity or interest?

There is another approach to describing activities or interests. Let's say you are involved in several activities, but one clearly stands out. You have been deeply committed to it for many years, and your accomplishments are particularly noteworthy. In this situation, you could focus the admissions staff's attention largely on this one activity. At many very competitive colleges, one exceptionally well developed talent can lead to an acceptance. An entire activity part of the application can be filled with this approach. An interest, let's say music, can also be mentioned with reference to the attached Activity Sheet. In *Making It Into A Top College* by Howard and Matthew Greene, the authors describe the main categories for a student with extensive music-related experience:

TRAINING

- Voice Lessons
- Piano Lessons

DANCE

- School Singing Groups
- Musical State Productions
- Music in the Community

As described above, the years of involvement, hours per week/month and description of the activities for each of the categories could then be added. In this case, the student might briefly describe her objectives in studying music at the college.

This type of Activity Log is also appropriate for a student who wants to play intercollegiate athletics in a college. Because this type of Activity Log can also be sent to coaches, a brief academic profile can also be added including the nature of curriculum, GPA and class rank.

Please note: An Activity Log does not replace completing the activities section of an application, including the Common Application. Rather, briefly fill in the activities section, and at the end state "please see attached Activity Log." Or, if you apply online, indicate that you will send a paper copy to the admissions office.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Put your name at the top of each page.
2. Be selective when including activities in the Activity Log. Only an extraordinary background calls for more than two pages--strive to be compact and neat.
3. If an application gives sufficient room to name and describe activities, an Activity Log is not needed.
4. If an application is submitted online, an Activity Log should be sent by mail. Ask that it be included in your file. Increasingly, these materials will be electronically scanned to be read by an admissions officer.
5. Do NOT use colored paper for an Activity Log. (In fact, completely avoid the use of colored paper in any materials. They may be scanned for computer reading and will not be picked up well.)
6. Use 10pt font or above. Remember an admissions counselor may be reading your list at night. Use margins. White space is appealing.
7. Avoid organizing an Activity Log by grades. Also, in most cases the chart form is a better format than long paragraphs to present activities.
8. Have someone proofread the Activity Log for misspellings, grammar, or even an activity that may have been left out.

Here are two sample Activity Logs. They do not represent the activities of one individual.

FORMAT OF AN ACTIVITY LOG – EXAMPLES

**Location, awards, names, student(s), dates have all been edited...*

Example 1:

SCHOOL SPONSORED (NOT ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES)	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION
<i>American Sign Language Club</i>	<i>11th grade 1 hour per week</i>	<i>Co-founder, Vice President, Secretary</i>	<i>My friends and I founded this club after realizing that our only exposure to sign language was during class. We decided to form this club for more practice.</i>
<i>Student Council</i>	<i>Grade 12</i>	<i>Senior Representative</i>	<i>Student Council organizes student focused school activities such as: Community Service Projects, school dances, pep-fests and...this year as a senior representative, I am the voice of my grade. I am the leader of developing enthusiasm in this student body. We speak with administration and plan events that fit within the boundaries of school regulations but are also fun enough to encourage student participation.</i>
<i>Windigo</i>	<i>12 10 hr/week</i>	<i>Layout Staff</i>	<i>Windigo, our school yearbook committee meets everyday to work on our publications. Although I am on layout staff, I contribute in other ways such as taking pictures or interviewing people. Being on layout is very time consuming and a large responsibility because often I have to stay after school to finish the layout in time for the deadline.</i>
<i>Key Club International</i>	<i>11 1-2 hr/week</i>	<i>Senior Class Representative</i>	<i>Key Club International is sponsored by the local Kiwanis Club and was started at Edina High School five years ago. It encourages students to help the community through service projects and fundraisers. As senior class representative, it was my responsibility to communicate projects and volunteer opportunities to students in my grade. Throughout the year, we did various fundraisers and service projects.</i>
<i>Chamber Singers</i>	<i>Senior: Leader Junior: Member</i>	<i>Singer, key leader</i>	<i>Chamber Singers is an elite, madrigal ensemble formed from members of the Concert Choir at Westlake High School. When I was selected my junior year, only two other juniors were chosen. Composed of eighteen voices, of which most are seniors, we rehearse twice a week during our off-season, taking one night for our concert music, and one day for our carols. During the holiday season, we perform everyday, and most days more than once until Christmas is over.</i>

Example 2:

ATHLETICS	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION
<i>Track and Field Team</i>	<i>10-12 15 hr/week</i>	<i>Captain</i>	<i>I have been on varsity for three years running the 300-meter hurdles. My best time is 48.6 seconds. I was sixth in conference and qualified for section finals. I also am a triple jumper. I have lettered twice, was voted Most Improved last year and was elected one of the captains of the team.</i>
<i>LaCrosse</i>	<i>2019-2020</i>	<i>Center, Third Home, and Attack Wing. Captain</i>	<i>Lettered three years. Named captain for the 2019-20 season. Won third in state in 2019 and won second in state in 2020.</i>
<i>Varsity Competition Cheerleading Team</i>	<i>10th-12th (20 hr/wk, Aug.-Mar.)</i>	<i>Captain</i>	<i>Voted captain senior year – duties include choreography of routines, organization of apparel and fundraisers, team motivation and enthusiasm, decision-making and problem solving. I am a liaison between coach, team members and parents.</i>

Fill out your own Activity Logs below.

SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL SPONSORED (NOT ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES)	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION

ATHLETICS

ATHLETICS	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES)	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION

EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT	DATES	POSITION	DESCRIPTION

**Disclaimer: This document has been edited for Access College America. Content has been used from other sources. Access College America does not take responsibility for creating this resource. In writing this piece, ideas were drawn heavily from Michelle Hernandez's [Acing the College Application](#) (Ballantine, 2002). Suggestions from [Making It Into a Top College](#) (Harper Collins, 2000) by Howard and Matthew Greene, [Admission Matters](#) (Jossey-Bass, 2005) by Sally Springer and Marion Franck and the website, College Center (www.csocollegecenter.org) were also helpful. Also prepared by David Breeden with editorial assistance from Sarah Meller, Edina class of 2007.*