



Activity Summary Guideline

Introduction

If you had the chance to have a ten-minute conversation with an admissions officer to explain everything you do that is important to you, what would you talk about? How would you sum up the way you've spent your life in high school when you weren't in class?

You probably wouldn't start with, "One time, I went to a meeting of the Spanish Club!" It wouldn't make sense to talk first about an activity that you didn't care that much about or didn't spend much time doing. Instead, you'd probably begin by discussing your most important activities—the ones on which you spent significant time and energy.

However, you'd be surprised how many students list their activities in no particular order when filling out college applications. Listing an activity first that meant little to you is like telling an admissions officer that the one week you attended a meeting of the "Ping Pong Club" was the most important thing you did in high school.

You're probably not going to get the chance to have that conversation with an admissions officer, but you can use your application to help admissions officers not only get a clear sense of how you spent your time outside of class, but also which activities helped define your high school experience. The following activity summary sheet will help you do that.

The Activity Summary Sheet

The activity summary sheet is similar to a résumé, but done in a format that mirrors college applications. You will use this sheet as a way to work with your Collegewise counselor to determine the most compelling way to describe and present your activities.

One last thing before you get started: The applicant with the longest list of activities is not necessarily the one who's going to get in. Admissions officers are looking for 2-4 significant ways you spent your time outside of class. If you list 50 activities, you're just making it harder for them to figure out what your 2-4 most significant ones were. Additionally, the Common Application will only allow you to list 10 activities, so be strategic here. Resist the urge to list as much as possible, and don't include things that weren't time-consuming or important. It's not a contest to see how much you can list—it's your chance to describe what you really enjoyed doing in high school.

Section I: Activities

The most important thing you should do in this section is to **arrange your activities in order of most important to least important**. Your most important activity will likely be one in which you spent significant time and enjoyed some degree of success.

For each activity, list:

1. The name of the activity (soccer, ASB, school newspaper, etc.)
2. The grade levels in high school during which you participated (10, 11, 12, etc.)
3. Approximate number of hours per week and weeks per year that you spend in this activity
4. Leadership positions you held, honors you won, or awards you received relating to this activity
5. A description of the activity and your involvement, if necessary. For example, it's not necessary to describe varsity soccer. Every admissions officer will know what soccer is. However, if you list something like "Eagles for CHOC," they'll need to know that this is a "high school community service organization that works with the Children's Hospital of Orange County." Please remember to spell out acronyms; your admissions counselor might not be familiar with what "CSF" stands for.

Section II: Academic Honors and Awards

List the award name, the date received, and the description of the award. Use the description to add any special significance to the award (e.g., only one junior is chosen, 400 applicants for 10 awards, etc.). By the way, the Academic Honors and Awards section is usually the shortest for most students. Don't worry if you have only a few awards to list (or none!).



Activity Summary for _____

Name of Activity/Organization & your Position/Role (50 character limit)	9	10	11	12	Hours/ Week	Weeks/ Year	Description (150 character limit)
Smith High School Water Polo, Goalie	X	X	X	X	15	12	Daily practices and weekly games; League Champions (11). Was pulled up to varsity in 11 th grade as the backup goalie. Most Improved Player (10, 11). MVP (11).
Smith High School Wind Ensemble, Alto Saxophone/Guitar	X	X	X	X	1	20	Artist/Instrumentalist in Wind Ensemble (9, 11), self-taught in the saxophone & guitar. Played the sax for 7 years and found the guitar due to my love of classic rock.
Assistance League of Tustin, Community Aid Group Volunteer			X	X	4	16	Enjoy helping at food drives. It was intimidating asking for donations, but it was worth it when I saw that I raised over 1000 pounds of food.
Best Buddies, Mentor/Volunteer	X	X	X	X	3	35	Help build students' autonomy by coaching them to dribble, shoot, and strategize at basketball games. Chaperone Prom. Develop ongoing friendships.



Summer Activities & Experiences (50-character limit)	9	10	11	12	Hours/ Week	Weeks/ Year	Description (150 character limit)
Exchange Student Program		X			40	3	My family hosted an exchange student from Argentina. I met a lot of amazing friends and I got to practice my Spanish. Chiara and I still talk weekly.

Work Experiences & your position title (50-character limit)	9	10	11	12	Hours/ Week	Weeks/ Year	Description (150 character limit)
Starbucks Barista				X	20	52	Four days a week I work at Starbucks, running the cash register, making drinks, and accidentally misspelling customers' names. (Dates of employment 09/13 – 08/15)

Awards Received (50-character limit)	9	10	11	12	Description (150 character limit) (For example, who gave you the recognition/award? Why were you qualified to receive it?)
Student of the Month: History		X			Awarded to one outstanding student from Mr. Kyle's six history classes
Scholar Athlete	X	X	X		Awarded to students who maintain a 3.2 GPA while participating in sports