

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR LAST SUMMER WITH YOUR HIGH SCHOOL GRAD



For your new graduate, it may feel like summer will last forever.

Road trips with friends, a welcome break from homework, and lazy days by the pool or maybe a cool summer job are a lovely bookend to their high school days.

As parents, we know how fast this season goes. And it never feels faster than when you'll be sending your son or daughter off to college in the fall.

This summer is a valuable opportunity to help your student feel better prepared for the independence and responsibilities ahead. But it's also a chance to enjoy time together as a family.

From getting them ready for campus life to creating and revisiting lasting memories, here's how to make the most of your last summer with your high school graduate.



CREATE NEW MEMORIES

COOKING LESSONS

**THIS SUMMER IS A
PERFECT TIME TO
PASS THE CULINARY
TORCH AND TEACH
YOUR STUDENT
SOME COOKING
SKILLS, PLUS THEIR
FAVORITE RECIPES.**

The way to a teen's heart is through their stomach.

But once your student moves to campus, you won't be able to cook them their favorite meal after a long day of classes.

This summer is a perfect time to pass the culinary torch and teach your student some cooking skills plus their favorite recipes. Start by creating a digital or physical family cookbook that your student can take with them wherever they go.

Spice things up even further by taking a cooking lesson together! You'll both learn something new, and share a lot of laughs along the way.

Get more healthy meal ideas for students living off campus. »



CREATE NEW MEMORIES

GROW TOGETHER

**WORK TOGETHER
TO NURTURE YOUR
GARDEN, AND
REAP THE TASTY
AND BEAUTIFUL
REWARDS LATER
THIS SUMMER.**

Nothing's more renewing than sinking your fingers in the dirt and spending time outdoors.

If your student shares this sentiment, gardening together is a great way to bond during their last summer before college.

Go to a gardening center together and pick out some flowers, berries, vegetables or herbs that are appropriate to plant this time of year. Maybe you have space in your yard, or you can do patio pots. Work together to nurture your garden, and reap the tasty and beautiful rewards later this summer.

Another option: plant a baby tree together, and watch it grow over the next four years.

Discover more ways to get outside and have fun with your high school grad this summer. »

A photograph of a man and a woman fishing together in a field. The man is on the left, wearing a light blue t-shirt and a tan hat, holding a fishing rod. The woman is on the right, wearing a light yellow t-shirt and a white hat, also holding a fishing rod. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background shows trees and a fence.

CREATE NEW MEMORIES

SET A GOAL

**THIS SUMMER IS
THE PERFECT TIME
FOR THE TWO OF
YOU TO SET A GOAL.**

Have you and your daughter or son ever dreamed of participating in a bike race?

How about running a marathon (or half marathon), or summitting your first mountain?

This summer is the perfect time for the two of you to set a goal, whether lofty or humble, and work toward it as a last hurrah before college. Training together will bring you closer as you sweat toward a shared finish line.

Meeting that goal will allow your student to finish the summer with confidence, preparing them to set and achieve ever more challenging goals during their college years.

You don't have to enter a race to make your time together meaningful, so keep it low-key if that's more your style. »



CREATE NEW MEMORIES

HIT THE OPEN ROAD

**MAKE THIS
LAST SUMMER
BEFORE COLLEGE
MEMORABLE BY
PLANNING A FAMILY
TRIP SOMEWHERE
NEW.**

Is your family the type to choose adventure? Or have you always wanted to be that family?

Make this last summer before college memorable by planning a family trip somewhere new. Travelling can open your student's eyes to new horizons and cultures, and prepare them even better for the diversity and fresh landscapes that await them in college.

Whether you choose an international destination, a cruise or just pack up the car for a local camping trip, you'll be having fun and making new memories together.

And how about building in a surprise for your student? A backpacking trip could conclude with an unexpected and refreshing day of river rafting; a road trip might diverge to a music festival they were dying to go to. A trip can have a theme or be a treasure hunt — or part way through, their favorite cousins or best family friends might just happen to show up and join in.

Whether traveling to celebrate high school or college graduation, find tips for planning an unforgettable trip. »

VISIT THEIR COLLEGE TOWN

GIVE YOUR STUDENT THE REINS TO CHOOSE WHAT THEY WANT TO SEE AND DO WHILE YOU'RE THERE.

Start getting to know your student's college town with a fun weekend trip.

This may coincide with orientation, which is a great way for your student to meet new people and participate in university-led activities, some of which may include the whole family.

Spend time exploring restaurants, live music venues, parks, hiking trails, gyms, coffee shops and shopping districts.

Make sure the agenda is relaxed — give your student the reins to choose what they want to see and do while you're there.

While on campus, find the student union, recreation center, library and residence hall they'll be living in so they can start learning their way around before the bustle of move-in day.

Find resources around your son or daughter's campus community before you go. »

TAKE CARE OF LOGISTICS

We don't need to remind you how much there is to do to prepare your high school grad for college in the fall.

But it helps to focus your energy in the right places. These agenda items will make a big difference in your student's adjustment to greater independence and responsibility:

- Give them the info they need to set up their own doctor, dentist and vision appointments.
- Work together to [find the best insurance plans for their car, health, tuition and more.](#)
- Help them create a resume or set up a LinkedIn account.
- Open a student credit card account with them where you can provide a set monthly budget or help them manage their own income and bills.
- Teach them the basics of comparison shopping: how to save money by choosing generic brands instead of name brands for food, toiletries, etc.
- Find out what [community resources are close to campus](#) including banks, doctors offices, emergency care clinics, public transit centers, post offices, dentists and counseling centers.
- Let your student know you're there for them whenever they need to talk about the pressures that come along with college like drinking, drugs, relationships, health, budgeting and work-life balance. Voicing your support gives them an opening to share concerns they may hesitate to bring up on their own.

[Find more transition talking tips. »](#)



GETTING PREPARED

GET ORGANIZED

HELP THEM SORT EVERYTHING THEY OWN INTO FOUR BOXES: TAKE TO COLLEGE, DONATE OR SELL, STORE, OR THROW AWAY.

There's nothing like trying to get your student to sort through a lifetime of beloved clutter in their childhood room before they leave for college.

But if you encourage them to throw on some music (and maybe sweeten the deal with dinner at their favorite restaurant when you're done), this chore can transform into some unexpected quality time together.

Help them sort everything they own into four boxes:

- Take to college
- Donate or sell
- Store
- Throw away

Let your student make these choices — you may hate that ratty rock band t-shirt, but it could provide a lot of comfort during this big transition.

Help your student get packed and prepped for the dorm with these tips. »

T-SHIRT QUILT

**A T-SHIRT QUILT
IS A GREAT WAY
FOR YOU AND
YOUR STUDENT TO
PRACTICE A CRAFTY
SKILL TOGETHER
BEFORE THE FALL
ROLLS AROUND.**

What do your son or daughter's soccer teams, favorite bands and elementary school choir concerts have in common?

Chances are, they all came with a t-shirt that's been sitting in the back of your student's closet for years (or that gets worn in heavy rotation).

What better way to see your student off than by transforming those tees into a treasured quilt to keep them warm during their first winter away from home?

Have your son or daughter gather up some favorite t-shirts (at least 12 to make a throw blanket, 40 to make a twin-sized one). Then follow [these directions](#) to turn the tees into a quilt before the summer ends.

A t-shirt quilt is a great way for you and your student to practice a crafty skill together and fit in some more quality time before the fall rolls around.

Directions on how to make a quilt from t-shirts you aren't wearing. »

A photograph of a desk in a room. On the desk is a photo album, a clock, and some supplies. On the wall behind the desk is a collage of photos and a hat. The text 'CHERISH OLD MEMORIES' is overlaid on a yellow bar at the top of the image.

CHERISH OLD MEMORIES

PHOTO ALBUM OR WALL COLLAGE

**CREATE A
DECORATIVE PHOTO
COLLAGE YOUR
STUDENT CAN HANG
IN THEIR DORM.**

Present your student with a thoughtful photo album that chronicles their childhood and high school years, and watch the waterworks start.

If you have other friends whose sons and daughters are graduating, work together on the weekends to make the project more fun.

Or create a decorative photo collage your student can hang in their dorm to remind them of favorite places and people. You can design it digitally and have it printed poster size.

These crafty tips for preserving college memories work great for high school memories, too. »

A photograph of two young women with long hair, one blonde and one brown, smiling and looking down at something in their hands. They are surrounded by a shower of colorful confetti (blue, yellow, red, green). The background is a light blue wall. The image is framed by a white border.

CHERISH OLD MEMORIES

THROW A GOING AWAY PARTY

**INVITE FAMILY
AND FRIENDS TO
CELEBRATE THE
START OF THIS NEXT
CHAPTER.**

Give your daughter or son one last big hurrah before the summer ends.

Invite family and friends to celebrate the start of this next chapter and remind your student of all the love and support they'll carry with them when they go.

Here at CollegiateParent, we understand your student's transition from high school to college isn't always easy.

From how to support your student to finding your own emotional wellbeing, we've got resources to help you along.

Browse our "Parent View" blog posts for stories that will speak directly to your heart. »