

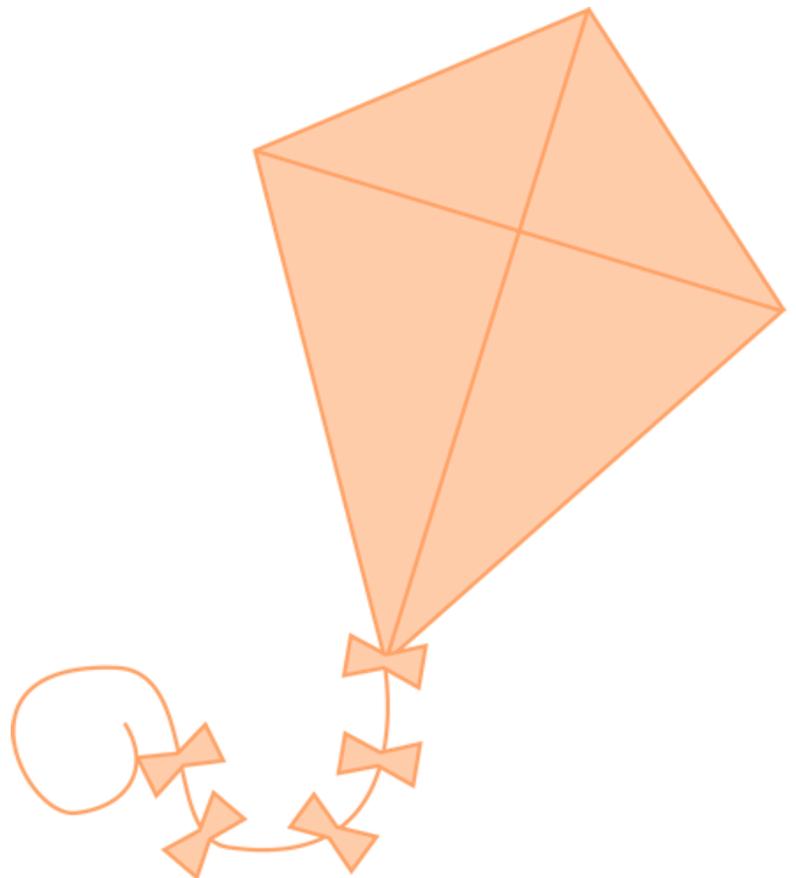


Aspire

Guide to College

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School Versus College

- You no longer have to call your teachers 'sir' or 'miss'. Lecturers, and tutors usually go on a first name basis
- You don't have to ask to go to the bathroom. In college you are in charge of your own bodily functions
- There is no timetable that is completely full up, you may have 2 or 3 hour gaps in your day which you will need to fill
- There are clubs and societies that you can join, from extreme Frisbee, to rugby, computers and dance. Each college has their own unique set of 'clubs and socs'
- You don't have to wear a uniform anymore. Unless specific for your course (Nursing, Culinary Arts etc). This is sometimes stressful because you now need to think about what you're going to be wearing everyday
- You will probably be allowed to bring a laptop in to your class to take notes
- There will most likely be boys and girls in your class
- Smoking is permitted in designated areas in the college grounds
- There may be a bar or pub on the campus
- You may be allowed bringing your tea or coffee into class with you
- You will be expected to do a lot of independent learning outside of your classroom hours
- You will have access to the disability support service in your college for supports
- You may have had an SNA in school, you will not have an SNA in college.
- You can drive to college and park in the college grounds
- There will be multiple places to get food and drinks on the campus, there will be a canteen and a coffee shop or café etc
- You can bring your own lunch to college and eat it in the canteen. This is a great way of saving money and not having to worry about long queues in the college canteen
- There are no set seats in college, unless assigned by your lecturer or tutor
- You will have different modules during your time in college. Some courses change these with each semester (before Christmas and after Christmas), others will be changed every year so you have the same modules for the full college year.

How Are You Getting To College?

It is important to figure out your route to college and to factor in times of heavy traffic in the morning (7.30-9.30am) and evenings (4.30-6.30pm).

You should get a **student leap card**. These can be bought via a student leap agent in your college, or you can get them by post. The student leap card costs €10.

You can use your leap card on Dublin bus, Bus Eireann, Luas and Dart. You can buy ramblers which are day tickets or you can top it up with cash. Leap cards also have an app for topping up your card using your phone, that is available for android devices. You can get it from your app store.

The leap card app, lets you see how much money you have left on your leap card, and also top it up. If you don't have access to the app, you can log onto your account on the leap card website to check your balance. You can top up your card in newsagents/local shops like centra, londis and spar. **NOTE:** If you are on disability allowance and have a travel pass you do not need to get a leap card

Have you planned your journey?

It is important to travel the journey to college and home from college as many times so that you can feel comfortable. This is so you know what time you need to get the bus, how long you have to walk for before getting on the bus, and after you get off the bus. Figuring out your route to college is best done during heavy traffic times so you know how long it will take.

The Dublin bus real time information app is something which can be really handy to have on your phone. You can add the bus stops which you use to your favourites to track when your bus is due. These apps are also available for the Luas, Bus Eireann and the Dart.

Time management is a big issue for a lot of people. Having a plan B for when the bus doesn't show, or is late, or you miss it important to figure out before starting college.

Supports On Campus

This is something that is important to figure out in your first few weeks of college

1. Find the disability support service on campus
2. Find the different class rooms and lecture halls that you will be in
3. See how long it takes you to get from class to class, sometimes classes are in different buildings in different parts of the campus
4. Find out where the closest bathrooms are for each of your classes/lectures
5. Find where the ATM is on campus
6. See what food is available in the canteen, how much it costs and times that food is served
7. The route you get from the bus to your building
8. Where the student support services are which include the doctor, nurse and counsellor
9. Find out how to use the library

The **disability support services** available in colleges differ within each college. Here are some of the supports available:

- Academic support
- Examination support
- Occupational therapy support
- Assistive technology
- Writing labs
- Deaf Supports
- Dyslexia Support
- Study skills seminars

If you apply to get in to college through the DARE scheme you will be linked in with the disability services automatically. If you are not going through this route, you will have to make an appointment to meet them. Call in to the disability service office and make an appointment to meet with them to discuss your needs.

Group Work & Independent Learning

Group work will be something you will experience throughout your time in college. Some people really enjoy working with other people, others find it difficult. It is an important skill to learn, to be able to work with others, as it is part of the work environment.

Things to consider:

- Knowing your role in the group and what work you have to do, pick your role according to your strengths
- Be aware of the workload
- Maintaining communication with members of the group that you are collaborating with on an aspect of the group assignment/ project.
- Attend group meetings so that you are kept involved and informed of group progress
- Don't be afraid to bring concerns to your lecturer or tutor

College is different than school in many ways. One way that it differs is **independent learning**. Some college courses might have 10 hours of lectures or tutorials a week. The rest of the week is meant to be for extra reading of college work and for time to do assignments and other course work. Some courses also have a full timetable from 10am-6pm with your lunch break. All of this depends on the course you choose.

Managing your spare time can sometimes be a challenge. You may have to keep track of assignments in your diary or calendar on your phone to make sure you hand them in on time. Setting aside time

Getting Organised & Minding Yourself

1. Have clean clothes ready to wear in the morning
2. Get up to give yourself plenty of time to shower, get dressed, do your hair etc
3. Have your lunch ready to go, and breakfast eaten or something to eat later on in the morning
4. Have your bag packed the night before so you don't forget anything important
5. Have your phone charged, bring a charger with you if your phone battery isn't great
6. Do you bring your laptop to college? Make sure you remember your charger
7. Give yourself plenty of time to get from your house to the bus stop and the bus to your classroom, especially during rush hour
8. Check college emails before you go to college to make sure changes in your timetable are known in advance so you plan for them

College can be stressful, and this can become more evident during exam periods or times when you have assignments due. It is important to take some time for yourself to relax and distress

- **Healthy eating** makes you feel better in yourself and prevents illness. A diet of pizza and chicken nuggets won't give you much energy to study and will leave you feeling groggy. Mix it up with some fruit and veg!
- **Sleep** is so important to keep you healthy and happy. It gives your mind and body the time to recover after a day of college.
- **Exercising** and keeping active relieves stress, allows you to meet new people, feel better, and gives your body feel-good endorphins
- **Talking** to your friends or professionals will take some weight off your shoulders. It's ok to ask for help, no one can be expected to solve all of life's problems on their own

Have more Questions?

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