

15 WAYS TO SPEND YOUR SUMMER VACATION PRODUCTIVELY

Congratulations on all your hard work this year - now keep up the momentum with these practical pointers.

1 PAT YOURSELF ON THE BACK

You've done brilliantly this year. So you deserve a treat. It needn't be something expensive. Perhaps you could head to the local cinema by yourself one afternoon - there's something magical about being alone in a quiet auditorium. Or maybe you could learn how to cook a dish that you've always wanted to try. Check out LifeHack.org's article on [30 Ways To Treat Yourself No Matter What](#) for more great ideas.



2 TAKE A TRIP

Holidaying can be productive while remaining fun. [Volunteering](#), [working](#), or [studying abroad](#) will give you memories that will endure for a lifetime and equip you with the real-world experience that employers value highly. A popular option is to become a [camp counselor](#). But if that doesn't appeal, why not plan a cultural expedition? You could even immerse yourself in classical art by following in the footsteps of Americans past and present on your own [Grand Tour](#).



3 BUILD YOUR RESUME

Throughout your time at college, you should be doing all you can to build your resume. And over the summer break, you'll have time spare to give it the boost it needs to catch a prospective employer's eye. Things you can do include:

- Finding a part-time job
- Visiting a career counsellor
- Taking an internship
- [Practicing your interview technique](#)



4 TURN YOUR WEAKNESS INTO A STRENGTH

Is there a particular discipline or subject area on your course that you have always struggled with? How's about setting yourself the challenge of turning it from a weakness into a strength over the summer break? If it's not something you enjoy, stay motivated by imagining how wowed your professor will be when they see how much you've improved.



5 LIVE THE GOOD LIFE

Academic study is obviously key to one's prospects. But what about learning to lead a good life, filled with meaning? For the ancient Greeks, becoming skilled in life was only possible through a lifetime's careful observation and introspection. Fortunately, they did much of that work for us over 2000 years ago, and you can apply what they learned this summer. For an introduction to the teachings of Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, and history's other great guides to "the good life", check out this magnificent [YouTube playlist](#).



6 GET CREATIVE

The best creative thinkers are adept at coming up with ingenious solutions to all sorts of problems. This is a skill that will give you the edge in education and employment. The writer and philosopher Edward de Bono is the Don of creative thinking. To become a formidable creative thinker in your own right, follow the exercises in his classic guide, [Lateral Thinking: A Textbook of Creativity](#).



7 GO SOCIAL

Have you acquired knowledge this year that you want to share with the world? Then try your hand at blogging or vlogging this summer. Who knows where it might lead... Physicist Derek Muller started his [educational science channel Veritasium](#) in 2011, and at the time of writing it has nearly four million subscribers (many of whom were first drawn to the channel by an early video explaining the physics behind the behaviour of the slinky).



8 BECOME AN AUTHORITY

Since the birth of the internet, it's become possible to know a little bit about a lot of stuff. But that type of knowledge is only worth anything when watching a game show on cable. So why not use your time this summer to become a true expert? Choose something that intrigues you. Then head to the local library and find every resource you can on the subject. You needn't choose something particularly academic. Rare baseball cards, the history of the Delta Blues... the world is brim full of topics worthy of exploration



9 DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS

Getting healthier is easier than you might think. It's not necessary to spend gruelling hours in the gym or pounding the sidewalks. Just making a few simple changes to your diet and adding some moderate exercise to your weekly routine can quickly leave you feeling better than ever. Check out [www.wikihow.com's](#) article on [How To Be Healthy](#) for six simple steps to a healthier you.



10 GET OUTSIDE

Isn't it sad that so few of us know the names for the flora and fauna that's all around us? Beyond being able to identify a few of the most common trees, birds, and flowers, we've lost access to the taxonomy that came so easily to earlier generations. But it needn't be so. Why not buy or loan some guides to the [trees](#), [birds](#), and [flowers](#) of North America, put on your walking boots and get naming? It doesn't matter if you live in the city. Nature is everywhere!



11 WORK YOUR MEMORY

You know that panicky feeling when you return for the new academic year and find you've forgotten much of what you knew only a few months before? After a while it should come back to you, but by then you are already several weeks into the semester. So, to make sure that hard-won knowledge doesn't slip away, it's wise to recap your course material over the summer. Why not refer to your notes from time to time to keep the material fresh? One good way is to create some [flash cards](#) that you can use to quickly test your knowledge when you're on the go.



12 TAKE UP SOMETHING NEW

These days, there are so many fantastic online learning resources available that everything from learning a language to taking up an instrument, or mastering a craft is more accessible and affordable than ever before. What are you waiting for?



13 GET OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

Giving back to your local community can give you a tremendous sense of belonging and purpose. One way is to volunteer, and you shouldn't have any difficulty finding opportunities to do so. Head to [www.volunteer.gov](#) to search for volunteering roles based on your location and interests.



14 FIND YOUR CALLING

The summer months are a chance to take a step back and reflect on what you want to do once you leave education. Ask your family what they think you would be good at. After all, they know you best. Or, if you already have a few possible careers in mind, you could approach someone within the industry to get their thoughts. People love to pass on the fruits of their experience, so you should find them forthcoming with advice and next steps. If you're very lucky, they might even offer you an internship.



15 PREP FOR THE NEW TERM

The last few weeks of the holidays is the time to ensure you're well placed to hit the ground running when college starts again. Revisit your notes from the previous year... watch some online videos on topics that will be covered over the coming year... purchase all the supplies you'll need... establish a sleep schedule that will fit in with your college hours. Best of all, you can do this preparation while feeling proud that you've put your summer break to such good use!



These tips were brought to you by Sonocent.
Have a great summer and thanks for reading.