

## How Hard is College?

*Although many high schoolers want to know “how hard” college is, the difficulty can be hard to measure. Some university students are surprised by how much free time they have, but others forget what free time is. Here are a few things I can tell you, though.*

- \* Prestigious schools with degrees that people drool over are usually “prestigious” *because* they’re challenging. The students supposedly learn more and therefore perform better in the real world. So don’t expect to earn a revered degree for doing nothing.
- \* Not all majors are created equal. Some are based on learning techniques or overall concepts while others are based on memorizing tons of facts. So, some majors require more studying than others. Some majors, such as English, may require more reading than others.
- \* Some professors are much more challenging than others, even if they teach the same class. How they use each class period, how they grade papers, what textbooks they assign, and more can vary. This is why I recommend using [RateMyProfessors.com](http://RateMyProfessors.com) to find a good match for you.
- \* Every college has some classes *everyone* has to take to graduate. How good you are at these subjects and how effective the professors are at teaching them can definitely influence your experience. Some colleges have huge core curriculums that require taking a wide variety of classes. If you think your skills are more “specialized,” then you will have an easier time at colleges that focus almost solely on your major.
- \* Needless to say, how much effort you put into college will affect its difficulty. If you slack off and just get by on the minimum GPA necessary to graduate, college won’t be very tough. However, it won’t be very beneficial either since you won’t learn much or have an impressive resume. Since you’re spending so much time and money there anyway, you might as well get something out of it, even if it requires effort on your part.
- \* If you’re already used to studying and working alone without anyone prodding you along, that puts you in a better position as you enter college.
- \* Your reading, writing, and typing speeds can influence how much time you need to complete assignments, which in turn helps determine how busy you are. Most speed-reading courses are scams, and even the legit ones don’t help much. So, I wouldn’t suggest trying to rush through the important reading you get. On the other hand, if you still cannot type properly without looking at the keyboard, I’d highly, *highly* recommend finding a program designed to teach teens or adults how to type. Poking one key at a time takes forever. If you’re a slow typist, these might benefit you immensely.
- \* Some semesters just plain go more smoothly than others. I had some oddly easy ones and some painfully difficult ones.
- \* Life events outside of school, such as family tensions, illness, or a part-time job, can also influence how tough college is for you.

\* If you're having a difficult semester, remember that you need to take breaks. I'd recommend scheduling a good-sized break once a day for doing something you really enjoy. That's much more fulfilling than procrastinating by doing boring stuff just for the sake of avoiding work, like browsing random websites or organizing for no reason.

**I don't think many people would describe college as "easy." However, if you're prepared to navigate its demands and use your time effectively, I believe you can survive university life. If I did it, so can you!**

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