

## Club: a four-letter word you need to survive high school



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Bristol, Connecticut, USA – Freshman year of high school is not an easy thing. You are the little fish in a big pond, surrounded by new types of people, teachers, and experiences. Especially for someone going to a school with a bigger student population than they had before, high school can be very daunting. But by following these simple tips, you can make the transition a bit easier for yourself, and become well acquainted with your new home for the next four years. Always remember to walk in confidently, hold your head up high, and smile. Clubs, clubs, CLUBS! I can't stress this enough. Being part of a club or sport or any kind of organization will immensely improve your social life at school. While you can make friends in your classes (and should), activities are a way for you to hang out with people who share your interests, whether it be

playing soccer, singing in a show choir, or just taking photos.

Clubs are a way for kids who may never cross paths during school to meet each other and connect over a similar activity they enjoy. Making friends in these organizations is not very difficult, as you find out that you may have a lot in common with the people around you.

This is another key aspect of high school; don't let your fear get into your head. I made the mistake my first year of avoiding a few people I thought wouldn't like me. I didn't even try to say hi to them the first day. These were people on the soccer or football team, who I thought were too different from me, especially in our interests and likings. However, these "jocks" I avoided for the first few months are actually some of my closest friends now.

People will always defy your expectations, especially if you don't even know them. The "cool kid" in my choir class actually turned out to love anime and it turns out that's what we bonded over after I got the courage to go up and talk to him. People will constantly surprise you, so go into a conversation with absolutely no expectations at all.

For me, the school activities I've been most involved with have been band, choir, and the drama department. These three groups alone account for probably one third of the entire school population, which helps in a lot of ways.

Band is a huge one for me, since we meet one week before school for band camp, to train for the upcoming fall season. The best thing about this, especially for a freshman, is that you walk into the first day of school already knowing a lot of people.

The other amazing thing about being part of a performing arts group is the recognition from the rest of the school. Just like the football team after a great game, all the actors in our theatre department get praised the following week after one of our productions. After an in-school concert, many of my classmates who didn't even know I existed gave me praise for my bassoon playing skills that day, and the same happened to many other performers. These are all ways to be part of a team, and make lots of friends along the way.

In short, join a group. Whether you are into sports, music, acting, art or singing, you can definitely find something to do while in high school. If not, start a club of your own. Many high schools let their students do this, as long as they have a teacher willing to serve as a supervisor. This will be the best thing you do, since after four years, it will feel like a family to you.

So remember: breathe, stay calm, and make new friends. Enjoy the experience.