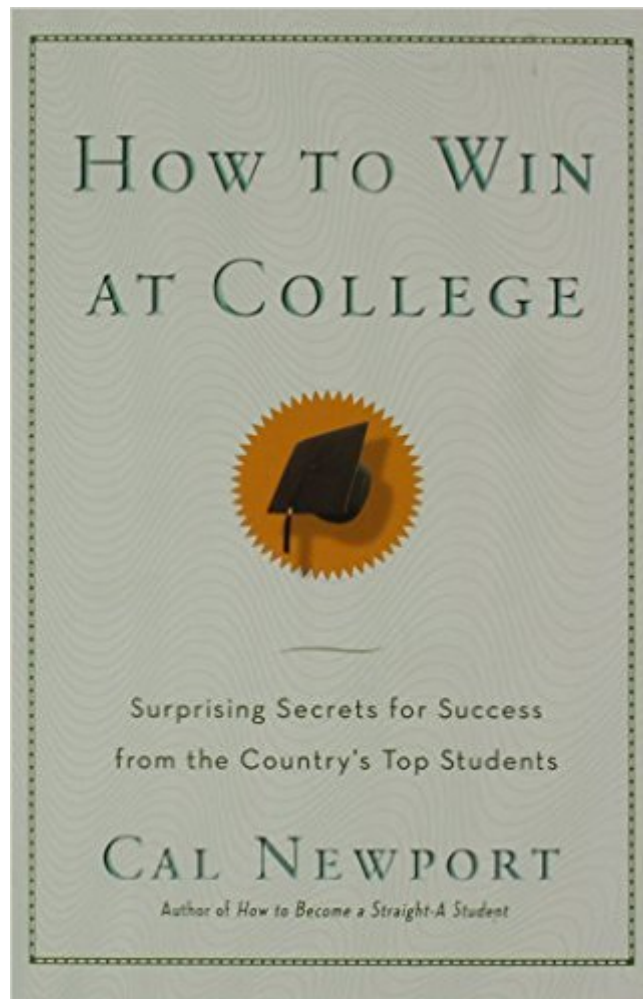


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# How To Win At College: Surprising Secrets For Success From The Country's Top Students



## Synopsis

The only guide to getting ahead once you've gotten in "proven strategies for making the most of your college years, based on winning secrets from the country's most successful students What does it take to be a standout student? How can you make the most of your college years "graduate with honors, choose exciting activities, build a head-turning resume, and gain access to the best post-college opportunities? Based on interviews with star students at universities nationwide, from Harvard to the University of Arizona, *How to Win at College* presents seventy-five simple rules that will rocket you to the top of the class. These college-tested "and often surprising" strategies include:

- Don't do all your reading
- Drop classes every term
- Become a club president
- Care about your grades, ignore your GPA
- Never pull an all-nighter
- Take three days to write a paper
- Always be working on a "grand project"
- Do one thing better than anyone else you know

Proving that success has little to do with being a genius workaholic, and everything to do with playing the game, *How to Win at College* is the must-have guide for making the most of these four important years "and getting an edge on life after graduation.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Not for the average student, this book, the only one in its category, will teach you how to have brilliant success in college. While other college survival-type books are about healthy habits, emotional balance, how to do laundry etc., this one is for those who probably haven't needed such hovering help in awhile. In an excellent format (lots of little, very concrete tips, each of which gets a

few pages of explanation), Cal Newport, himself a recent grad, lays out what separates the truly high achievers from the simply smart. The tips are not obvious or general, but precise and interesting ("Use High-Quality Notebooks", "Apply to Ten Scholarships a Year"), and well-researched (the author says he compiled them by speaking to many exceptional students, including Rhodes scholars, entrepreneurs, productive researchers and published writers, from all over the Ivy League.) The tone, unlike in many advice books by older adults, is never cute or patronizing. This is a very, very useful book if you're motivated and in for the long haul.

The author says in the beginning of the book that a student doesn't have to utilize all 75 tips in order to be a successful student. This is a simple fact that you need to grow accustomed to when reading this book. There is simply not enough time in a day, nor an individual motivated enough to develop every habit he suggests, varying from exercising 5 days a week to relaxing for a good half hour before you go to sleep. I agree with essentially all of the tips he suggests. However, I think that outstanding students can indeed get away with studying in their dorms, eating with friends 2 or even 3 times a day, or getting a "normal" job just working in retail in town. While all of his tips are laid out clearly and justified in simple terms, college is a different experience for every person. Some tips will actually not apply to certain people. Some things he expressly forbids might be alright in certain situations. That being said, I think this book holds a lot of wisdom. While it was a quick and easy read, and while it is like a compendium of tips that are intended to be read like a list, the reading did become predictable. He suggests writing every paper in college like you're writing for a Pulitzer--while he does write very skillfully, and while his personality does indeed shine in the writing, the reading just became somewhat monotonous after reading 10 or 15 tips at a time. To fully enjoy this book, read it in small doses. Read 4 or 5 tips at a time and take time and ponder the things he suggests. For tips which come alive to you and really seem like they'd make you a better student, mark the page somehow. If you see a tip you don't agree with, make a different mark and go back a few weeks or months later and see if you still agree with your initial decision. Make an effort to live by the ones you agree with and see if they truly make a difference. This book holds more wisdom than just "don't procrastinate" and "don't binge drink" and all of the common sense things that most books include. While he does mention them, he doesn't dwell on them quite as much (though he drives no procrastination home, no doubt). This book comes from a man who really knows college life--you can see it in the way he writes and the things he writes. My only complaint is that reading it in a single sitting isn't as fun as reading it in small doses. This book needs time to fully blossom, which some people don't have much of.

I wish I'd had this book in college. There seem to be a million breezy, humorous books about college life on the shelves, but they're all about cooking, cleaning, reducing stress and buying futons. This one is better than most at breezy humor, but it gets five stars because it's about COLLEGE: the core tasks of getting good grades, an employable resume, and the critical thinking skills necessary for a richer appreciation of life. My little brother is starting Harvard next year, and I've bought him a copy. Hard to believe the college-survival genre has been around so long and this book is just being published now.

my little brother is going to st. andrews next fall. he asked me, a recent nyu graduate, if i had any sage advice on how to do well. i told him 'nope. i did it the hard way. all nighters & pestilence." but there's a better way. this alleged 23 year old 'cal newport' seems to have written precisely the book i should have had back in 2000 when i still had a shot at doing things right. i regret nothing but like i told my bro, read this book and take advantage of the tips you'll learn, cause you won't get them from your professors or your peers. a book for that rare kid willing to seek out advice on how to succeed in college. this book won't disappoint.

After thoroughly enjoying How to be a Straight A Student, I picked up another of Cal's books. While Straight A focuses more on specific study and notetaking methods, this book provides more general lifestyle tips for a 1st year uni student (ie. befriend your professor, never pull an all nighter, exercise and attend guest lectures). I like in this book how he emphasizes the importance of health, self worth, good relationships and intrinsic motivation as factors in doing well. However, some tips are pretty obvious (don't binge drink, always go to class, exercise, laugh everyday, find an escape) and others are just random (volunteer quietly, don't network, eat alone, make your bed, empty your inbox). It's an okay book, there is some genuinely good advice like, ignore classmate's grades and take hard courses early on but there is a bit of fluff and while I have no doubt this stuff is from Yale, Dartmouth and other top notch students, it's vague and generic advice. Not much detail or anecdotes from students.

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