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KnowHow2GO | Insider

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Surfing College Sites

We've been talking lately about our virtual campus – [KnowHow2GO-U](#) – and the importance of [visiting real college campuses](#). But what if you don't have a chance to visit any this summer or in the near future? One of the best ways to get a feel for a college is to check out its Web site. Here are the [College Board's](#) five tips for making virtual visits worth your while:

- **Get involved.** Music junkie? Really into politics? College clubs come in all shapes and sizes. Look for links like *Student Life* to see which ones you'd want to join.
- **Get a room.** Your housing choices as a freshman might be limited, but many colleges offer language, sorority/fraternity and honors houses; and dorm rooms that look like apartments. Your best bet is to look for a *Housing* link under *Admissions* or *Prospective Students*.
- **Get help.** Colleges work hard to keep you on campus once you get there. They offer a wide range of support from drop-in writing assistance to peer tutoring. You might find this information in a section called *Student Services*.
- **Go team!** Click on *Athletics* to look into intramural and recreational sports, which every student can take part in. While you're there, take a look at the varsity team rosters and stats. You could be cheering them on from the students' section in the near future!
- **Get cultured.** Click on *Events*, *Arts* or a similar link to learn about the school's concerts, film screenings, plays, lectures and other cultural events.



If you have trouble finding these links on a college Web site, refer to the *Site Map*. Click [here](#) for more tips and links to specific college sites.

Food for Thought

While you're watching TV or lying by the pool this summer, let your mind wander to...college application essays. They're not as scary as they sound! In fact, some common essays ask you to describe a life-altering experience or the person you most admire. These are topics you can start thinking about as early as middle school.

The "[Common App](#)" is an online application accepted by more than 300 colleges and universities. (Yes, this means you can fill out *one* application and send it to [multiple schools!](#)) Here are the six essays they asked students to choose from this year (250 words minimum):

1. Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you.
2. Discuss some issue of personal, local, national or international concern and its importance to you.
3. Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you and describe that influence.
4. Describe a character in fiction, a historical figure or a creative work (in art, music, science, etc.) that has had an influence on you, and explain that influence.
5. A range of academic interests, personal perspectives and life experiences adds much to the educational mix. Given your personal background, describe an experience that

- illustrates what you would bring to the diversity in a college community, or an encounter that demonstrated the importance of diversity to you.
6. Topic of your choice.

Meet Your Match: Foreign Languages

Name: Foreign Languages
Age: 400,000 years old
Video: <http://youtube.com/KnowHow2GO>
MySpace: <http://www.MySpace.com/ForeignLanguages>

Nobody knows exactly when humankind began to communicate with words, but it probably started with a caveman joke. Now, in modern times, there are nearly 6,700 recognized languages. Don't worry. If you can master two of them, you're way ahead of the game.

Japanese, French and Spanish are the most commonly taught languages in high school. A lot of kids don't want to take a foreign language because it's foreign...and anything foreign takes time to learn. But, nothing is cooler than being bilingual (except maybe jean jackets). And, if that's not enough, knowing a foreign language will help you prepare for college! Talk to your guidance counselor to see if you're up for the challenge.



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