

# COMPOSITION BOOK

## ***Aggie Survival Guide*** ***to the First Year of College*** ***Shared with love by the Baytown Aggie Moms***

100 Sheets

9.75 x 7.5 in / 24.76 x 19.0 cm

# GETTING STARTED

## HOWDY WEEK:

Every college has “welcome back” festivities to kick off the fall semester. This is the week you can find opportunities, get out and meet people, and even sign up for organizations. The best way to know what is going on is to follow it on social media. There are often lots of freebies and food given away, so take advantage of that too.

## GETTING INVOLVED:



TAMU has many organizations and clubs that offer opportunities to be involved. There are clubs for EVERYTHING. Find something that fits your personality. Consider the requirements that the groups ask before you commit. It is common for groups to require you to apply and go through an interview process, but not all will. Sign up or apply for several organizations, clubs, or groups to ensure you get to join at least one. You will find friends much more easily if you are involved and make an effort to get out of your dorm or apartment. Take a look at the official organization at TAMU: <https://getinvolved.tamu.edu/organizations>

## LEARNING YOUR WAY AROUND:

Once you have a schedule, take an afternoon BEFORE classes begin to find the buildings and rooms where you will need to go. Take the opportunity to test out the Aggie Spirit Bus. It is important that you know the routes. TAMU has a transportation app (Maroon Rides) to help you navigate. The buses will be VERY busy the first week or two. Be patient. It gets better. If you decide to drive to campus, make sure to scope out the parking lot you are assigned to (make sure you have a permit). The transportation website has lots of info: <https://transport.tamu.edu/default.aspx>



During week one, find your study spot. Check out the library, student center, study spaces in class buildings, or even outdoor spaces. Find the student center and know where the bookstore is located. Know what food places are on campus or near campus. If any of your classes require blue books or scantrons for tests, pick up a few early in the semester from the bookstore and keep them in a neat place in your backpack. Also, make sure you have an umbrella or other rain gear. When it rains in College Station, it pours. <https://www.tamu.edu/maps/index.html>

Each semester, before you choose your courses, you will need to do quite a bit of research. Here are a few thing you need to do:

|         | Monday                                               | Tuesday                                             | Wednesday                                              | Thursday                                            | Friday                                              |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 8:00AM  | <b>Literature</b><br>The American<br>2:00PM - 2:30PM | <b>English</b><br>The American<br>2:00PM - 2:30PM   | <b>Math</b><br>The American<br>2:00PM - 2:30PM         |                                                     | <b>Art</b><br>The American<br>2:00PM - 2:30PM       |
| 8:30AM  | <b>English</b><br>The American<br>2:30PM - 3:00PM    | <b>Math</b><br>The American<br>2:30PM - 3:00PM      |                                                        | <b>Health</b><br>The American<br>2:30PM - 3:00PM    | <b>History</b><br>The American<br>2:30PM - 3:00PM   |
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| 10:30AM | <b>Art</b><br>The American<br>3:00PM - 3:30PM        |                                                     | <b>Math</b><br>The American<br>3:00PM - 3:30PM         | <b>English</b><br>The American<br>3:00PM - 3:30PM   | <b>Health</b><br>The American<br>3:00PM - 3:30PM    |
| 11:00AM | <b>Art</b><br>The American<br>3:30PM - 4:00PM        |                                                     |                                                        |                                                     |                                                     |
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| 12:30PM | <b>Math</b><br>The American<br>4:30PM - 5:00PM       | <b>English</b><br>The American<br>4:30PM - 5:00PM   | <b>Literature</b><br>The American<br>4:30PM - 5:00PM   | <b>English</b><br>The American<br>4:30PM - 5:00PM   | <b>History</b><br>The American<br>4:30PM - 5:00PM   |
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- A blue background featuring a large white speech bubble with a black diagonal split. The text "RATE MY PROFESSORS" is written in black, uppercase, sans-serif font across the split. Below the bubble, on the left, is a black silhouette of a woman with her hand on her hip. On the right is a black silhouette of a man.

# STUDENT SERVICES:

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT:

When you need help, go to your professor's office hours. You should do this early in the semester anyway. Build a relationship with them and show them you are willing to go the extra mile. Every school provides some kind of resources for students who need help with academics. You will be paying good prices for tuition and fees that provide the services the school offers, so take advantage of what they have.

Sometimes Aggies need a little help getting through some of the challenging coursework at TAMU. The university offers assistance through the ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER. This is a service provided by the university, so all students should take advantage of the variety of assistance it offers. ASC provides Supplemental Instruction, Academic Coaching, Tutoring Hub, and more. These are all accessible through the website and on campus. For more information, go to <https://asc.tamu.edu/>.

There are local paid tutoring services in town such as TutorJohn, 4.0-and-Go, Aggieland Tutoring. These services vary in price and availability. Do your research on these services before spending time or money on them. Make sure they will offer the course you need and at a time you can attend.

Texas A&M University has the University Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.tamu.edu/>, where students can get assistance with a variety of writing tasks.



## STUDYING:

Your room can be a good place to study, but it isn't the only place to go. The library, MSC, classroom buildings, and coffee houses all offer free wifi or other perks for students.

Make sure you have the right materials. Some majors require specific technology specs. BEFORE you buy a laptop, make sure you get the right kind with the right software. You can also check out or borrow items from the campus libraries.

## SOME TAMU SERVICES TO EXPLORE:

- University Health Services: <https://uhs.tamu.edu/index.html>
- Career Center: <https://careercenter.tamu.edu/>
- Student Assistance Services: <https://studentlife.tamu.edu/sas/>
- Division of Student Affairs: <https://studentlife.tamu.edu/> (Explore this site!)
- Campus Safety: <https://www.tamu.edu/campus-community/campus-safety.html>
- Parking & Transportation: <https://www.tamu.edu/campus-community/parking-transportation.html>
- Disabilities Resources: <https://disability.tamu.edu/>

**\*\*A complete list of TAMU Student Services can be found at <https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/services/>**

# ADULTING ISN'T EASY, BUT YOU CAN DO IT:

## ROOMMATES & FRIENDS:

Living with others is always an interesting thing. Few things are certain except one thing...you WILL have a conflict sooner or later. The best thing to do is communicate with each other up front about your limits, likes, dislikes, etc. When issues arise, talk it out. Ignoring little things is ok at times, but never ignore big issues. It isn't fun to have these adult conversations, but they are necessary. Try your best to be fair and be willing to compromise. Consider how you differ. Are they an only child? Do they have lots of siblings? What is their background? It can take time to build a good relationship with others you live with...especially if you haven't had to share a space before, so be patient.

**FAMILY:** After you move in, try to give yourself time to adjust. Don't go home right away. Stay at school so you can find a way to make your new home a place you can enjoy. Going home too soon makes it easy to flee the challenge of making yourself at home in your new surroundings.



With that said, call home regularly. You don't have to call every day if you don't want to, but don't forget that your family will worry about you at first. Ease their minds by keeping them updated on how you are doing. Call, FaceTime, and text often. You will find they won't pester you too much because they know you will be in touch. Remember, you aren't the only one going through a big life change. So are your family members. They are used to you being there, and now you aren't. It takes time for everyone to adjust. When you go home,

things may be different. You will want independence. Most parents don't mind giving you space to be independent, but take it slow. Communicate with them and respect their boundaries. [Speaking from experience as a mom...be patient with them. It is hard to let your child go.]

**HOMETOWN FRIENDS:** Many of you will be separated from your hometown friends for the first time...ever. They will be in one place, and you will be in another. You will try your best to stay in touch, and with today's world of social media, it isn't that hard to do if you want to. However, don't forget that it is okay to make new friends too.

Getting involved in activities on and around campus can be a great way to do that. Check out organizations, clubs, intramural sports, Breakaway, Big Event, sororities, fraternities, and groups that interest you.

# IMPORTANT THINGS : TIMELINES TO FOLLOW:

**FINANCIAL AID:** Make sure you know where the financial aid office is located. There are times each semester that this office will be VERY busy. Do your best to stay ahead on your financial aid documents and details. It is better to call or go by when it is slow and avoid long lines.



FAFSA money gets posted late in the summer. Try not to panic. Again, stay on top of it and get help early if you are concerned. Know where to look in your portal and check regularly. Remember, you will get half now and half in January. In the fall, FAFSA opens again, and you have to reapply EVERY YEAR. Do not put it off.

If you have extra money left after your tuition is paid, consider putting these extra funds into an account that is separate from your main banking account. [Some Aggies keep a savings account where they deposit their extra college funds. They can access it, but not with an ATM card. They transfer or withdraw the funds as needed to their regular account.]

**DISABILITIES RESOURCES:** If you have documented disabilities, you can receive services in college to help, much like you probably did in high school. This can include extended time on tests or other services. Be sure you collect your important documentation from your high school before you leave for TAMU. You must share the documentation you have from high school with the Department of Disability Resources. Explore what DDR has to offer at <https://disability.tamu.edu/>

**ADVISORS:** At least 1-2 times each semester, you should make an appointment with your advisor to plan your courses for the next semester. Don't wait until the end of the semester. You will be busy preparing for finals, and appointments are often hard to get. Don't be afraid to meet with more than one advisor until you find one who is a good fit for you. Once you do, meet with them at least once a semester. To find an advisor in your major, go to <https://studentsuccess.tamu.edu/academic-advising/for-students/find-my-advisor>

**DROPPING CLASSES:** If you are considering Q-dropping a class, you will likely need to meet with your advisor, but you should see your professor first. Talk to them about what you are struggling with and ask about your options. After you assess your options, you can choose whether a Q-drop is the best option. Remember, you only get FOUR Q-drops at A&M. They are like gold...not to be wasted. [Texas college students are allowed 6 Q-drops, but A&M only allows 4. Your other two can be used at other institutions, if needed.]

# AGGIE MOM ADVICE FOR OUR AGGIES:

1. The Aggie Honor Code: "An **Aggie** does not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those who do." Be aware of the issues with group texting, online apps, group work, communication, and more.
2. Receiving a "B" is not the end of the world. Most of you are accustomed to making A's, and it would be awesome if it happens throughout your time at A&M, but don't panic if it doesn't.
3. Talk to your professors. Ask questions. Ask what resources are available to you in all of your classes. Go to office hours BEFORE you panic about your grade. Face-to-face interaction makes a big difference.
4. Get the number of at least one person in each class you have. Find some study partners. Don't try to do it all alone. Aggies are always willing to help other Aggies.
5. Being a student is your job. Ideally, you should dedicate 40 hours per week to it. If you are in class 15 hours, make sure you spend 25 hours studying and working on your assignments. Divide the hours however you must, but get them in.
6. In the world of technology and AI, it is tempting to allow the tech to do all the work of note-taking and studying. Remember that it is vital to take the info and notes you gather and process them. Revisiting and reworking your notes is still the most reliable way to put the knowledge into your long-term memory rather than short-term memory. It also relieves stress when preparing for tests.

## AGGIE IN NEED - BRAZOS VALLEY AGGIE MOMS

Aggies in Need is a unique service of the Brazos County Aggie Moms.

If your Aggie has an emergency such as a health issue or death in the family, local Brazos County Aggie Moms are available to help. The Brazos County Aggie Moms offer this service at no charge to the student or mom.

You can reach out between 7:00 AM and 10:00 PM to any of the following numbers:



- Julie Diggins - 979-595-3595
- Cynthia Funderburk - 214-695-3656
- Robin Hamilton - 972-345-0536

**AGGIES IN NEED**



# HEALTHCARE INFO TO KNOW:

**DOC** ~ 979-571-1967 - [www.docishere.com](http://www.docishere.com)

Years ago, Dr. Joel Richards served the BCS area by making house calls for Aggies who were sick and had no primary care doctor in town. Since then, he has expanded to an on-demand physician service that is 100% mobile. Check their site for details about their services.

## **A.P. Beutel Student Health Center**

979-458-4584 ~ <https://uhs.tamu.edu/index.html>

Located at 311 Houston St Bldg. 520, College Station, TX 77843 (near Military Walk off of Academic Plaza). Beutel offers different services for students. It is recommended to make an appointment in advance. Look at the website for details about services, appointments, and fees.



## **Emergency Care:**

There are a variety of clinics, ERs, and urgent cares in the BCS area. Most will provide wonderful care, but the bills can be quite shocking afterward if you aren't vigilant about coverage. We suggest you research which ones accept your insurance AHEAD of your Aggie falling sick. This applies to dentists/specialists for Aggies who need care in Aggieland rather than using their hometown doctors.

## **Suggestions for students:**

- Keep a digital copy of an insurance card on your phone. A picture saved in your favorites or an "emergency info" album in your camera roll might make it easier when checking in to the ER.
- Have the names and dosages of meds you take saved in your phone. Take a picture of bottles.
- Make sure your roommates/friends know your parents' contact info, so they can reach out to them if you can't. Tip: Sharing locations with a trusted roomie can be helpful.
- Consider getting a HIPAA authorization and a medical power of attorney. Once you turn 18, doctors and nurses are limited in what they can share with parents. Take steps to prepare yourself legally BEFORE you have a crisis. (See the Baytown Aggie Moms website for more links.)
  - TAMU Legal Services - <https://studentlife.tamu.edu/support/>
  - Mama Bear Legal Forms - <https://www.mamabearlegalforms.com/>
  - Baytown Aggie Moms Helpful Info & Links - <https://baytownmoms.aggienetwork.com/links-websites/>

# HELPFUL HOUSEHOLD HINTS:

## **Washing clothes:**

- Try to sort clothes into categories such as by color or whether they can go in the dryer or they need to hang to dry. For example, put all of your towels, underwear, and socks (as long as they are similar colors) into one load because they can all be tossed in the dryer without having to pull anything out to hang up.
- Maroons/reds should go together in one wash.
- Buy "Color Catchers" by Shout. Put a 1/2 sheet in every load of laundry. This keeps colors from fading or bleeding if you forget to sort colors from whites/lights.
- The hotter the water, the more likely it is for things to shrink. Pay attention to the temperature settings for the cycle you choose.
- Never leave clothing in the washer for too long. Things will mildew and begin to stink.
- After drying, always remove the lint from the trap. This can cause a fire hazard.
- Leave the washing machine lid open when not in use. This way air can circulate.
- If the washer tub starts to smell yucky, there are products you can pick up on the same aisle as your detergent that are designed to cleanse washing machine tubs. Use according to the instructions. You might need to do this more often since the machine is being used more often due to the number of people in your apartment.
- Be careful with clothing that has not been washed yet. If it is a dark color, be sure to wash it with like colors or even by itself at least once. Sometimes blue jeans, towels, and items that have been dyed will fade the first few times you wash them.
- Ink stains can often be removed or minimized with aerosol hairspray. Test it on a less obvious place on your garment first. Spray it directly to the stain and scrub lightly with a toothbrush.
- Gum stuck to fabric can often be removed with creamy peanut butter.

## **General Cleaning:**

- Make a point to use a disinfecting agent to wipe down door knobs, handles, counters, door frames where hands often touch, and any surfaces where people may put their hands.
- After preparing chicken or handling raw meat, anything you touch should be cleaned to prevent the spread of bacteria.
- Vinegar, baking soda, and lemons in general are cleaning agents you may have around the house that are not toxic. Be careful with cleaning products. Some are toxic to animals.

### **Removing Smells:**

- Garbage disposal - Mix baking soda and vinegar. The mixture will fizz and bubble. Be sure to scrub what you can and rinse thoroughly. You can also cut up lemons or limes and toss along with a few cubes of ice in the garbage disposal. Run for about a minute.
- Carpet - You can buy scented carpet powder to shake on the carpet, leave for a few hours to absorb odors, and then vacuum up. If you don't prefer the fragrant options, regular baking soda will work too.

### **Living Room:**

- Be sure to vacuum the floors regularly. Sweep the baseboards too. Don't forget the stairs.
- Periodically, move the big furniture and clean underneath and between the cushions.
- Spray Febreeze on the cushions of couches and chairs regularly. Placing scented dryer sheets between the cushions can help with any light odors. This also works in your sock drawer or towel cabinet, if you want to prolong the "fresh from the dryer" scent.
- Shake out small door rugs regularly. They will bring in more dirt than prevent it if you don't clean them occasionally.

### **Bathroom:**

- Clean outside of the toilet as well as the inside. Clorox wipes work very well.
- Keep your toothbrushes on the side of the counter farthest from the toilet. Toilet water can spray up to a few feet from the toilet when flushed.

Jot down your Aggie Mom's helpful tips:

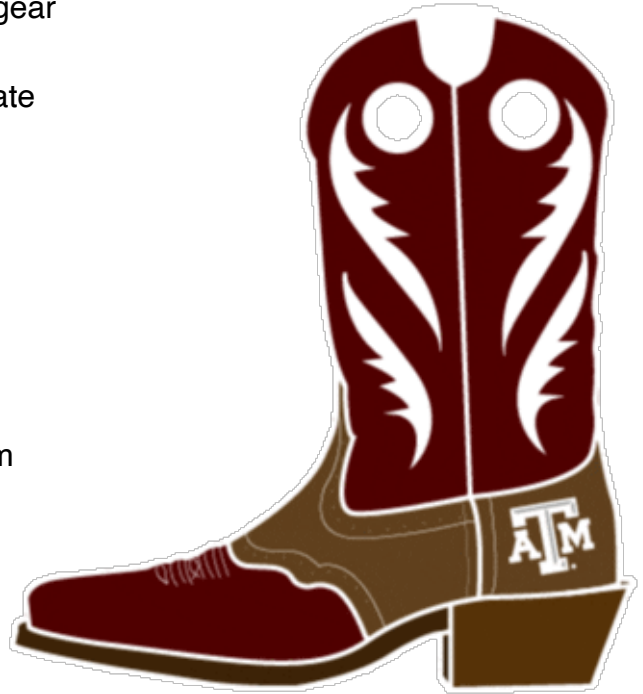
# THINGS TO SEE & DO IN AGGIELAND

## Off Campus:

- The Warehouse & Maroon U - t-shirts and TAMU gear
- Aggieland Outfitters - TAMU gear and gifts
- The Dixie Chicken - bar and restaurant at Northgate
- Downtown Bryan
- Messina Hof Winery
- Museum of the American GI
- Santa's Wonderland (late fall and winter season)

## On Campus:

- The Association of Former Students (The big ring)
- George H. W. Bush Presidential Library & Museum
- Howdy Garden
- Bonfire Memorial
- Cushing Library
- Sanders Corps of Cadets Center



## TAMU Events that are Memorable:

- Any Aggie sporting event
- Midnight Yell Practice - midnight before every football game
- '99 Bonfire Remembrance - November 18th at 2:42 am
- The BIG Event - community-wide service day held each spring
- Muster - April 21st at Reed Arena
- Silver Taps - first Tuesday of the month at 10:30 pm at Academic Plaza
- Pull Out Day (end of soph year) - Aggies becoming upperclassmen who can WHOOP!
- Elephant Walk (end of senior year) - Seniors walk the campus for one last time together.
- Ring Day - 4 times per year

## Links for activities around Bryan/College Station:

- Visit College Station - <https://visit.cstx.gov/food-drink/>
- KBTX News Station - <https://www.kbtx.com/>
- Things to Do - <https://www.thegeorgetexas.com/things-to-do-in-college-station.htm>
- Family Fun - <https://www.texasamhotelcc.com/experience/family-fun-1/>
- Destination Bryan - <https://www.destinationbryan.com/things-to-do/family/>

**\*\*The TAMU website is VERY informative and provides access to all the services, programs, departments, and activities Texas A&M University has to offer.\*\***

**<https://www.tamu.edu/>**