



BETTER ATHLETES
BETTER PEOPLE

Making Up Schoolwork When You Miss Class for Sports

BY LESLEY MARTIN

As a student-athlete you stand a pretty good chance of missing some classes in order to compete in games, meets, and matches. And, the way many school and sports schedules work, you often will miss the same class repeatedly.

This is hard for you AND your teachers. Making sure you stay up to speed on when you are going to miss class and working with your teachers to come up with a plan to make up your work are the key tools to helping you stay on top of your academics during your sports seasons.

TIP #1 - MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO MISS CLASS

Take responsibility for knowing your competition schedule and when you will miss class. Whether your schedule is posted online or on a piece of paper, at the beginning of the season copy it into your planner and add it to your online calendar so that you know when you might miss class. (Some schools have online schedules that you can add to your own online calendar so you don't have to type it in!)

Be sure to note if competitions are home or away, as the latter requires travel that is more likely to result in a missed class (or two). Check your planner/calendar weekly to know your schedule. Some schools have release times included in the schedule and others don't. If yours doesn't, be sure to ask your coach the week before if there will be early release. This will give you plenty of time to make a plan with your teachers for how to address missed classes.

TIP #2 - ESTABLISH A PLAN TO MAKE UP WHAT YOU MISSED IN CLASS

As soon as you know about a class you likely will miss, find a time as soon as possible to talk to your teacher. Missing class is a drag for you (you have to find a time in your already busy schedule to make up the work), but it's also hard for your teachers because they will also need to find a time to help you make up what you missed.

Before or after class (or at an appropriate moment during class) ask your teacher when would be a good time to talk about what you will miss. Don't expect that your teacher will be able to come up with a make-up plan at that moment, but rather make an appointment for the near future during a time that works for both of you (before school, break, lunch, etc.).

TIP #3 - SEE IF YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE CAN ADJUST TO ACCOMMODATE COMPETITION SCHEDULES

Work with your school to see if you can schedule free periods or non-academic classes for the end of the day. This is not an option at every school, but if your school is open to it, communicate with your counselor early in the course-selection process. Another option would be to take a 0 period (I know, early morning classes are brutal) so that you can have your last period of the day available for sports.

By now you should have noticed that all three of these tips rely on your personal responsibility and accountability for knowing what you have to do when...and then doing it!

Lesley Martin is an Academic Success Coach and founder of ClassTracker, a company that makes planners for students and schools. She's authored two books geared towards student success: Where's My Stuff and Make the Grade. Her latest product, The Ultimate Student Planner by ClassTracker is designed specifically to help students manage their hectic lives.