

# Freshman year: What I did wrong

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When I was in high school, there was nothing I looked forward to more than going to college. I always joke that I was ready to move out when I was 14. With years of great expectations under my belt, I was brutally snapped back into reality when I stepped foot onto campus my freshman year. My eager attitude slowly dimmed with every lonely meal at the dining hall. The life I longed for was escaping me. As a junior, I look back at my freshman self in pity. She had no idea what she was doing. I like to think if she had this advice, freshman year may have gone a little smoother.

## *Applied to too few schools*

Before even starting college, I remember there being a lot of stress surrounding getting into one. Luckily, I did end up getting into my first choice, but if I could go back, I would certainly widen my application pool to spare the pressure. I applied to only three schools, and when I did not get into one of my fall-backs, it sent me down a spiral. My advice would be to apply everywhere that is remotely of interest. Having more options will make the waiting period a little more manageable. Without an application fee, Baylor made it easy to apply. It was one less thing to think about during that busy time.

## *Roomed with someone I knew*

My freshman year, I lived with my cousin. Don't get me wrong, we are still super close, but I was too comfortable with her. We did everything together freshman year, meaning we were content only being with each other. Any time we would have an argument or one of us was busy, the other was left completely alone. I wish I had considered living with a stranger. Although many of us have heard horror stories about random roommates, the way I see it, at least a bad roommate will force you to make your own friends. If you get a good random roommate, you most likely won't be tied at the hip and will still have the opportunity to make friends. Baylor offers a great roommate matching tool that was so fun to look through. Even though I roomed with my cousin, it provided a list of people I was compatible with that I ended up reaching out to.

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## *Disqualified myself*

Baylor offers countless ways to get plugged in. From clubs to campus jobs, there is something everyone will enjoy. My fatal mistake was disqualifying myself from joining these things because I did not think I was good enough. I opted out of joining clubs I thought looked cool because I did not know anyone, and I opted out of applying to campus jobs because I told myself I did not have enough experience. The truth is, no one has a lot of friends or work experience their freshman year. Instead of automatically assuming how situations will play out, say yes to everything.

## *Spent too much time in my room*

I have always been a homebody, and I pride myself on the ability to curate a space I feel safe in. Although a dorm room should be an oasis, it should not be the place students spend most of their time. I was embarrassed to eat alone, so I would often take food back to the dorm and eat there. I was embarrassed to study alone, so I would study at my desk. By staying in my dorm all day, I was limiting myself. Not only did this make it hard to find friends, but I developed a bad seasonal depression. Instead, I should have gone outside, said hello to strangers and been unafraid to look like I was alone.

Freshman year does not have to look like mine did. Although I implemented these tips a little later than I should have, college life has improved immensely since then. The first year of college can be isolating, but I suggest to embrace the lonely moments. No one knows what they're doing, so it is okay to be a little clueless too.

## **About Baylor University:**

The mission of Baylor University is to educate men and women for worldwide leadership and service by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment within a caring community.