

## **THINGS THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE YESTERDAY (OR AT LEAST BEFORE JULY)**

1. Be sure offer of admission has been accepted -- return green postal card.
2. Convince your new cadet to RUN, RUN, RUN and then RUN some more. Also have your new cadet follow the recommendations for preparing physically for West Point as stated in the Fact Sheet, "How to physically prepare for Cadet Basic Training," which your youngster received.
3. Purchase items needed for Reception Day (R-Day). Travel light -- small bag. Bringing one bag means the new cadet will need to fill out only one baggage tag and have only one bag to carry around and keep up with during the initial in-processing. Check the "Information for New Cadets and Parents" booklet for needed items to take to West Point. New cadets should also consider taking the following items:
  - a. Razor -- electric and/or battery operated (optional, but a good item to have, in addition to a regular razor & blades)
  - b. Sturdy, inexpensive watch
  - c. Alarm clock -- battery operated
  - d. Small penlight (mini-mag) flashlight with extra batteries
  - e. Rubbing alcohol to remove lacquer finish from brass
  - f. Soft, lint-free cloth for shining shoes (a very old T-shirt and several old handkerchiefs come in handy for shoes & brass)
  - g. An old toothbrush for cleaning and applying polish around the soles of shoes.
  - h. Supply of self-addressed stamped envelopes with a piece of stationery in each.
  - i. Fingernail brush.
  - j. Leatherman tool (multipurpose tool)-cadets will be calling for one during Beast if they don't already have one!
4. Buy your new cadet two pair of plain black leather shoes and two pair of combat boots as prescribed in instructions, which your new cadet received. Your new cadet should **break these shoes and boots in** before leaving for West Point - and that doesn't mean just wearing them between the refrigerator and the TV! **Having well broken-in shoes and boots is very important.**
5. Consider a computer printer for the family's graduation gift to your youngster. Don't purchase it now. Let your cadet buy it at West Point through the facilities there just before academics start. Once your cadet gets into the academic program, the printer will be appreciated. Purchasing it at West Point will save you tax and shipping charges, and only your cadet will know the type to buy.

**YESTERDAY (1)**

## **THINGS THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE YESTERDAY (OR AT LEAST BEFORE JULY)**

6. Complete paper work requirements for West Point. The final high school (eighth semester) transcript or final college transcript must be forwarded to West Point. Keep copies - paperwork does get lost.
7. Decide whether or not you will accompany your son to West Point for "R-Day" Monday 2 July.
  - a. For those traveling from South Texas with their son/daughter, make arrangements to stay near West Point on Sunday, 1 July. A very short drive and arriving early Monday is very important in getting your son/daughter in the reception process as soon as possible. (Note: New Cadets are instructed to arrive at 6:30, 7:30 or 8:30 depending on the last number of their Social Security Number. This procedure is to stagger the number arriving at any one time. However, getting in line early will give your youngster a jump on in-processing.). This will allow your son/daughter more time to arrange their new equipment and uniforms and begin adjusting to the stress of initial requirements.
  - b. For those flying with their son/daughter to the New York/ New Jersey area, it is recommended that flight reservations be made with Carlson Wagonlit, the travel agency at West Point. If you can beat the Carlson Wagonlit's price for you and your son/daughter's travel costs with an airline or other travel agency, go for it. However, your son/daughter will only be reimbursed for his/her Carlson Wagonlit (government authorized) price of the air fare.
  - c. For new cadets traveling alone to West Point, every effort will be made to schedule them on the same flight to Newark. Use the hotel/travel package offered by Carlson Wagonlit. This package has proven to be the most economical and assured way to get a new cadet traveling alone to West Point at the right time and right place.
  - d. Contact your Parents Club or Admissions representative regarding your travel decisions as soon as possible. If your son/daughter is traveling alone, contact should be made before making travel arrangements with Carlson Wagonlit.
8. Don't forget to encourage your son/daughter to RUN, RUN, RUN, and RUN some more!
9. RELAX!

## JUNE

1. Attend the Welcome Picnic on Saturday, June 2 at 3:30 p.m. Pavilion #2 at USAA grounds and join the Parent's Club.
2. Make reservations for "R-Day" if you are going to accompany your cadet to West Point.
3. Complete application for a major credit card for cadet. While this is OPTIONAL, it is good for the cadet to have in emergency situations. Your cadet may receive coupons for reduced air fare.
4. Get your cadet a telephone credit card and/or get an 800 number for your home.
5. Re-read Information for New Cadets/Parents and West Point Parents Almanac and Instructions for Candidates Offered Admission. Plan to keep these publications at home. They'll serve as great references, and your cadet won't need them at West Point.
6. Continue to encourage your cadet to RUN, RUN, RUN, and then RUN some more.
7. Check to be sure that West Point has received all necessary paperwork.
8. Plan an informal farewell for your cadet with family/friends.
9. Purchase tissues, you'll need them the day your cadet leaves and on many occasions thereafter.
10. Make hotel/motel reservations for future visits to West Point if not already made.
  - a. Labor Day weekend -- very good time to visit West Point and New York
  - b. Weekends during football season.
  - c. Plebe/Parent Weekend (12 – 15 October – plan to arrive Thursday 11 October)

**JUNE (1)**

## **JUNE**

11. Prepare yourself and your cadet for the stress of "R-Day" -- one of three particularly stressful days in the first two months.
12. Make sure your cadet is breaking in both the new shoes and boots. It will cut down on blisters and foot injuries.
13. Start collecting comics, jokes, and trivia your cadet might enjoy. Humor added to your cards, letters, or email helps a lot. Ask friends, teachers, church members, etc to write.
14. LAST MINUTE REMINDERS AND CHECKS:
  - a. Insure that your cadet has packed the dental records and any other paperwork or records requested by West Point.
  - b. Remind your cadet to keep the airline ticket stub and any other travel/lodging receipts for reimbursement later at West Point.
  - c. Don't forget to bring your black shoes to R-day!!!!

## **JULY**

1. Send lots of mail, at first it's their only link with home. Don't expect much mail in return; they're too busy to write.
2. Don't expect many telephone calls. Your cadet can call only when his/her squad leader gives permission. This varies from squad to squad. The first call will probably be during the 4th of July Weekend. Your cadet will have a limited time to talk (usually 10 minutes maximum). Let the cadet do the talking. You do the listening. If you can, record this first phone call, it's a keeper.
3. Refrain from sending treats -- not even a stick of gum -- until your cadet tells you that food packages are allowed. This will probably be mid-August.
4. REMEMBER -- you know your cadet better than anyone else. Listen to what he/she says. Each new cadet will have different kinds of concerns. Other parents may offer suggestions on different ways to solve a problem, but you know better than anyone which method might be most effective.
5. Talk with parents of other cadets for moral support.
6. Think about purchasing a speakerphone.
  - a. Enables your cadet to speak to everyone at once -- doesn't have to repeat stories.
  - b. Allows phone conversations to be recorded so that family members not present can listen later.
7. Purchase an answering machine if you don't have one already. Consider leaving a message on the machine that you will accept "collect calls from your cadet at West Point."
8. Keep a pen and paper by the phone to record any requests made by your cadet. Make notes of things you intend to discuss with your cadet.
9. Give the Parent's Club your cadet's address along with company letter, platoon number and squad number.

**JULY (1)**

## **JULY**

10. Check with your car insurance agent to determine if your cadet should be removed from the policy.
  
11. Prepare yourself for a "downer" communication after the change in leadership midway through Beast -- around the end of July. This is the second particularly stressful day.
  
12. Don't do anything that will draw attention to your cadet. The cadet wants to keep a low profile during Beast. If you have concerns, call your Plebe Parent coordinator or any person listed in the Parent's Club roster. Calling the TAC Officer should be reserved for very serious matters, family emergencies, etc. Call someone locally first if you're in doubt.
  
13. If you have medical insurance covering your son/daughter, it is strongly recommended that the policy be maintained while he/she is a cadet. Cadets receive complete medical care free while serving as cadets; however, a medical condition could occur which would preclude the issuance of medical insurance at a later date, if needed.

**JULY (2)**

## AUGUST

1. Keep sending notes of encouragement.
2. Remember you will hear the worst from your cadet. You are their outlet for all the frustrations. Most times your cadet will feel much better after the phone call while you will feel worse. Do not hit the panic button if your cadet mentions quitting at this point. During these conversations, practice the techniques given below:
  - A. Be a good listener. Encourage the use of humor to get through the tough times.
  - B. Be positive.**
  - C. Be understanding.
  - D. Be encouraging.
  - E. Be empathetic.
  - F. Don't ask how he/she likes it. Postpone this question for about 20 years.
3. Talk to other cadet parents for moral support.
4. Attend all Parent's Club meetings. There will be a meeting about this time with the Plebe Parent Coordinator to share experiences.
5. Watch for airline specials. There's a three-day weekend in September (Labor Day) and a three-day weekend in October (Columbus Day). Your cadet may want to use a pass to come home one of those weekends. A home cooked meal and familiar bed may be appealing.
6. August 13<sup>th</sup> is the March Back from CBT and August 18 is A-Day (Acceptance into the Corps of Cadets). Both great times for parents to visit if they can make it (you won't get to visit with your Plebe after the March Back but just seeing him/her coming back from CBT is a great experience — you can plan on having some time with your Plebe after A-Day ceremonies). If you go to see either event, plan on arriving the day prior to be there early for the March Back or for the A –Day parade ceremony.
7. Prepare to send a "boodle box" (snack items). The first box should include an airtight container to hold future boodle. Boodle is very important to cadets. Usually the first one can be sent at the end of Beast Barracks.
8. Send any parcel via USPS so that the package goes directly to your cadet's assigned company. See the Handbook, page 11, for the address you

**AUGUST (1)**

## AUGUST

you should use to send packages. Can order flat rate boxes (11 x 8.5x 5.5) or small boxes (7 x 7 x 6) at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) free of charge. Postage for flat rate box is \$8.10 and both of these are good for boodle!

9. Send one set of "civilian clothes" IF your cadet requests them.

10. Prepare for another "downer" communication -- reorganization is immediately after Beast. This is the third day that is particularly stressful. Upperclassmen return. The ratio is now three upperclassmen for each lowly Plebe.

11. Encourage your cadet frequently. Classes begin creating stress of another type. Thayer method instruction is utilized -- study/ application first with explanation later -- a unique approach that creates frustration until adjustment can be made. This is when your cadet learns the most efficient way to manage time. Homework is done before the class, not after. The cadet should be prepared before the first day.

12. The best answer to the question on how your cadet is doing is, "He/she is still there." That in itself is a major accomplishment

13. Look for West Point Society of South Texas flyers in the mail. This is the local group of graduates. All parents of cadets are given free membership in the local society. The WPSST conducts many functions during the year, and parents are certainly welcome to attend. The annual fall picnic and Founder's Day celebration in the spring in San Antonio are attended by many parents.

**AUGUST (2)**

## SEPTEMBER

1. Your cadet may be able to take a pass for the Labor Day weekend and come home. If not, you may choose to visit West Point.
  - a. Talk with your cadet **before** making specific plans. Each cadet's schedule can vary and may include unexpected duties or disciplinary activities.
  - b. Remember cadets are ultimately responsible for their plans and you may want to let them make their own reservations.
2. Expect to see a changed person -- a weight loss may have occurred.
3. Be sure your cadet has registered to vote. Telephone the County Clerk's office to learn of any upcoming elections and the procedure for requesting an application for absentee ballot. Cadets are made aware of national elections, but there may be local elections where the cadet would like to have a voice in the outcome.
4. **Be** attuned to your cadet during visits. Let your cadet gauge how much he/she wants to do. Do not ask your cadet to spend every minute with you. Give him/her a break now and then. Most cadets will sleep a lot during their passes either at home or in your hotel if you visit West Point.
5. **Be** prepared for a "let down" feeling after seeing your cadet. It's NATURAL!
6. Make hotel/motel reservations for Plebe/Parent Week (12-15 Oct.) if you have not already done so. Most of the local facilities will already be filled. Cadet may be permitted to go within a 50 miles radius during this time period. Your plebe will need to arrange for tickets in advance for certain events:
  - a. Tour of Quarters 100 - Superintendent's House
  - b. Banquet
  - c. Formal dance
  - d. Special performances
  - e. Any meals at the Cadet Mess
7. Mentor (sponsor) assignments are being made. Encourage your cadet to accept invitations to visit in the homes of these sponsors. This provides a welcome and needed place for some relaxation. Visits with the sponsor usually include a meal; therefore, thank you notes from your cadet to the sponsor after a visit are always appreciated.

## **SEPTEMBER**

8. Keep up with the football games. All extra-curricular activities play a big part in the cadet's educational experience; however, the football games, in particular, serve as good conversation starters.
9. Attending church is another good outlet for your cadet -- time for visiting and doughnuts.



# OCTOBER

1. Attending Plebe/Parent Weekend is a MUST if you can afford it. Have a great time with your cadet as they run the Corps. Do and see as much as you can of West Point. Your cadet will let you know their boundaries.
2. Share pictures and stories of Plebe/Parent Weekend with other parents.
3. Continue to send notes of encouragement to your cadet. If you receive comments in letters or phone calls about academic problems, strongly suggest that your cadet take advantage of Additional Instruction (AI). Help is there, and it is readily available.
4. Encourage your cadet to join clubs than may be of interest. These clubs frequently have weekend field trips that provide the cadet with an opportunity to "get away." Looking forward to special times away from post sometimes helps.
5. Send your cadet a list of names of South Texas area cadets (all classes). It will help to start conversations and therefore make the West Point experience more positive. Check WPPC website at [www.west-point.org/parent/wpcc-south-texas](http://www.west-point.org/parent/wpcc-south-texas) or [www.westpointcadets.org](http://www.westpointcadets.org)
6. Begin making plans for Thanksgiving. If the airline expense is too much for your budget, your cadet may want to visit friends and/or relatives in that area for Turkey Day--Christmas leave is usually two to three weeks later and the airlines have been more expensive at Thanksgiving than any other time of the year. If your cadet is coming home:
  - a. Check with your cadet before making flight arrangements. Have cadet confirm times with his/her chain of command.
  - b. Remember that policies change--your cadet must know the current policy.
  - c. Schedule flights leaving ample time for ground transportation as well as other unexpected delays.
7. To plan for Christmas leave, ask your cadet for his/her final exam schedule and details regarding dismissal from duties and time for reporting back, so that flight arrangements can be made. Cadet needs to call you as soon as the schedule is released. In scheduling the return flight, schedule the first flight out that day. Moving into a new room will need to be done after arrival. The earlier the arrival, the better prepared the cadet can be for resuming cadet activities. Cadets will know well before their Christmas leave the date by which they must be back. Normally they must be present not later than 6:00 p.m. on that date.
8. Try to watch any televised Army Football games or attend if within close driving range.
9. Watch for West Point Society of South Texas and West Point Parent's Club functions.

## NOVEMBER

1. Set your video recorder for and/or make plans to watch the **Army/Air Force football game** with other West Point parents (Saturday, November 3rd).
2. Thanksgiving Leave is 22 — 25 November. If your cadet is coming home, let your cadet's mood dictate your plans. Your cadet may just want to spend "quiet" time at home. He/she will notice every change in the home so avoid major remodeling before your cadet's first visit home.
3. Discuss plans for the All Academies Ball/Dinner Dance to be held during Christmas leave--an event sponsored yearly by the local area Parent's Clubs of one of the academies (This year is West Point's turn to host).
4. Continue sending notes of encouragement. Army/Navy football week is special with rallies, a bonfire, the send-off of the team, and the travel to the Army/Navy football game. This is a must see at least once during your cadet's time at the Academy. The game is also televised on local television stations. It's a thrill to see Army beat the hell out of Navy! (Hopefully this year!)
5. Get Christmas gift ideas from your cadet. Plebes are allowed stereos after Christmas, so CD players and CDs are popular. Of course, money is always a welcomed gift. Something that your cadet hasn't experienced yet is the need for Lycra or spandex thermal underwear, but it will be a requested item by mid-December (the preferred color is black). A piece of carry-on wheeled luggage is a useful gift. For food items, you might consider: McDonald's gift certificates, a "boodle-of-the-month" subscription from a West Point vendor or a line of (limited) credit at a Highland Falls restaurant. Since all cadet rooms are permitted one coffee maker, one electric iron and one hot water pot, what your cadet's newly assigned roommate(s) (beginning in January) don't have of those items, might be a consideration for a gift.

## DECEMBER

1. Set your video recorder for and make plans to watch the **Army/Navy football game** with other West Point parent's (Saturday, December 1st).
2. Make reservations for the All-Academies Ball –This year's Ball is scheduled for December 28 tentatively. Plan to attend with your cadet if at all possible as this is a great way for cadets/midshipmen from all five service academies, their dates, and families to have a wonderful time together.
  - A. Tell your son to bring his Full Dress uniform and your daughter to bring her Dress Mess (long skirt).
  - B. Details of the Ball will be announced in the newsletter. NOTE: This year is the West Point Parent's Club's turn to sponsor the Ball; you are encouraged to be part of the planning and program of the evening.
  - C. Parents, family, and friends may attend. Get your reservations in EARLY!
3. Encourage cadets to attend the orientation sponsored by the West Point Society and the USMA Admissions Office for prospective cadets and their parents. This is an annual event for our more competitive candidates in South Texas. Our local cadets who attend the orientation provide a great service in meeting with the candidates and talking about their West Point experiences.
4. Remember: Cadets have been assigned new roommates for the spring semester.

# JANUARY

1. Be aware that this is the beginning of the "gloom" period and your cadet may experience an emotional roller coaster.
2. Understand that adjusting to new roommates may be causing additional stress for your cadet.
3. Prepare to receive a letter from the West Point Fund requesting a donation to the special activities of the cadets. You are not required to make a donation or pledge. The letter will be followed up by a telephone call. Be prepared to give a response. Making a donation is OPTIONAL.
4. It's Super Bowl time. Your cadet's mentor (sponsor) will most likely have a Super Bowl party.
5. Be on the lookout for special airline fares. President's Day may be another time your cadet may want to take advantage of a pass for a trip home, so some Cadets who have the ability to leave West Point for the long weekend go home. Be aware, however, arranging for your cadet to come home for the long weekend, may result in two days worth of travel, and one day at home with you. This is seldom a good plan for a tired cadet. Some Parents find that it is a better solution for them to travel to West Point, and use that weekend to visit with their cadet, while allowing him/her some badly needed R & R and good meals out on the town.
6. Replenish "boodle" box.
7. Check airline fares and schedules for Spring Break. Cadets may depart after their last class or duty on Friday 14 March. Their Spring Break is currently scheduled for 14 - 24th March.

# FEBRUARY

1. Remember: Everything's "gray" at this time of the year. Keep up the encouraging words. Looking forward to Spring Break may help.
2. Remember the "boodle" box.
3. Keep up with the correspondence.
4. President's Weekend is February 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>.

# **MARCH**

1. Recognition Day - a highlight! Be ready for an exuberant phone call! Special ceremony for cadets and TAC officers only.
2. Class crest is unveiled.
3. Have a Great Spring Break! Cadets may depart after their duty Friday 14 March.

## **APRIL**

1. Continue encouragement. Academics are in full swing. Suggest your cadet take advantage of Additional Instruction (AI) as needed.
2. The APFT (Army Physical Fitness Test) is being administered throughout the month - perhaps earlier or later for athletes. Passing the APFT annually is a requirement. It consists of doing push-ups, sit-ups, and a two-mile run within a given time limit. This is very hard and very important.
3. Check with your cadet before making flight arrangements for summer leave. Cadets must remain at West Point until after graduation exercises have been concluded. Permission to leave early is not granted - even if it is for the purpose of attending the high school graduation of a sibling.
4. Keep up with the writing and "boodle" box replenishment.
5. Participate in talking with prospective cadets and their parents to assist them in making their transitions easier

# MAY

1. Keep your cadet focused. Making summer plans can be exciting; however, academics must come first.
2. Send notes of encouragement. Exam time is tough.
3. Consider sending a "survival kit" to help get your cadet through those cram sessions for exams. These can be ordered from several sources.
4. Breathe a sigh of relief - your cadet has survived Plebe year!

## JUNE

1. Encourage your cadet to allocate some time during summer break for the Welcome Picnic for the next class of new Plebes. New cadets need the advice that can only come from someone who has just experienced life as a Plebe.
2. Be aware that your cadet may be required to take a class in summer school if academics are not up to par. Don't be discouraged. Your cadet won't be the first one who's done this and certainly will not be the last.
3. Give that cadet of yours lots of hugs and kisses. Enjoy the positive changes that you see in your cadet.
4. Provide ample "rack" time.
5. Be unselfish. Your cadet is probably more eager to spend time with friends than with you. He/she may even want to go visit with some new West Point friend(s).

## ANNEX HOTEL/MOTEL LIST

<b>Mileage to West Point</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>City, State, Zip</b>	<b>Phone</b>	
0	Hotel Thayer	West Point, NY 10996	800-247-5047	
0	Five Star Inn	West Point, NY 10996	845-446-5943	845-938-6816
01	West Point Motel	Highland Falls, NY 10928	888-349-6788	845-446-4180
01	Econolodge	Highland Falls, NY 10928	877-424-6423	845-446-9400
03	Bear Mt. Bridge Motel	Ft. Montgomery, NY 10922	845-446-2472	
03	Holiday Inn Express	Ft. Montgomery, NY 10922	800-315-2621	845-446-4277
06	Bear Mountain Inn	Bear Mountain, NY 10911	845-786-2731	
07	EconoLodge	New Windsor, NY 12550	877-424-6423	845-561-6620
07	Peekskill Inn	Peekskill, NY 10566	800-526-9466	914-739-1500
10	Days Inn	New Windsor, NY 12553	800-329-7466	845-656-7550
10	Super 8 Motel	Newburgh, NY 12550	800-800-8000	845-564-5700
11	Howard Johnson	Newburgh, NY 12550	800-446-4656	845-564-4000
12	Comfort Inn	Newburgh, NY 12550	877-424-6423	845-567-0567
12	Marriott Courtyard	Newburgh, NY 12550	800-321-2211	845-567-4800
12	Hampton Inn	Newburgh, NY 12550	800-426-7866	845-567-9100
17	Best Western Nyack	Nyack, NY 10960	800-780-7234	845-358-8100
20	Comfort Inn	Nanuet, NY 10954	877-424-6423	845-623-6000
20	Holiday Inn Express	Fishkill, NY 12524	800-315-2621	845-883-7373
20	Holiday Inn	Fishkill, NY 12524	800-315-2621	845-896-6281
20	Marriott Residence Inn	Fishkill, NY 12524	800-331-3131	845-896-5210
20	Marriott Courtyard	Fishkill, NY 12524	800-321-2211	845-897-2400
20	Hilton Pearl River	Pearl River, NY 10965	800-445-8667	845-735-9000

## NOTES