



Lee Burgess: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today we're talking about 10 things to consider when getting ready for your first year of law school. Your Law School Toolbox hosts are Alison Monahan and Lee Burgess, that's me. We're here to demystify the law school and early legal career experience, so you'll be the best law student and lawyer you can be. We're the co-creators of the [Law School Toolbox](#), the [Bar Exam Toolbox](#), and the career-related website [CareerDicta](#). Alison also runs [The Girl's Guide to Law School](#). If you enjoy the show, please leave a review or rating on your favorite listening app. And if you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can reach us via the [contact form](#) on LawSchoolToolBox.com, and we'd love to hear from you. And with that, let's get started.

Alison Monahan: Hi, it's Alison from the Law School Toolbox. Today we're talking about 10 things to consider when getting ready for your first year of law school. Well, the summer before law school can be exciting, but it is definitely stressful. Lee, how did you spend the summer before you went to law school?

Lee Burgess: Well, I was working for a lot of it, so I didn't have a ton of time. I did want to work because I wanted to save as much money as I could. I did move in May before law school into the place where I was going to be throughout law school. So, one of the jobs I had was getting my life set up while I was working. I tried to read books about law school, but not books on how to do law school. I read books like 1L and like kind of trashy books, which I found somewhat entertaining. And then I went to Costa Rica for a vacation for 10 days.

Alison Monahan: That sounds nice.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. I don't know that was what I should have been doing, but that's what I did.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I definitely did not take a vacation. I was also working and I had to move across the country, so there was a lot of packing boxes and trying to figure out what I was going to pay to move. And yeah, basically I just finished my job and sent all the stuff via FedEx or whatever it was, and got on a flight and landed in New York City, and there I was with like a few days to set everything up. So, it was kind of a lot.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I think it can be a lot. I think working on this list of things to consider, I was kind of reflecting and thinking maybe I could have done a better job of getting things set up.



Alison Monahan: True. At least I guess I had, maybe it wasn't even a week, maybe I had three or four days, because I was living in university housing in New York and so we couldn't move in super early. But I do recall I had at least maybe half a week or so. And one of my new roommates and I went to the Bed Bath & Beyond or whatever it was in New York City. She'd been living in New York, so she at least knew some things. I didn't even know how to use the subway at that point. So, definitely there was a lot of trying to figure out the city, and where things were, and how you got there, and how the subway operated, and all that kind of stuff before I started thinking about classes.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, that makes sense. Well, let's dive into what we think you should do. Maybe not exactly what we did, but things to think about when getting ready for your first year of law school. So, anyone who listens to the podcast is not going to be surprised that my number one thing on my list of 10 things was to get organized, because you and I are so much more organized now than I think we were back then, even though we didn't know each other.

Alison Monahan: For sure. I think you were probably always more organized than I was, and I was organized in certain ways. I was always a day planner type of person, so I did have some organizational capacity, but I definitely have a lot more now.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. So, it's time to invest in some sort of planning, planner, calendar system. You've got to stay on top of all of these tasks that are coming down the pipe for you – so, readings, assignments, other commitments, meetings. This may be different from your work life, which may be a bit more standardized. So, if you don't have a system, it's time to look at some of them and test them out. We have a great [episode on executive functioning](#) where we talk about certain systems, but I do think it's time to evaluate how you track things to see if you need to change what you're doing. You may also want to think about systems for note-taking and outlining, how you're going to organize all your documents. Are you going to use Dropbox or Google Drive? Spending some time thinking about that as well, I think can help you when it comes time to start implementing everything. You need to look at how you're going to run your calendar, track tasks, keep track of life things like bills. I mean, you need a system. If you don't have a system, it's not a great time to just fly by the seat of your pants.

Alison Monahan: No, it's really not, because things start coming at you really fast. And I think one thing that trips people up a lot is, a lot of stuff in law school is still done with email. And I know a lot of people are not kind of used to managing a lot of email, they're not really into email. I totally get that. But Career Services is probably not going to be texting you important information; they're going to



send you an email about it. So, I think that's something that people should be aware of. And I totally agree with you, that the better your systems, the easier all of this is going to be. And you don't want to be having stuff fall through the cracks and then missing out on opportunities because you forgot to do something.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And you're living in a city maybe you've never lived before. Different types of lifestyles – whether you live in a city or you live in a more suburban environment – require different things. If you are in a major city, you need some sort of bus transportation pass, which is its own thing. And there're logistics around that. You don't want to not be able to get to school because you don't have a valid bus pass. I mean, it seems silly to think about all of these things, but they do take quite a bit of time to get everything situated.

Alison Monahan: Definitely. And the more you can do that beforehand and just do your research and be ready to go when you show up wherever it is you're showing up to, the better.

Lee Burgess: Alright. Number two on my top 10 list is to consider a [study routine](#). So, not shocking to anyone, law school requires an immense amount of reading and preparation. And if you've been out of school, especially for a bit, you may not really know off the top of your head when and where you're going to study best and what your routine might be, so you might want to spend some time, because it used to be maybe you were a night owl, but now that you've had a typical job, maybe now you realize you're really productive in the mornings. I mean, things can shift, so you need to spend some time thinking about this. And if you're setting up a new home for yourself, you may want to consider whether you have a workstation in your house, a desk, a study area. I just studied at my kitchen table, which had very uncomfortable chairs that I bought off of Craigslist. I wouldn't recommend that as a solution.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. One of the things my roommate and I bought was a really cheap Ikea dining table and four chairs that I think we paid maybe a couple of hundred dollars for the whole thing. Very uncomfortable, but that is basically where I did most of my law school reading, and I always did it at night. So, the fact that it was kind of uncomfortable might have been a good idea, because it probably kept me awake.

Lee Burgess: That's true, yeah. You may also want to check out different study locations. Let's say you've located to the place where you are going to be in school and you like to study in coffee shops. Go try them out. Take a book, see where you think you



want to be. I think it can be comforting to know that you have your spots that you can return to, and there's no reason why you have to wait for school starting to do that sort of stuff.

Alison Monahan: No. And as soon as you get access to campus, you can also start checking out libraries there. So, the place I was in school had amazing libraries and I hardly ever went to the law library, because I found it too stressful and counterproductive for me to be in there, unless I was actively doing research. I did not want to study there, but I would go to the Architecture library, the Undergraduate library. They had these beautiful buildings, I just found it helpful to be able to cycle through them so I didn't get so bored.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, that makes sense. I used to study at the medical school at UCSF because they had a very beautiful library. And it was never crowded because medical students don't really study in the library. They sleep in the library – that's what they did in the library.

Alison Monahan: Interesting. Yeah, Teachers College at Columbia had a really nice new library at the time and it was pretty unoccupied, and I remember they had fantastic chairs, so I started going there a lot.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. See, it all comes down to the chairs. You have to have good chairs. Maybe that should have been on my list – think about the type of chair you're going to be sitting in.

Alison Monahan: To be fair, you do probably want to invest in some type of desk chair that is not going to give you carpal tunnel.

Lee Burgess: That's true, yeah. Or in some sort of workstation. I've got a laptop riser with multiple books underneath it to get it to the right height on my desk.

Alison Monahan: Same.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I mean, you got to get creative. Well, number three, along the lines of making sure you have a good desk chair, is you have to [take care of yourself](#). And if you haven't been taking great care of yourself while you've been working, it is a really good time to try and think about what you need to do to take care of yourself, because law school is extremely demanding. So, when you think about all the tasks you are going to take on, you want to think about how you're going to make time for exercise, you want to eat some healthy food. You're



going to end up eating a lot of pizza at law school. So much pizza. You want to make sure you have some sleep hygiene and some leisure activities that you like to do to avoid burnout. The other thing you have to think about is all the time you spend going to personal appointments. This week I had a doctor's appointment, I had a chiropractor appointment. I'm trying to get a bunch of stuff done before summertime, and you start to realize that this stuff really adds up – you go to the dentist, you go to all of these things, and you definitely don't want to be missing school to do those things. It's much better to do them over the summer if you can, to not add to your to-do list when you are at school.

Alison Monahan: Definitely. You may have better health insurance now that you could use to knock some of this stuff out. Maybe you have dental insurance or maybe you have eye insurance that you might not have as a student. So, definitely look at that, take advantage, make sure you get refills on everything and all this stuff. And if you're going to need new practitioners, that's also something you could be researching in advance, because oftentimes it's hard to find people.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, and there can be a wait to get in, especially if you're not using your Student Health Center. So, it is probably a good idea to think about that ahead, especially if you do have prescriptions that you're going to need somebody to connect with. Great time to get blood work, up your supplement game. Just get it all done! All done before school.

Alison Monahan: Again, get that plan in place.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, you want a good solid immune system going into school. I got the flu my first year of law school; it was miserable. Oh my gosh, it was terrible. Alright, so you're feeding yourself good food, you figured out how you're going to do something recreational. Another thing to think about is making sure you have some [professional clothing in your closet](#), depending on what you've been doing for your job before law school, if you've had a job. You may not have legal-type professional clothing in your closet, and that's kind of a problem.

Alison Monahan: It is. We're going to be releasing some podcasts either very soon, or we just did – we're not sure. Right around the time that this is coming out, we're also going to be putting out some content around what to wear, which I think is a question lots and lots of people have. And I do think the summer is a great time to start thinking or even executing on, "What would I wear if I had to go do an interview? What would I wear to a networking event at the bar association?" These are things that you probably are going to be called upon to do at some point in your first few months, and it's a lot easier and usually a lot cheaper to



take care of this beforehand so that you're not just having to walk into a store and be like, "Oh my gosh, I need something right away. I'll pay whatever." You might be able to go on Poshmark or get consignment options. There are lots and lots of options now, and thinking through that in advance and having it ready to go is going to make sure you're not missing out on opportunities.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, and for both women and men, which typically have somewhat different clothing norms, you can't forget that you also have all the accessories. You need to make sure you have the appropriate shoes, and that means the appropriate types of socks, and the appropriate bag to carry stuff with you. You probably don't want to walk into a networking event with your school backpack. If you're at a fancy place, you probably want a folio or some sort of shoulder bag that's not necessarily from like a Sports Basement, which is where we would buy these bags in the Bay Area. So, you kind of have to think about that kind of stuff. What jewelry do you have that is appropriate to wear, if you wear jewelry? So I think it is really worth thinking, "I need a couple of these outfits." You don't need a ton of them; you just need a couple. Nobody will remember what you wear; they will just remember if you aren't appropriately dressed for the event.

Alison Monahan: Right. So, definitely check out all the other people I've talked with recently about this. They have some great tips. But I do think getting something that you can put on and look and feel basically like an aspiring lawyer is going to help you.

Lee Burgess: Yes. The fifth tip I wanted to discuss was something we've talked about on the podcast as well, is this idea that you should read something demanding. Because you're going to do a lot of reading, like a lot. And reading fluffy, fun things – which I'm reading a great memoir right now, which is super fun and you're just tearing through it; all of a sudden you're like, "I'm 80 pages in", because it's just flying through the pages – is very different than reading something dense. And I think sometimes if you only read things for fun that you can fly through, it can be so daunting to open a casebook and realize how slow and deliberate that reading is. And so, it might be a nice time to get something a little bit dense. It doesn't have to be a legally dense work; just something that you're going to have to plod through a little bit to get used to it. And remember that sometimes reading is slow and difficult and not always easy.

Alison Monahan: Right. I remember the summer before I went to law school, I did read, there was a big case that came out from the Supreme Court that I was interested in. So I was like, "Oh, this will be great. I'm going to read this opinion before I go to law school and really get up to speed." And it was like a hundred plus pages. I was just like, "Wow, this is really a slog." It took me like half the day to read this



thing. And I was really happy when I got to law school and realized they edit the cases for you, because I was like, "How am I even supposed to do this? This is going to take forever."

Lee Burgess: Yeah, it's so true. So, it's just good to flex those muscles a little bit. Remember that you can read more challenging text.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. And I think it's a good idea to just do something different. This whole experience is going to be different. So, as well as getting up to speed and remembering how to read hard things and focus, I think it's great just to do something different, start to get in a growth mindset. So, something fun – pottery, dance, whatever you want to do, but you're not that good at – just go ahead and do it, because I think that's going to be a great way to set yourself up for law school, which is going to be a whole new experience.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And it can be something you used to like to do. A couple of years ago, I took up tennis again, which is something I hadn't done in longer than I'd like to admit. And it was interesting because I could feel that my brain was tired from making all the judgments about coordinating your body, and you're looking at distance and speed of the ball, and you're anticipating in a different way. And it does remind you that some of these tasks or activities that you pick up, they just do exercise your brain in a different way. And law school is going to exercise your brain in a different way too.

Alison Monahan: Very true. Very true. And I think doing something physical that you can then continue into law school. So something like tennis would be great. I also picked up tennis in the pandemic again after not playing for a very long time. But it was fun. It was something to do, it was social, it got me outside, I got exercise. I guess it's funny because I did take up squash in law school in the New York winters, so I did kind of go to racquet sports. But if you do something, whether it's a running habit or tennis or whatever it might be, pick your poison – but anything you can do and continue, I think would be a great thing to try out this summer.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I agree. It'd be great to look at what leagues there are, or group classes, because if you're worried that some of these activities might become really prohibitively expensive, oftentimes communities have group classes that have series that are not that expensive, or you can pay in a league. I play in a tennis league some seasons and the entry fee is nominal. It's just so that they can give somebody a hundred bucks who wins the event or wins the tournaments or



whatever. But sometimes, it's not prohibitively expensive to participate in these things, even if you're watching your finances.

Alison Monahan: Right. In the gym at my law school, they had classes that were dirt cheap. I took belly dancing, I took some yoga, that's how I did the squash. So, whatever it is, I think look around. I mean, you're a student, you're going to be paying a lot of money to your school, so look to see what they have to offer you, because chances are good they have a lot.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, 100%. Alright, tip number seven is, we definitely want you to spend some time thinking about finances. No one likes to think about money, but money is super important. We have a few podcast episodes out there, specifically one on the Law School Toolbox podcast that we will link to [with the founder of You Need A Budget](#). But if you don't like to think or talk about money, I think you should listen to that podcast because it's not really talking; it's just passively listening. And if you've never created a budget, now's a great time to start thinking about that, and also really understanding what are the consequences of taking out loans and other financial decisions that you're going to have coming down the pipe. So, it's not always fun, but it's good to spend some time thinking about it. And if you're changing from a professional lifestyle to a student lifestyle, it can be a little shocking to the system and the bank account, so you may want to kind of evaluate that a little bit.

Alison Monahan: Right. It's the old saying, "If you live like a lawyer when you're a student, you're going to live like a student when you're a lawyer." So, when you're a student, everyone should be living like a student – if you don't have money, don't spend money. But everybody's kind of in the same boat, so you can get creative. Your friends can come over and hang out, and everybody has a potluck instead of going out to what's probably going to be a very expensive dinner, if you go out in some place like New York City – which I just always felt like it was hemorrhaging money as soon as I stepped out the door. But I do think it's important to really get realistic about, "Okay, what am I borrowing? Do I need to borrow that amount? What am I going to do with that money? How am I going to parcel it out? How am I going to make sure that I don't run out by the end of the semester?" Because the reality is, you're probably not going to be working for much of that first year, so you really have a finite amount of money, essentially, that you have to make last for that semester or that year.

Lee Burgess: I bet You Need A Budget would let you put that in and would magically help you parse that out. I feel like that tool would do that.



Alison Monahan: I'm guessing. I have not looked at it, but based on...

Lee Burgess: It's been a while since I looked at it, but I'm pretty sure.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, based on your interview with him, it seemed like that was something they probably could accommodate for you. Also, Lee, I think you skipped the very important number six.

Lee Burgess: Did I skip one? Oh, I did.

Alison Monahan: Which is kind of a critical one.

Lee Burgess: Oh my goodness. Well, we've got to loop back to that. That shows that if you do a podcast after playing tennis, maybe you're dehydrated and can't follow your own notes. Okay. Alright, so let's get back to number six, which is very important, which is [understanding law school exams](#).

Alison Monahan: We don't want to leave that one.

Lee Burgess: We don't want to leave that out. Alright, why is that important, Alison?

Alison Monahan: Well, Lee, law school exams are kind of an important part of law school. For people who are not so familiar, you will typically have all or most of your grade depend on one exam at the end of the semester, so that is extremely high pressure. It might be two to four hours that determines your grade for the entire course, and it's something that you need to be really thinking about and working towards from day one. Exams are also sort of unique. When you were in undergrad they might have asked you on an exam, "Describe Kant's theory of whatever." And you wrote down that and then you're like, "Okay, cool." And then they're like, "Tell me what Hobbes said about this", and you regurgitate what Hobbes said about that. Law school exams aren't like that. You have to take your knowledge that you've learned and actually apply it to new factual scenarios. So the question in a Torts class might be a very involved hypothetical, describing all these people and all this crazy stuff that's happening, and their dog was killed and their car crashed and a tree fell. The question might just be, "Discuss the liability of the parties." And you're sitting there thinking, "What? I have no idea how to do this." So you need to figure that out early. You need to practice, you need to understand things like IRAC and issue spotting and all this stuff really early on, so that you have some conception of what you're actually doing.



Lee Burgess: Yeah. And if you're not sure where to begin, of course, there are resources. We've even made some. One is called our [Start Law School Right course](#), which walks you through kind of the life cycle of a law school class, so you can understand what's going to be asked of you at each point in this semester, so the first fact pattern you see isn't on some sort of midterm or graded exercise. I think that some things like that, it's not intensive, it's not going to take a ton of time, especially if you're working during the summer. But it can be a little bit of a snack, like you're going to get a taste of what this is going to be like. And some of the things that may feel very unfamiliar, like how to brief a case, how to outline, how to get ready for an exam, what an exam question looks like – it may overall lower your anxiety when you feel like you've seen at least some of this before. So, I do think that it can be a worthwhile thing to spend some time on. You could also read some [books about law school](#). But learning what law school is all about is going to reduce your anxiety and make you feel more prepared.

Alison Monahan: Definitely. And I think it's just that idea of, if you know what the end goal is, you're probably going to be approaching your reading a little differently, your class notes a little differently, so that at the end you have better stuff to work with and you're not kind of scrambling to say, "Oh my gosh, everything I wrote down for the last eight weeks was completely pointless." It's not a great place to be when you're right before exams, and suddenly you realize you have been doing everything incorrectly.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, 100%. Okay, we did number six. Finance was number seven. Now just to anchor everybody, we're now at number eight. We all agree that we're on number eight. Shouldn't have an outline that goes over two pages – clearly, this is very dangerous for me. I mean, we've only done bazillions of episodes at this point. It's amazing, but things happen. Okay, number eight – get familiarized with your school resources. You mentioned that you were only on campus for a few days, but if you knew you were going to have specific needs, I think you probably, from a distance, could have started researching, where's Academic Support and what do they offer? Where's Health Services and what do they offer? Where's Career Services? They're not going to talk to you, but you can at least know they're there. And if you need access to [accommodations](#), you want to also understand who manages that at your university. Is it a university-wide office, or is it just specific to the law school? You want to engage with them, because that's something that you don't need to spend time doing the first couple of weeks of school. You can do that early to make sure you have things set up, especially if you're going to need something like a note-taker or some accommodations at the beginning of the year.



- Alison Monahan: Definitely. Yeah, that's something you do not want to delay on. It might involve getting appointments with a doctor during the summer, getting them to write up something for you. You just want to make sure you're really clear on what they need and what the timeline is, so that when classes start, you have what you need in place to do your best. You don't want to be struggling with that throughout the semester.
- Lee Burgess: Alright, number nine, a little more fun than some of our other lists, is to spend time with friends and family. However – because lawyers always have to have a "but" or "however" – you also need to [set expectations of what the school year is going to be like](#). This can be hard, especially if you don't have friends and family who are familiar with the law school experience. So, you want to have some fun. Like I said, I went on vacation, I spent some time with my best friends, we made some fun memories. But I also wanted to make sure that everyone understood that I was going to dive in and spend a lot of time on this next goal. And I think that can be kind of challenging for some folks, especially if your friend group isn't also doing the same thing.
- Alison Monahan: Right. In my case, I had a boyfriend in San Francisco and he didn't want to move to New York, so we were going to do the long-distance thing. I was thinking about this podcast earlier today and I was like, "You know what? If you have one of those relationships that you think probably is not going to go to the distance, I think this summer is the time to end it." It really is.
- Lee Burgess: So you don't have the drama in the fall.
- Alison Monahan: Every night I had to talk to this person and it just became this real drag. So I'm like, "It's midnight. I want to go to sleep." And we had a spectacular breakup over the winter break or shortly thereafter. But if you're in one of those relationships, particularly, maybe you're with a college partner or something, and you're like, "Well, that's been fun, but I'm not sure this is the long-term prospect for me" – I think just go ahead and pull that plug.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. You don't want extra drama that's avoidable, during the school year.
- Alison Monahan: You don't need the drama. You really don't. If you're going to be distracted by sobbing phone calls and people guilted you into things and whatever – other people are not distracted by that. They're studying, you're not. That's a problem.



- Lee Burgess: It can also be a good time to approach the holidays with your family. That's always a tough one that first year of law school – how you're to come home for Thanksgiving, because it's right before final exams. You might just talk about it and maybe set the expectation that you're not likely coming, and then surprise them if everything works out.
- Alison Monahan: Which, it's probably not going to, let's be honest.
- Lee Burgess: It's probably not going to, but you can just decide that you're going to under promise, over perform.
- Alison Monahan: Definitely, 100% agree. It is amazing how big a deal Thanksgiving becomes for people. And I think if you can just get on out ahead of that and say, "You know what? Things might be different this year. I'm just going to go ahead and set that expectation, and if it works out, I will do my very best to be there as normal." But there's a very good chance that will not work out.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. Alright, number 10 – we made it to number 10 – is...
- Alison Monahan: Woo!
- Lee Burgess: I know. It's, [get your tech in order](#).
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, definitely. So we're not saying you have to go out and buy a brand new laptop. We have discussed this, I think, on different podcasts. We don't even necessarily think that is a good idea. It might make sense to wait a couple of years and do it before you take the bar. But you need to have something that works and is reliable and is helpful. So, if your laptop battery does not function, you need a new laptop. That's the bottom line. If your phone does not receive text messages or the battery lasts 30 minutes, you need a new phone. It doesn't have to be the top of the line iPhone, but you need something that is reliable and functional and allows you to actually do the things you need to do, because otherwise your life is going to be a mess.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah, you can't have stuff crashing on you. It's just bad news. So, not only make sure your tech is stable, then learn how to use the tech that you need. So, if you've decided that Google Docs is going to be the end-all-be-all, don't come to me because I'm terrible with Google Docs. Google Docs and I do not have a great relationship, even though I'm part of a lot of organizations – not ours – that love Google Docs and I'm forced to use them constantly. But if you've



decided that's what you're going to do, make sure you actually know how to use it, you know how to keep your files organized, and you can find things and you know how to save things and back things up. It depends, everybody has a different level of comfort with technology, and you want to make sure that whatever you're going to use, you know how to use it.

Alison Monahan: Right. And I think that backup is so, so critical. We have had so many people that we've worked with who have lost really important documents in very poor timing – things are getting ready to submit to a journal competition, final exam, take-home exams. Things happen. You have to be backing stuff up and it has to be automatic, so that you do not have to remember to do it, because you will not remember to do it just at the right time and you will lose work. And that is not something that you want to be doing.

Lee Burgess: No. It's just so critical. And sometimes I feel like these days especially, tech gets buggy. For instance, I've got some low-level tech problems – for some reason, my photos don't connect to my laptop, I don't know why. Not mission-critical for law school, but...

Alison Monahan: I can tell you how to back those up automatically to Dropbox, Lee.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I know. Well, they do for my phone; they just don't do it for my laptop. It's all very confusing, but for a project I need to be able to access them. But little things like that, good to just make a Genius Bar appointment or whatever. Get it taken care of, because you don't want lingering things. Like you were saying, if you're worried that the battery's not going well, take it now, because what I have also learned as somebody who frequents the Genius Bar is that when you have these lingering problems, even if you don't think that they are very important, they sometimes take your laptop away.

Alison Monahan: Yes, exactly.

Lee Burgess: And you don't want to do that during school.

Alison Monahan: No, it might be gone for a day or two or more depending on where you live. And yeah, go ahead and deal with these things. I will say the other cool piece of tech I've recently learned about is if people want to handwrite their notes, there's a super cool product called [reMarkable](#), I think it is. We're not getting paid to promote them, but it's kind of awesome, it literally feels like writing on paper. I tried it out, two people at a table I was at had one. But if you are thinking of



handwriting, that might be a great option to consider. A little pricey, but maybe someone will buy it for you.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I like the Kindle Scribe as well, that's another good option if you want to handwrite on to tech. Something else to consider. These are all the things you want to figure out before you start, because you want to get it, you want to practice with it, you want to get used to it. You want to make sure you can back up those notes. Oh, goodness, you don't want to lose... Yeah.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Basically, you've got to get your process in place. You've got to get your tech stack in place, as they say, and then your process in place to make sure everything is going to be seamlessly backed up, so that your life is not completely ruined if your computer crashes or gets stolen or lost or whatever.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. The one other thing about tech is, automate what you can. When you're setting up everything, automate your bills, automate whatever you can, automate as much as possible, and then use thoughtful calendaring tools or tools like Trello to make sure that things don't fall by the wayside, because I think that the busier you get, it's easy to say, "Oh, have I not paid that bill in two months?" I think you want to just try and utilize your tech to make things happen as seamlessly as possible.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think that's the story of going into 1L year: Get your stuff together and make your life easier, because you're going to be really busy doing important stuff and you don't want to be dealing with all this piddly junk, basically.

Lee Burgess: Oh, I know, like car stuff. Oh my gosh, we didn't even touch on that.

Alison Monahan: Ugh. Yeah.

Lee Burgess: Anyway. Deal with your car too. You can't have a car breaking down all the time. There're so many things. So, make a list, spend some time on it. Your future self will thank you. And that's really the theme of this episode, is do things now so your future self will thank you.

Alison Monahan: Awesome.

Lee Burgess: If you enjoyed this episode of the Law School Toolbox podcast, please take a second to leave a review and rating on your favorite listening app. We'd really appreciate it. And be sure to subscribe so you don't miss anything. If you have



any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to reach out to myself or Alison at lee@lawschooltoolbox.com or alison@lawschooltoolbox.com. Or you can always contact us via our website [contact form](#) at LawSchoolToolBox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon!

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