

College Application Calendar

College applications can seem overwhelming at first glance. What needs to be done, and when? Use this calendar to get a bird's-eye view of the college application process.

Summer Before Senior Year

Visit colleges that interest you. Call ahead for the campus tour schedule. Schedule an on-campus interview with an admissions representative.

Finalize your list of colleges. Be sure your list includes "safe" schools, as well as "reach" and "realistic" schools. Request college applications and informational packets. Organize materials into separate files by college.

Keep a college calendar of all admission deadlines.

If you plan to compete in Division I or Division II college sports and want to be eligible to be recruited by colleges, you must register with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse.

If you took AP[®] Exams in May, you will receive your AP Grade Reports in July.

Register early for fall SAT[®] tests.

September

Your counselor will play a big role in helping you get into college, so keep him or her informed. Meet to talk about your college plans and review your transcript.

Get started on your applications right away. Deadlines for early applications tend to fall in October or November.

Start working on your college essays. Write essays that focus on your experiences and make you stand out from the crowd.

Update your resume—your list of accomplishments, involvements, and work experiences—with your senior year activities. Your resume will help you complete your applications and essays.

October

Ask your counselor, teachers, and coaches or employers for letters of recommendation. Give them plenty of time to meet your deadlines and make sure to provide them with stamped and addressed envelopes.

Take SAT tests. Make sure your scores are sent to each of your colleges.

November

Submit early decision and early action applications on time.

Work hard at completing your college essays. Proofread them rigorously for mistakes.

Follow up with your teachers to ensure that letters of recommendation are sent on time to meet your deadlines.

Mail applications as early as possible for colleges with rolling deadlines (admission decisions are made as applications are received).

Take SAT tests. Make sure your scores are sent to each one of your colleges.

December

Try to wrap up college applications before winter break. Make copies of each application before you send it.

Take SAT tests. Make sure your scores are sent to each one of your colleges.

Early Decision and Early Application responses arrive this month.

January

Early Decision and Early Application responses arrive this month.

Some colleges include your first-semester grades as part of your application folder. This is called the mid-year grade report. Have your counselor send your grades to colleges that require them.

February

Contact your colleges and confirm that all necessary application materials have been received.

Do not get senioritis! Colleges want to see strong second half grades.

March

Some admissions decisions arrive this month. Read everything you receive carefully, as some of it may require action on your part.

April

Most admissions decisions and financial aid award letters arrive this month. Read everything you receive carefully, as some of it might require action on your part.

Make a final decision, and mail the enrollment form and deposit check to the school you select before May 1 (the enrollment deadline for most schools).

Notify each of the schools to which you were accepted that you will not be attending in writing so that your spot can be freed up for another student.

On the waiting list? Contact the admissions office and let them know of your continued interest in the college and update them on your spring semester grades and activities.

May

Study hard for final exams. Most admission offers are contingent on your final grades.

Thank your counselor, teachers, coaches, and anyone else who wrote you recommendations or otherwise helped with your college applications.

June

Have your counselor send your final transcript to your college choice.

If you plan to compete in Division I or Division II college sports, have your counselor send your final transcript to the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse.

Summer

Make travel plans. Book early for the best prices.

Finalize your housing plans.

Shop for items you will need in college.

Make sure to sign up for first-year orientation.

Plan your first-semester courses with an eye towards eventually selecting your college major.