



College Preparation Toolkit

Timeline: Action List

There are so many tasks to be completed during the senior year, it's easy to lose track of things. The list below gives you a general idea of when certain items in the college-going process should be addressed.

June (summer before your senior year)

- ✓ Sign up for the ACT if you didn't take it as a junior, or to improve your score.
- ✓ Review ACT test results, study and retest if necessary.

July through early December

- Visit with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements.
- Consider taking one or two courses at a local university or community college.
- Keep working hard all year; second semester grades can affect scholarship eligibility.
- Ask for personal references from teachers, school counselors, or employers early in the year, at least two weeks before application deadline.
- Follow your school's procedure for requesting recommendations.
- Visit with admissions counselors who come to your high school.
- Attend a college fair.
- Begin your college essay(s).
- Apply for admission at the colleges you've chosen (as early as possible).
- Avoid common college application mistakes such as missing application deadline, grammar, etc.
- Find out if you qualify for scholarships at each college to which you have applied.
- Start the financial aid application process.
- See your school counselor for help finding financial aid and scholarships.
- Visit colleges that have invited you to enroll.

January through May

- If you need it, get help completing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).
- Be aware that colleges ask for high school transcripts in January. Any college you've paid a deposit to will be monitoring student progress.
- Decide which college to attend, and notify the school of your decision.

- Keep track of and observe deadlines for sending in all required fees and paperwork.
- Notify the schools you will not be attending of your decision within the specified timeline so your admissions deposit fee will be refunded.
- Continue to look for scholarship opportunities.
- Keep track of important financial aid and scholarship deadlines.
- Watch the mail or email for your Student Aid Report (SAR). It should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed.

January through May continued

- Compare financial aid packages from different schools.
- Work with the Financial Aid Office at your chosen university to prepare necessary documents.
- Notify your college about any outside scholarships you received.
- Register for fall classes according to school timelines, usually around April or May.
- Keep working hard because second semester senior year grades count.

June through August

- Getting a summer job can help pay some of your college expenses.
- Make a list of what you will need to take with you for your dorm room. Check your college's website for suggestions.
- If you haven't met your roommate, call, write, or e-mail to get acquainted in advance.
- Make sure housing documentation is quickly accessible when you move into the dorm.
- Learn how to get around at your new school. Review a campus map.
- Buy your books and supplies, used if at all possible. Check online sources for deals.