

College Application Timeline

Want to know if you're on track in the college application process? This timeline shows you what you should be doing, and when.

SEPTEMBER

- Create a list of 4–8 colleges.
- Create a master list or calendar with application fees and deadlines, test dates, and your school's application processing deadlines.
- Meet with your counselor, and download college applications and financial aid forms.
- Plan visits to these colleges.
- Talk to your counselor to see if you are eligible to receive fee waivers for applications and tests.
- Register for a college entrance exam, such as the SAT®.

OCTOBER

- Finalize your college choices.
- Prepare early decision, early action, or rolling admission applications.
- Complete the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® if it is required by any of your selected colleges.
- Register for any tests that are required or recommended by the colleges on your list, such as SAT or SAT Subject Tests™.
- Take any necessary tests and have your score reports sent to colleges.

NOVEMBER

- Be sure not to miss early decision application deadlines, many of which are in November.
- Complete your application essays. Be sure to proofread them for mistakes.
- Follow your school's procedure or ask your counselor and have transcripts sent to the colleges.
- Give your counselor the proper forms at least two weeks before colleges require them.
- Take any necessary tests and have your score reports sent to colleges.

DECEMBER

- Go to www.pin.ed.gov and get PINs for the FAFSA for both yourself and your parents.
- Take any necessary tests and have your score reports sent to colleges.

JANUARY & FEBRUARY

- Submit your FAFSA.
- Encourage your parents or guardians to file income tax returns early. Some colleges want copies of your family's returns before finalizing financial aid offers.
- Take any necessary tests and have your score reports sent to colleges.

MARCH & APRIL

- Stay active in school. If you are wait-listed, the college will want to know what you have accomplished since you applied.
- Expect to receive acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April.
- If you haven't visited the college you've decided to attend, do so before accepting.
- Tell your counselor which college you'll be attending.
- If you have questions about housing, talk to your counselor or call the college.
- Prepare for any Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) Exams you plan to take.

MAY & JUNE

- Inform all colleges to which you applied of your admission and financial aid decisions by May 1.
- Send a deposit to only one college.
- Work with your counselor to resolve any admission or financial aid problems.
- Ask your high school to send your final transcript to your chosen college.
- Take AP Exams that may earn you advanced placement, college credit, or both.