

COLLEGE

PLANNING TIMELINE

Getting ready for college doesn't have to be complicated. Just map it out with our handy college planning timeline.

Spring Junior Year

- THINK ABOUT YOUR DREAM JOB**
Not sure where to go to college? Work backwards and think about what you want as a career.
- MEET WITH YOUR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR TO PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR'S CLASSES**
It's important not only to get good grades but also to take challenging courses.
- SEARCH FOR SCHOLARSHIPS**
Find the latest tips for scholarship success.
- START GATHERING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**
Ask people who know you well, such as your teachers, guidance counselor, employer, or other mentor.
- TAKE THE SATS OR ACTS**
Register at the College Board or the ACT.
- LEARN ABOUT THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS**
There are many reputable sites, such as the College Board, that offer free articles and webinars about college admissions.
- TOUR CAMPUSES!**
Can't make it to campus? Check out virtual tours at sites like YouVisit.
- TALK WITH CURRENT STUDENTS AT THE SCHOOLS YOU'RE CONSIDERING**
Connect with students you know who are attending the school, or check out services like CollegeWeekLive to chat online with students from a wide variety of colleges and universities.

Fall Senior Year

- MEET WITH YOUR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR**
Get their advice on staying on track during this all-important senior year.
- MEET WITH ADMISSIONS COUNSELORS**
Visit in-person and online college fairs to learn more about schools you're interested in and what they're looking for in their applicants.
- FINALIZE YOUR LIST OF COLLEGES**
Find tips from Ted Fiske of the Fiske Guide on choosing a school that's right for you.
- WRITE YOUR ADMISSIONS ESSAY**
Ask your parents, teacher, or high school counselor to proof it before you submit it.
- FINISH YOUR APPLICATIONS**
Pay attention to deadlines. Early decision and early action applications are usually due between October 1-November 1.
- HAVE YOUR TEST SCORES SENT TO THE SCHOOLS YOU'RE APPLYING TO**
Fill out a request form at the College Board or ACT.

Spring Senior Year

- REVIEW YOUR STUDENT AID REPORT**
Learn why this report is important for getting financial aid, and get tips on understanding your report.
- CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE LETTERS AND FINANCIAL AID AWARDS**
Use a comparison tool to keep track of the financial aid offers.
- RESEARCH STUDENT LOANS IF NEEDED**
Carefully review the terms, such as repayment lengths, repayment options, and interest rates. You can use College Ave Student Loans' calculator to see your loan options before applying.
- FORMALLY CHOOSE YOUR COLLEGE!**
Notify the school of your decision to enroll, and write to the other schools you were admitted to as well to let them know your plans.
- SEND IN YOUR DEPOSIT**
Be sure to have a letter of acceptance from the school in hand before you send in your deposit.
- SUBMIT YOUR HOUSING FORM**
Send in your housing form promptly for the best chance of getting into the dorm you want.

Winter Junior Year

- RESEARCH COLLEGES ONLINE**
Visit college's websites as well as popular college search sites like CollegeWeekLive, Unigo, and the College Board.
- SHARE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED**
Talk with your family, teachers, and high school counselor as you learn more about each school.
- START NARROWING DOWN YOUR CHOICES OF COLLEGES**
Mobile apps like College Passport can help you build and track your college list.
- TAKE A PRACTICE TEST OF THE SATS OR ACTS**
You can sign up for practice tests for free at the College Board or the ACT.
- EXPLORE FINANCIAL AID OPTIONS**
The US Department of Education offers online tools that help families plan ahead financially for college.

TIP: Use a scholarship matching tool to find a list of scholarships best suited for you. Visit collegeavestudentloans.com for more details.

Summer Junior Year

- VISIT COLLEGE TOWNS!**
Research online to learn about the nation's top college communities.
- DO VOLUNTEER WORK**
Strengthen your experience and your college applications by giving back to an organization you care about.
- GET A SUMMER JOB**
Earn extra money for college expenses.
- APPLY FOR GRANTS**
Find winning strategies for getting college grants.
- PRACTICE WRITING YOUR APPLICATION ESSAY**
You'll find a lot of handy tips online from education experts on the types of essays admissions counselors are looking for.

TIP: When finalizing your list of colleges, make sure to consider all factors. View a list of factors to think about at collegeavestudentloans.com

Winter Senior Year

- COMPLETE THE FAFSA AND OTHER FINANCIAL AID FORMS**
The US Department of Education offers free resources to help you complete the FAFSA.
- PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR GRADES**
Have your high school counselor send your midyear grades to the schools you applied to.

TIP: View 10 common FAFSA errors to avoid on collegeavestudentloans.com

Summer Senior Year

- MAKE A COLLEGE BUDGET**
You'll find many free college budgeting templates online.
- APPLY FOR STUDENT LOANS IF NEEDED**
Once you apply, keep copies of applications and keep a spreadsheet to track responses.
- KEEP TABS ON COLLEGE BILLS**
Bills for tuition and other fees will start rolling in by mid-June and usually are due by mid-August.
- ATTEND ORIENTATION**
Many universities offer in-person orientation sessions, as well as online sessions for those who can't visit campus before classes start.
- PICK YOUR FALL CLASSES**
Popular classes may fill up quickly. Choose classes as early as possible so you can get into your top choices.
- MEET YOUR NEW ROOMMATE!**
If possible, text or call your roommate before you meet in-person. It's a nice way to break the ice before the semester starts.

FIND MORE HELPFUL ADVICE AND TIPS AT
COLLEGEAVESTUDENTLOANS.COM



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