

# College Planning: 12th Grade

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

## FALL

- Narrow your list of colleges to between five and 10.**  
Meet with a counselor about your college choices and, if you've not yet done so, download college applications and financial aid forms. Plan to visit as many of these colleges as possible.
- Create a master list or calendar that includes:**
  - Tests you'll take and their fees, dates, and registration deadlines
  - College application due dates
  - Required financial aid application forms and their deadlines (aid applications may be due before college applications)
  - Other materials you'll need (recommendations, transcripts, etc.)
  - Your high school's application processing deadlines
- Ask a counselor** to help you request a fee waiver if you can't afford application or test fees.
- Be sure** to have your college admission test scores sent to the colleges to which you are applying.
- Prepare** early decision/early action or rolling admission applications as soon as possible. Nov. 1–15: Colleges may require test scores and applications between these dates for early decision admission.
- Ask a counselor or teacher** for recommendations if you need them. Give each teacher or counselor an outline of your academic record and your extracurricular activities. For each recommendation, provide a stamped, addressed envelope and any college forms required.
- Write first drafts** and ask teachers and others to read them if you're submitting essays. If you're applying for early decision, finish the essays for that application now.
- Complete** at least one college application by Thanksgiving.
- Ask counselors** to send your transcripts to colleges. Give counselors the proper forms at least two weeks before the colleges require them.

## WINTER

- Keep photocopies** as you finish and send your applications and essays.
- Give the correct form** to your counselor if the college wants to see second-semester grades.
- Have your high school send a transcript** — it is sent separately by mail to colleges if you apply online to colleges.

## SPRING

- Keep active in school.** If you are waitlisted, the college will want to know what you have accomplished between the time you applied and the time you learned of its decision.
- Visit your final college before accepting.** You should receive acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April. Notify your counselor of your choice. If you have questions about housing offers, talk to your counselor or call the college.
- Inform every college** of your acceptance or rejection of the offer of admission and/or financial aid by May 1. Colleges cannot require your deposit or your commitment to attend before May 1. Talk to your counselor or advisor if you have questions.
- Send your deposit** to one college only.
- Waitlisted by a college?** If you intend to enroll if you are accepted, tell the admission director your intent and ask how to strengthen your application. Need financial aid? Ask whether funds will be available if you're accepted.
- Work with a counselor** to resolve any admission or financial aid problems.
- Ask your high school** to send a final transcript to your college.

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