

Stay on track

Your stress-free guide for applying to college

Junior year

September

Have the “college” talk with your parents.

Where do you want to go? What major? How much can you spend?

October

Take the PSAT!

It can give you an idea of where you fall in the college applicant pool. Plus, your scores may make you eligible for national scholarships.

November

Consider how you'll pay for college.

Take a look at different types of loans and scholarships. From the exceptionally tall to the llama enthusiast, there's a scholarship opportunity for everyone!

December

Take the ACT/SAT.

These tests are crucial to figuring out which schools are a good match for you. Be sure to take practice tests and even a prep course to ensure that you get your best score possible.

March

Make a list.

Once you have a list of possible schools, start planning your visits. Counselors often recommend visiting six to eight colleges to keep a narrow, focused list.¹

Senior year

August

Start your essays!

With your top schools in mind, start drafting your work and be sure to leave yourself time for edits, edits, and more edits.

September

Secure letters of recommendation.

Reach out to teachers, coaches, and employers who would be happy to write you a glowing review. Don't forget to send them a thank you note afterwards!

October

Submit your FAFSA.

Some student aid programs award funds on a first-come, first-served basis so don't wait too long to submit your FAFSA.

Consider re-taking standardized tests.

You can also re-take your SAT to try to raise your score.

November

Stay on top of deadlines.

Don't let the date for early application sneak up on you. Many schools have different application deadlines; make sure you know when everything is due.

January

Apps are due!

January 1st is the universal deadline for most school's applications, so make sure yours are in. If you applied early action, you could get your decision letter any day.

February

Mail's here!

Keep an eye out for your college acceptance letters.

March

Watch for award letters.

This is when you'll get financial aid award letters from the schools that have accepted you. Compare them to see which offers the best financial aid package.

April

Decision time!

After deciding where you'd like to go, make sure to stay on top of communications from your school. Deposits, forms, and housing apps are all due prior to leaving in the fall.

May

Make a budget.

Talk with your parents to figure out how much you'll expect to earn and pay while at school. Having a budget will start you on the journey toward financial responsibility.

Summer

Final to-do items.

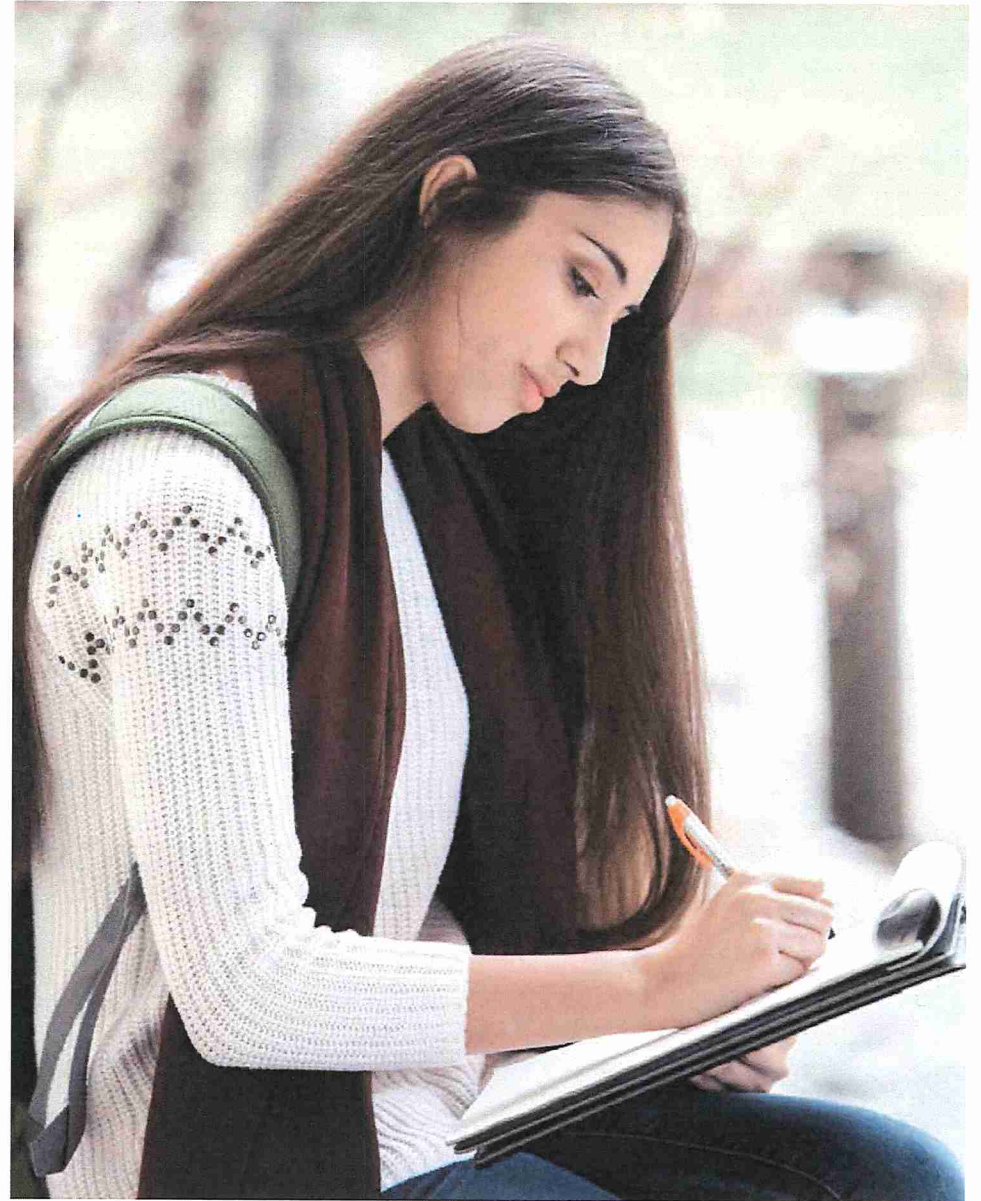
This is the time to attend orientation, register for your classes, and make sure the tuition bill is paid. It's also the time to have fun—and have an amazing time!

Before you go

Applying to college is a busy time

With all the essays, forms, and deposits, it's easy to overlook some of the simple tasks. Don't forget to:

- See if your bank has branches and/or ATMs in your college's city. If not, consider opening a bank account at a local bank.
- Limit roaming charges by double checking your cell phone plan. Does your plan cover your college's location?
- Coordinate with your future roommate. Two TVs, two microwaves, and two futons are too much in a dorm.
- Get checked up! Visit the eye doctor, dentist, and physician before heading out.
- Make a plan to keep in touch. A video chat with your best friend or an old school letter from your family can be a nice reminder of home.



¹ This information was gathered from <http://www.nacacnet.org/studentinfo/articles/Pages/Applications.aspx> on September 27, 2016.

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