

Use this checklist to keep track of your college plans.

III Form Year

During the beginning of a student's high school career, there should not be a specific focus on college admissions. Instead, students should focus on:

- Taking solid academic courses at the appropriate level of challenge, developing current interests and exploring interests in new subject areas where possible;
- Engaging fully in extracurricular activities, sports, and/or community service, trying out new interests and taking on leadership roles if available;
- Becoming comfortable interacting with teachers and forming positive relationships with peers and adults in the community; and
- Reading! Whether novels, poetry, non-fiction, newspapers, or special-interest articles, students should be reading outside of school. This is probably the single best possible preparation for the demands of school, college, and even standardized tests.

- Spring:** Work with your advisor during course selection to choose IV Form courses that are challenging yet appropriate for you.
- Talk to the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning about summer programs and enrichment opportunities that might be of interest to you.

- Summer:** If you are an athlete and think you might wish to play sports in college, try to attend a summer camp or recruiting showcase.

IV Form Year

Continue to focus on doing well in your classes, exploring your interests, developing your critical thinking and time management skills, and engaging fully in the St. Mark's community through athletics, clubs, and other extracurricular activities that you enjoy.

- October:** PSAT is offered. The PSAT for IV Formers is just for practice.

- December:** Read your PSAT results thoroughly to see where you can improve.
- Take the ACT diagnostic offered at St. Mark's to help you decide whether you will pursue the SAT or ACT as a testing option.

- March:** Course selection: make sure that you continue to enroll in courses that are challenging yet appropriate for you and keep you on track to meet graduation requirements.

- May:** If you are an athlete who wishes to play in college, talk to your high school coach and start reaching out to college coaches.

- July-August:** If you are an athlete who wishes to play in college, try to attend a summer camp or recruiting showcase.
- Consider taking a SAT/ACT test preparation class.

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V Form Year

Begin the college counseling process. In the winter, start to meet regularly with your college counselor and attend the V Form core Saturday class focused on identifying your interests, strengths, and passions and building a college process around them.

- September:** Register for a standardized test (SAT/ACT) if you completed a test prep program during the summer.
- October:** PSAT is offered. The PSAT for V Formers is also the National Merit qualifying test.
 Consider enrolling in an SAT or ACT prep class on-campus at St. Mark's to prepare for winter testing.
- November:** Develop a standardized testing plan with your counselor.
 If you are completing test prep in the fall, register for a December SAT or ACT so that you can test when your preparation is freshest.
- December:** Read your PSAT score report thoroughly to see areas in which you need to improve.
 SAT and ACT are offered.
- January:** Schedule an individual meeting with your college counselor.
 Participate fully in the V Form core Saturday class, Preparing for the Journey.
 Begin exploring online tools YouScience, Scoir, and College Kickstart to help support and focus your college search.
 Consider enrolling in an SAT or ACT prep class on-campus at St. Mark's to prepare for spring testing.
 If you are potentially interested in attending a service academy (West Point, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy), discuss this with your counselor in order to get the nomination process started.
 If you are considering playing sports at the Division I or II level in college, register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- February:** If you plan on visiting colleges over spring break, discuss your preliminary list of colleges to visit with your counselor. Arrange tours as needed to ensure you will be able to see campuses.
 Register for any tests you may wish to take in March or April.
 If you are an athlete who wishes to play in college, contact college coaches.
- March:** Visit various types of colleges over spring break, if possible. Register with the admissions office at any college you visit so that they have a record of your interest.
 Continue meeting regularly with your college counselor and using Scoir and College Kickstart to build and evaluate your college list.
 Consider registering for the ACT in April.
- April:** Continue to meet with your college counselor and discuss standardized testing plans and possible courses for VI Form year.
 Continue to research colleges. Report back to your counselor about any visits you made over spring break.
 ACT is offered.
 Consider registering for the SAT in May.

- May:**
- Continue to meet regularly with your college counselor.
 - Continue refining your preliminary college list.
 - SAT and AP exams are offered.
 - Register for the June ACT or SAT, if planned.
 - Ask two teachers for recommendations and confirm that they are willing to write on your behalf.
 - Musicians, actors, and visual artists should talk with teachers about portfolios.
 - Start planning summer college visits (tours, information sessions, and—where available—interviews). Remember that appointments at desirable times fill up early.

- June:**
- SAT and ACT are offered.
 - Finalize your summer college visit plans. In addition to an information session, tour, and interview, see if it's possible to meet with professors and/or coaches, if appropriate.

- July-August:**
- Visit and tour colleges, interview when possible, and request supplements.
 - Return student and parent questionnaires to college counselor.
 - Start working on the Common Application.
 - Take an SAT preparatory class at home, if you wish.
 - Register for the September ACT or the October SAT.
 - Continue to revise your college list.
 - If you are an athlete who wishes to play in college, try to attend a summer camp at a school you are interested in attending or a recruiting showcase.
 - Musicians and artists should begin to make portfolios.
 - Actors should begin to schedule auditions or record video auditions as appropriate.



OVER THE SUMMER...



VISIT COLLEGES



COMPLETE COMMON APPLICATION



TAKE A TEST PREP CLASS AT HOME IF YOU WISH



REGISTER FOR FALL ACT OR SAT

VI Form Year

Attend informational sessions with college admissions representatives. Continue to meet with your college counselor and prepare to graduate from high school. Apply to colleges. Make decisions.

- September:**
- Meet with your counselor to discuss the colleges that you've visited.
 - Confirm which teachers will write your recommendations.
 - Work on applications, especially essays.
 - If you will be applying for financial aid, file a CSS Profile registration form.
 - Review your testing plan with your counselor.
 - ACT is offered.
 - Register for any November or December SATs you wish to take.
 - Register for the October ACT if needed.
- October:**
- If you are applying for financial aid, work with your parents to complete the FAFSA and CSS Profile.
 - Continue to meet with your college counselor.
 - SAT and ACT are offered.
 - Early applicants should hand in a yellow Materials Request Form to the college office.
 - Work on applications and essays.
 - Complete all early applications.
 - Determine which colleges require official SAT/ACT scores sent directly from the testing agency, and send scores appropriately.
- November:**
- Continue to meet with your college counselor.
 - Most early applications are due November 1 and 15.
 - SAT tests are offered.
 - Register for the December ACT.
 - If you are applying for financial aid, ensure that the FAFSA and CSS Profile are sent to all schools on your list, and confirm that your aid application is complete with each college.
 - Keep your grades up, since your Window 1 grades will be shared with your early colleges!
- December:**
- ACT is offered.
 - Continue to work on applications (even if you applied early).
 - Wait for decision letters if you applied early (usually mailed by December 15).
 - Update the college office on any early results.
- Jan.-March:**
- Focus on your classes, and update your college counselor about decisions as you receive them.
 - Keep your grades up, as your Semester 1 grades will be shared with your colleges!
 - Attend revisit days at colleges of interest that offer them.
- April:**
- Meet with your college counselor if you plan to stay on a waiting list.
 - International Students: Arrange I-20 transfer to the college you will be attending. See the college office with questions.
 - Notify the college office and your teachers of your decisions.
 - Respond to all offers of admission, including declining offers at schools you do not plan to attend.
- May:**
- Submit deposit to one college.
 - International Students: Arrange I-20 transfer to the college you will be attending. See the college office with questions.
 - Fill out final college forms and return to the college office.
 - Fill out all forms for housing and classes; research to see if you have summer reading.
 - Sign up for orientation programs.

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

Start growing your alumni network by visiting www.stmarksschool.org/alumni.