

VISITING A COLLEGE CAMPUS

1. It is never too early to start visiting

Most students start visiting colleges during the Spring Break of their Junior Year. Three day weekends are a great opportunity to visit – stay over Sunday night, go to classes on Monday, and go home Monday night.

2. Visit when the school is in session

If you visit in the summer, you can't get a real sense of a college. Those who visit in the summer will often find a deserted campus – except for the hordes of prospective students. You need to visit when school is in session to interact with the students, sit in on classes, see the activities and get a sense for the school. Can you see yourself fitting in with the culture of the school?

3. Stay overnight at a school when possible

There's only so much you can tell about a school from the tour and a walk around campus. Staying overnight will allow you to see the social scene, visit classes, and really interact with the college students. Note- some schools do not host official overnight visits.

4. Sit in on multiple classes - especially in your possible major

When you visit a school, make every effort to sit in on multiple classes. The admissions office can provide you with a list of classes in various subjects. The quality of teachers and classes varies, but by sitting in on several classes, you can get a feel for the type of students and teachers.

5. Ask students what they think!

The most overlooked tool to finding out whether a college will be right for you. When you're on campus, seek out students and ask their opinions. Ask several students, anyone you find in the cafeteria, campus center, gym, etc. This is the best way to get honest opinions. And college students definitely are opinionated and are often happy to share their love (or hate) of their school.

6. Keep a notebook

After visiting several schools, the colleges and your experiences will blur in your mind. Have a notebook that you bring around to each school. Record your feelings and experiences of that school. This notebook will be instrumental when you finally are choosing which schools to apply and go to.

7. Visiting campus is a must!

There are so many reasons to visit a college campus, rather than just going by what the website or brochures tell you. Obviously, the information sent out by the college highlights the best aspects of the campus. You can discover a lot of information that the college didn't want you to know such as if the campus is in a bad neighborhood, what the nearby town is like, and the quality of the facilities and dorms.

8. Go off the beaten path! Don't just take the tour

On the college tours, you are taken on a well thought out route of the campus. After the tour, go around and explore for yourself.

9. Read school newspapers

A school newspaper is one of the best ways to get a feel for the school and to learn about the activities on campus. Notice the main themes in the newspaper - are there a lot of stories about theft and vandalism? Are there features on student activism? If a school has multiple publications, be sure to check all of them out.

10. Look at "student sites"

Another good way to get a sense of the school is to look on online forums that some colleges have for students to interact and share information. Not all schools have these sites but many do. For instance, Williams Colleges' site is: wso.williams.edu, and other schools have a Daily Jolt site, such as Brown, <http://brown.dailyjolt.com/>, and Amherst, <http://amherst.dailyjolt.com/>

11. If possible, visit twice

First impressions can be misleading and so take advantage of every possibility to visit the campus. Remember, you're going to be at the school for four years, so spending two nights there makes a lot of sense.

COLLEGE RESEARCH FORM

College Name: _____

Website: _____

% accepted: _____ Avg. GPA: _____ Avg. Test Scores: _____

Common Application user?: _____ Deadline: _____ Early Action/Early

Decision/Priority? _____

Location and distance from home:

Program(s) in which you are interested:

Sports/ Division

Info: _____

Clubs & Activities in which I might be interested:

When I looked at their website I thought I might like the following things about this school: _____

Attach Representative's
business card here

When I looked at website the following are things I thought I might not like about this school: _____

After looking at the website, I still have the following questions about this school:

User name for website or school's application: _____ Password:

I was concerned about or need to do more research on:

A representative from this college will be visiting SHS on:

Other

comments: _____
