

COLLEGE APPLICATION TYPES: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



How are you applying to the schools on your college list — early decision, early action, early decision II, rolling admission or regular admission? Before making your selection, be sure you understand the differences, benefits and drawbacks of each option.

	EARLY DECISION	EARLY ACTION	EARLY DECISION II	ROLLING ADMISSION	REGULAR ADMISSION
WHEN ARE APPLICATIONS DUE?	Early to mid-November	Early to mid-November	Mid-December to mid-January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by school Applications can be accepted as early as July and as late as April 	Mid-December to mid-January
WHEN DO YOU LEARN ADMISSION STATUS?	Mid-December	January or February	Mid-February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by school Typically two to six weeks after receipt of application 	March or April
IS ADMISSION BINDING?	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
CAN YOU APPLY TO MORE THAN ONE SCHOOL USING THIS METHOD?	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by school If early action is "restrictive," you can only apply to one school. 	No	Yes	Yes
ARE ACCEPTANCE RATES HIGHER WITH THIS METHOD?	Yes	Yes	Yes	The earlier the application is received, the higher the acceptance rate.	No
WHEN DO YOU NEED TO ACCEPT ADMITTANCE?	Immediately	Typically by May 1	Immediately	Typically by May 1	Typically by May 1
CAN YOU COMPARE FINANCIAL AID PACKAGES?	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
BENEFITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to finish application season early Learn admittance decision early Increased admittance odds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn admittance decision early Increased admittance odds Ability to compare financial aid packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn admittance decision early Increased admittance odds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to finish application season early Potential to learn admittance decision early Potential to increase admittance odds Ability to compare financial aid packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More time to complete applications Ability to compare financial aid packages
DRAWBACKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to research, apply and decide on top choice school early Must commit to school early No flexibility with financial aid package 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to research, apply and decide on top choice school early 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must commit to school early No flexibility with financial aid package 	To gain greatest advantage, need to research and apply early	Long wait for admission decision