

Senior Checklist

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER

- ❑ Register for the SAT and/or ACT if you didn't take a college entrance exam as a junior or want to take one again. Remember: Your college advisor can help with fee waivers.
- ❑ Take a look at some college applications. Make note of all the pieces of information you will need to compile.
- ❑ Check with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements.
- ❑ Take every opportunity to get to know colleges. Meet with college representatives who visit your school, attend local college fairs, and visit campuses.
- ❑ Narrow down your list of colleges. Collect information about the application and financial aid process at each school.
- ❑ Create a checklist and calendar to keep track of standardized test dates, college application due dates, and financial aid deadlines. Make note of the other materials, such as recommendations or essays, you'll need to complete your applications.

OCTOBER

- ❑ File your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon after Oct. 1 as possible. In addition to determining your eligibility for federal funds, many colleges and states use the form when distributing grants, so don't delay. Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR)—it should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed.
- ❑ **Some colleges will have deadlines (rolling, priority, early decision, and early action) as early as this month.**
- ❑ If you cannot afford the application fees that many colleges charge, ask your counselor to help you request a fee waiver.
- ❑ Finalize your college essay. Many schools will require that you submit at least one essay with your application.
- ❑ Request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers. **Give your recommender at least 3 weeks to write the letter.**
- ❑ Research scholarships. Ask your counselor, your colleges, and local religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. You should *never* pay for scholarship information.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

- ❑ Finalize and send any early decision or early action applications due this month. Have a parent, teacher, counselor, or other adult review the application before it is submitted.
- ❑ Every college will require a copy of your transcript from your high school. Follow your school's procedure for sending transcripts.
- ❑ Make sure testing companies have sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are applying.
- ❑ Begin to organize regular decision applications and financial aid forms, which will be due in January and/or February.
- ❑ If needed, register for the December SAT or ACT. It is the last one most colleges will be able to consider for a senior.
- ❑ Many popular and selective colleges will have application deadlines as early as Jan. 1. Others have deadlines later in January and February.
- ❑ Have your college application list finalized by the end of your first semester so that it matches up on Naviance. This is **very important** for sending your documents to the colleges you applied to.
- ❑ In January, ask your college advisor to send first semester transcripts to schools where you applied (Naviance will alert your college advisor to do this for some colleges, but not all--please check in to make sure your transcript is sent on time!). At the end of the school year, they will need to send final transcripts to the college you will attend.

FEBRUARY-MAY

- ❑ Acceptance letters and financial aid offers will start to arrive. Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices.
- ❑ Don't slack in the classroom. The college you decide to attend will want to see your second semester transcript.
- ❑ May 1 is the date when the college you plan to attend requires a commitment and deposit. When you've made your college decision, notify your counselor. Send in your deposit by the postmark date of May 1. If you've been offered financial aid, accept the offer and follow the instructions given. Also notify schools you will not attend of your decision.
- ❑ Request that your final transcript be sent to the college you will be attending.
- ❑ If you are wait-listed by a college you really want to attend, visit, call, and write the admission office to make your interest clear. Ask how you can strengthen your application.