

# COLLEGE VISIT GUIDE



## KEYS TO SUCCESS

### BE INTENTIONAL.

Pay attention. Observe. Create realistic plans for a day trip, overnight visit, three-day trip, or a week vacation of college tours. Partner and communicate with your EA college counselor.

### BE OPEN-MINDED.

Step on big and small college campuses with a wide range of selectivity. Compare liberal arts colleges, research institutions, public universities, and technical schools. Experience campuses in rural, urban, and suburban settings.

### HAVE FUN.

Enjoy, imagine, laugh, eat well. Add elements of joy to your trip to see what your life would be like in that setting. If you like history, visit historical sites. Go to the beach or amusement park. Appreciate the area in a more meaningful way.

## TOP 10 TIPS FOR YOUR COLLEGE VISIT

- 1 If available, sign up for the tour and information session.** Register for both of these online. If visiting over a break, register early because these slots fill up! Next-level tip: students should take ownership of and register for visits.
- 2 Do your research.** Browse the school's website and social media before you arrive. Feel empowered to ask questions.
- 3 Dress appropriately.** Wear clothing and shoes that are school- and weather-appropriate. Remember to bring water!
- 4 Take notes and pictures.** Both will help you remember your visit, and may help you with supplemental essays should you apply to that school.
- 5 Visit the office or building of your intended major.** Ask students and professors about their work and the school.
- 6 Schedule a meeting with the financial aid office.**
- 7 Eat on campus, ideally in one of the cafeterias.** Experience the school's coffee shop. Pay attention to how professors, students, or staff interact with one another.
- 8 Observe!** After the tour, walk the campus and enter buildings. Find the student center. Pick up a school newspaper and other campus publications, and browse bulletin boards.
- 9 Visit the bookstore** if it was not on the tour.
- 10 Explore the college's town/city** to get the vibe of the area.

## Q&A: WHAT TO ASK

- Student Perspectives:** Why did you choose this school? What do you love the most, and what would change?
- Housing:** Is housing guaranteed? What are the housing options for first-year students, and how is it assigned? Does it differ for upperclass students?
- Student Life:** How do students balance academics with social life, leadership commitments, and work?
- Classes:** What is the average class size for intro courses, labs, and higher-level classes within my intended major? What's the student-faculty ratio? How accessible are professors?
- Advisors:** How are academic advisors assigned? How would you describe your relationship with your advisor? Where are career advisors housed? What programming do they offer?
- Social Life:** Do they have Greek Life? If so, how does it affect social life of those involved and not involved? What do students do for fun? What did your guide(s) do last weekend? (Ask about things you consider fun.)
- Support:** What academic support services are available? How accessible are they?
- Orientation:** What does orientation look like, and when is it?

## COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT VISITS

### ***What is “Demonstrated Interest”?***

Some admission offices track your interactions with their institution (campus visits, interviews, meeting the admission rep at EA, attending programming, and opening emails). Demonstrating interest is you researching more about the school, which will empower you should you apply. Note: some schools track demonstrated interest; many do not. Wondering if a school tracks demonstrated interest? Check with your counselor.

### ***How can I make the most of special visit opportunities?***

Fly-ins. Portfolio review days. Official athletic visits. Review your college list with your EA college counselor, and, if applicable, plan for these special visit opportunities.

### ***What if I can't visit campus in person?***

Take advantage of virtual tours and information sessions. Many virtual tours are interactive, so you choose what to explore on campus.

### ***I'm overwhelmed. Where do I start?***

Don't worry: Everyone's roadmap looks different! Check out the Suggested Timeline below, and reach out to your EA college counselor for help.

## AS YOU PLAN

Once you have your college list together, here are some logistical considerations to make before visiting schools.

■ In addition to registering for tours and information sessions, see if you can schedule an **on-campus interview**. Ask EA College Counseling how to make the most of these opportunities.

■ Inquire about **additional opportunities on campus**: sitting in a class, having lunch with a student, meeting with a professor, or connecting with a specialized program director and students in your intended major.

■ Connect with **EA alumni** at the school you're planning to visit. Don't know any? Ask EA College Counseling for help.

■ Learn if the school offers **special visit opportunities** or track **demonstrated interest**.

Remember, the goal of visits is to determine if you can see yourself at this school.

## SUGGESTED TIMELINE

### ***Summers before 10TH & 11TH GRADES:***

Start local! Take advantage of the Philadelphia area, home to over 100 colleges and universities. Check out schools of varying levels of selectivity and size. There is great benefit to learning what you do and don't like. If you're traveling, explore a college in that area. These can be highly-informative, low-stakes visits. From here, you can expand your college visit list to schools farther from home.

### ***11TH GRADE (holiday breaks and three-day weekends):***

When traveling for a multi-college tour, do not schedule more than two college visits per day. Continue to explore while identifying and prioritizing factors that will help you build your college list heading into 12th grade.

### ***Summer before SENIOR YEAR:***

Expand your search to cities and colleges you're interested in. Heading into this summer, connect with your EA college counselor to help plan your visits to a good mix of schools, ultimately to narrow your college list. Bonus: pick a city/region of interest and build a college tour in that area.

### ***SENIOR YEAR:***

During the fall, continue exploring and visiting schools. Consider these visits as means of helping you narrow to an Early Decision school. In spring, if applicable, you may want to attend admitted-student programs; some happen as early March, and extend into April.

## REACH OUT.

The EA College Counseling team is always here to help. If you have any questions along the way, please do not hesitate to reach out to your EA college counselor!